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**Kurdistan Regional Government
Representation in the United States
Washington D.C.**

Welcome to the "Kurdistan in America" Podcast



Season 2 Episode 2 - Interview with David Tafuri

FEBRUARY 27, 2021

KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATION IN THE UNITED STATES



This episode features a discussion with David Tafuri, the President of the United States Kurdistan Business Council (USKBC), an advisor to the Kurdistan Regional Government Representation in the United States, and a political commentator on Fox News. Mr. Tafuri sheds light on the mission of the USKBC and the organization's activities in the Kurdistan Region, his experience working for UNHCR in Turkey and later for the US Embassy in Iraq in 2006 and 2007. He also offers his take on the KRG's economic reform initiative and how it can attract more US investors to Kurdistan.

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Season 2 Episode 2 - Interview with David Tafuri

FEBRUARY 27, 2021

KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATION IN THE UNITED STATES

KURDISTAN
IN
AMERICA



Kurdistan in America

Season 2 Episode 2 - Interview



00:43 | 34:47

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KRG's Quarterly Humanitarian Bulletin

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Kurdistan Regional Government Representation in the United States Washington D.C.

Welcome to our 2021 Quarterly Humanitarian Bulletin: Q1



USAID provides KRG with medical, laboratory supplies to fight COVID-19. The US Consul General in Erbil, Rob Waller, alongside KRG Health Minister Saman Barzinji, January 13, 2021. (Photo: US Consulate General)

The Kurdistan Region of Iraq continues to host the largest number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees in Iraq. According to Kurdistan Regional Government's Joint Crisis Coordination Center (KRG-JCC), 930,635 displaced people are registered with the KRG, of whom 671,238 are IDPs, and 259,397 are refugees. Of the refugees, 239,476 are from Syrian Kurdistan, 8,551 from Kurdistan of Turkey, 10,572 from Kurdistan of Iran, 713 Palestine, and 85 from elsewhere.

HIGHLIGHTS

COVID-19 Cases in Kurdistan:

Confirmed: 107,933

Recovered: 103,011

Active: 1,414

Total deaths: 3,508

A total of 930,635 refugees and IDPs are registered in

The vast majority of the IDPs and refugees, 635,466, live outside of camps, within the host communities in Kurdistan, while about 275,248 reside in 35 camps across the three provinces: 41% of the total displaced population live in Erbil, 41% in Duhok, and 18% in Slemani. Although 37,139 IDPs returned to their places of origin in 2020, more than 6,113 IDPs and refugees have returned back to the Kurdistan Region—1,037 in January 2021 and 5,076 throughout 2020—because of the uncertain security situation, lack of job opportunities, poor living conditions, and the cold season.

Moreover, the Yazidi community continues to experience hardship. Thirteen Yazidis have committed suicide this year. The suicides are believed to be linked to the trauma caused by the Yazidi genocide at the hands of ISIS, the difficult living conditions inside the camps, lack of prospects for the future, and economic and social problems. Additionally, the Iraqi government's closure of IDP camps in the areas under its jurisdiction has further exacerbated the lives of thousands of Yazidis in the Sinjar region. The security threats from the hostile regional militias and remnants of ISIS remain a major impediment for their safe return to their homes in Sinjar and the surrounding areas.

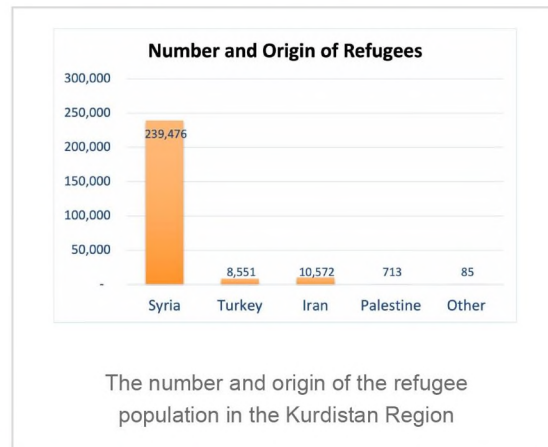
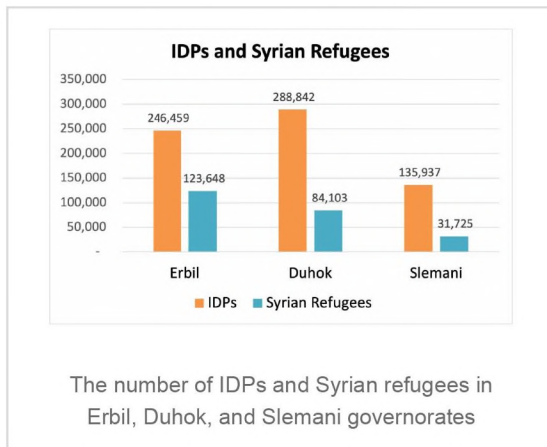
the Kurdistan Region.

635,466 IDPs and refugees live outside of camps, while 275,248 reside in 35 camps across the Kurdistan Region.

More than 6,113 IDPs returned to Kurdistan Region since 2020, while 37,139 returned to their place of origin and/or left the country.

More than half of the displaced people are women and children.

Source: KRG-JCC & KRG
Coronavirus Dashboard



KRG's Joint Crisis Coordination Center

Meanwhile, the number of COVID-19 cases in the Kurdistan Region has reached 107,933 confirmed cases across Erbil, Slemani, Duhok, and Halabja governorates, of which 103,011 have recovered, and 3,508 have died. A new COVID-19 variant was detected in the Kurdistan Region's Duhok province on January 13 from a person who had returned from the United Kingdom. As of February 21, the health authorities have detected 19 cases of the UK-mutated COVID-19 in the Kurdistan Region. Consequently, the KRG has

placed a travel ban to 21 countries, effective on January 15, 2021, to control the spread of coronavirus's new variant to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Accordingly, Iraqi nationals cannot travel from the Kurdistan Region to Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, India, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, the UK, the USA, Zambia, and the Netherlands. Additionally, foreign nationals coming from the countries mentioned above will not be allowed to enter the Kurdistan Region, except diplomats and official delegations, the staff of United Nations (UN) organizations, International Organizations, and the global coalition against the Islamic State (ISIS). However, the exempted categories must be approved by the Kurdistan Regional Government Ministry of Interior first before traveling.

Baghdad's continued withholding of the KRG's share of the federal budget, coupled with the pandemic and the deep economic recession, have caused hardship to the local population and displaced people inside the Kurdistan Region and the disputed territories. The cost of providing essential services to nearly 1 million IDPs and refugees in Kurdistan is about \$871 million per year, \$72 million per month, and \$2.4 million per day. The KRG has been shouldering about 70% of the costs, but the current economic situation has constrained KRG's ability to appropriately meet the IDPs' and refugees' needs. The KRG calls on the United States and the international community to provide greater assistance during this crisis to adequately maintain the well-being, security, and stability of the displaced people.

To learn more about the humanitarian situation or how you can help support vulnerable communities in Kurdistan, please contact Delovan Barwari, Director of Public and Humanitarian Affairs at the KRG Representation in the United States: delovan.barwari@us.gov.krd.

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Sun, Feb 28, 2021 at 3:01 PM



**Kurdistan Regional Government
Representation in the United States
Washington D.C.**

Welcome to our February 2021 Newsletter



Before looking back at this past month, I would like to look ahead to the historic visit of Pope Francis to Iraq and Kurdistan Region from March 5 to 8.

There is great excitement about the papal visit, not just among the Christians of Iraq but people of all faiths. In Kurdistan Region, we look forward to Pope Francis celebrating Holy Mass on Sunday March 7 at Erbil's Franso Hariri International Stadium and his meeting with the President of the Kurdistan Region and the Prime Minister.

You can follow His Holiness's journey to Baghdad, Najaf, Ur, Mosul, Erbil and Qaraqosh through the Kurdish media and the Vatican website: [Read more](#)

The US airstrike, which took place on February 25, hit facilities used by Iraqi militia in East Syria.

What is needed now is de-escalation. The Kurdistan Region's stability and status as a safe haven for those fleeing persecution needs to be protected and preserved. US forces are in Iraq at the invitation of the Iraqi government and their role is to support Iraqi and Kurdish forces against ISIS terrorists.

Meanwhile, the business of government continues. This month, the new governor of Erbil, Omed Khoshnaw, was sworn in and the KRG announced that more than 350 billion IQD (\$240 million) will be set aside in the 2021 budget for investment projects across all four of Kurdistan's provinces.

Expressing his support for Kurdistan's youth and entrepreneurial spirit, Prime Minister Masrour Barzani addressed the wildly popular TEDx Nishtiman event that brought young people together to share ideas and experiences. The Prime Minister urged Kurdistan's youth not to give into cynicism or to think that we are prisoners of the past. He urged them to believe in themselves and to be part of the political debate and to bring in new ideas.

The Prime Minister and other Kurdish leaders bid farewell to Dr Roj Shaways, who died on February 15 after an illness. Dr Shaways was a highly respected leading figure as a peshmerga and public servant. He held several posts in the

This past month we were shocked and saddened by the rocket attack on Erbil by militias. The attack was an attempt to hit US and Coalition forces stationed at the city's airport and to undermine the stability of the Kurdistan Region. This rare incident outraged Kurdistan, Iraq and the international community, with all sides condemning the attack which killed two people and injured over a dozen. Following the attack, US Secretary Tony Blinken called KRG Prime Minister Masrour Barzani to discuss the incident and pledge America's support for all efforts to investigate and hold accountable those responsible. An investigation was launched by the KRG, the Iraqi government and the United States.

Several members of Congress also expressed their outrage at the rocket attack and support for US airstrikes that took place in response to this and other recent assaults in Iraq on US facilities.

Kurdistan Region and Iraq, including KRG Prime Minister and Vice President of Iraq. He will be greatly missed.

Here in Washington DC, our Mission has continued our outreach to the Kurdistan-American community across the United States, including the Chaldeans in Michigan and Yezidis in Nebraska and elsewhere. We have also held meetings with members of the US Congress and officials in the new Biden Administration. I also had the pleasure of meeting with Nashville Mayor John Cooper last week to thank him for his embrace of the Kurdish-American community in his city, which is often referred to as Little Kurdistan.

Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman
Representative to the United States
Kurdistan Regional Government



KRG envoy answers questions from Kansas City International Relations Council members

On Wednesday, February 24, Representative Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman was the guest of the Kansas City International Relations Council...

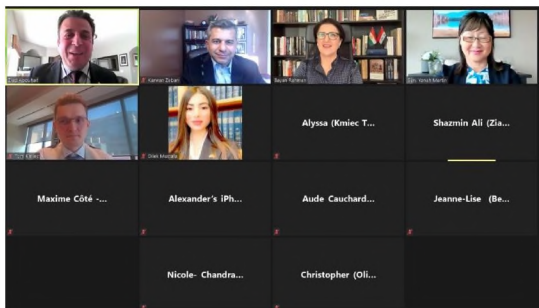
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Kurdistan envoy meets with senior advisor to UN team investigating ISIS crimes

Representative Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman this week had a productive meeting with Thomas Lynch, the Senior Advisor to the UN team investigating...

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Kurdistan Representative briefs members of the Canadian parliament

On Thursday, February 25, Representative Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman held a virtual meeting with members of the Canadian parliament to update them on the political...

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Representative Abdul Rahman discusses developments with Biden Administration officials

Representative Bayan Abdul Rahman had virtual meetings with several officials from the US State Department, Department of Defense, and White House...

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KRG envoy highlights genocide and plight of displaced Yazidis and Christians at various forums

Representative Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman, taking part at various forums this month, has highlighted the plight of displaced Yazidis, Christians, and other...

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Kurdistan Region Government's COVID-19 Travel Restrictions

The Kurdistan Regional Government has placed a travel ban to 21 countries, effective on January 15, 2021, to control the spread of coronavirus's new variant...

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KRG Representative and Nashville Mayor praise vibrant Kurdish-American community

On Tuesday, February 23, Representative Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman and John Cooper, the Mayor of Nashville, Tennessee, had a virtual meeting in...

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KRG Representative and IMF Iraq Mission Chief discuss Kurdistan's economy

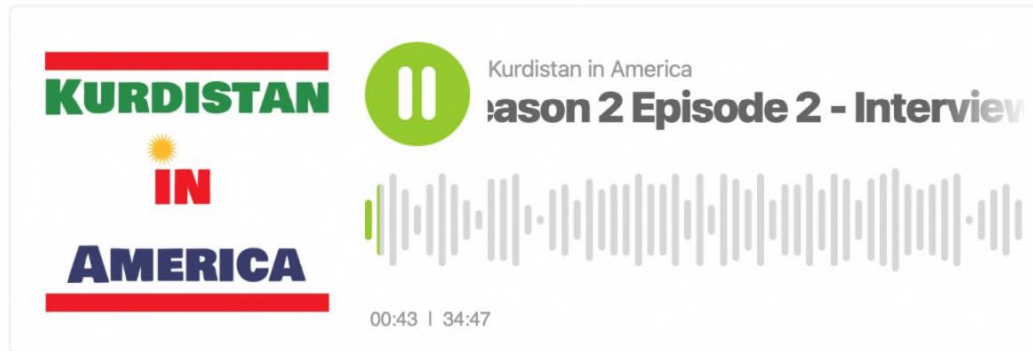
Representative Bayan Sami Abdul Rahman and Tokhir Mirzoev, the Mission Chief for Iraq at the International Monetary Fund, this week discussed Kurdistan's...

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FEBRUARY 27, 2021

KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATION IN THE UNITED STATES



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KRG Representation's Quarterly Humanitarian Bulletin

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President Barzani meets with the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq

Kurdistan Region President Nechirvan Barzani received the United States' Ambassador to Iraq, Mr. Matthew Tueller in Erbil today. Discussions focused on the latest security and political developments in...

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President Barzani condemns Erbil terrorist rocket attack

The President of the Kurdistan Region Nechirvan Barzani issued a statement, strongly condemning the rocket attack that targeted Erbil on Monday. Below is the full statement: ERBIL, Kurdistan Region, February 16, 2021 We strongly condemn last...

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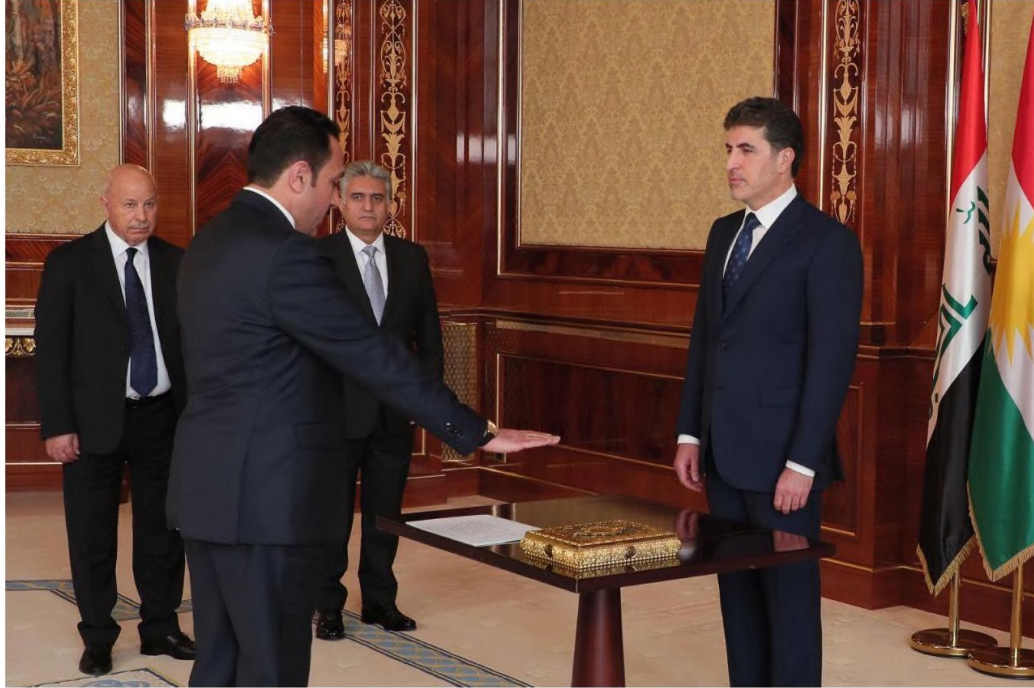


Plasschaert welcomes Barzani's role in Baghdad-Erbil talks

Kurdistan Region President Nechirvan Barzani met with the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative for Iraq, Ms. Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert. Ms. Plasschaert reiterated that President...

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Erbil's new Governor takes oath of office

Erbil, Kurdistan Region, February 18, 2021 The newly-elected Governor of Erbil, Mr. Omed Khoshnaw, was sworn in today and took the oath of office before the Kurdistan Region President Nechirvan Barzani. Mr. Khoshnaw is succeeding the late Dr....

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President Barzani receives Yezidi activist Nadia Murad

The President of the Kurdistan Region Nechirvan Barzani received Yezidi activist Ms. Nadia Murad. The President commended Ms. Murad's advocacy work for the Yezidi people and reaffirmed the Kurdistan...

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President's statement on the passing of Dr Roj Nuri Shawes

Honorable relatives, friends and comrades of Dr. Roj Nuri Shawes, It is with great

sadness that we learned of the passing of Dr. Roj Nuri Shawes, the Peshmarga commander, renowned politician and the...

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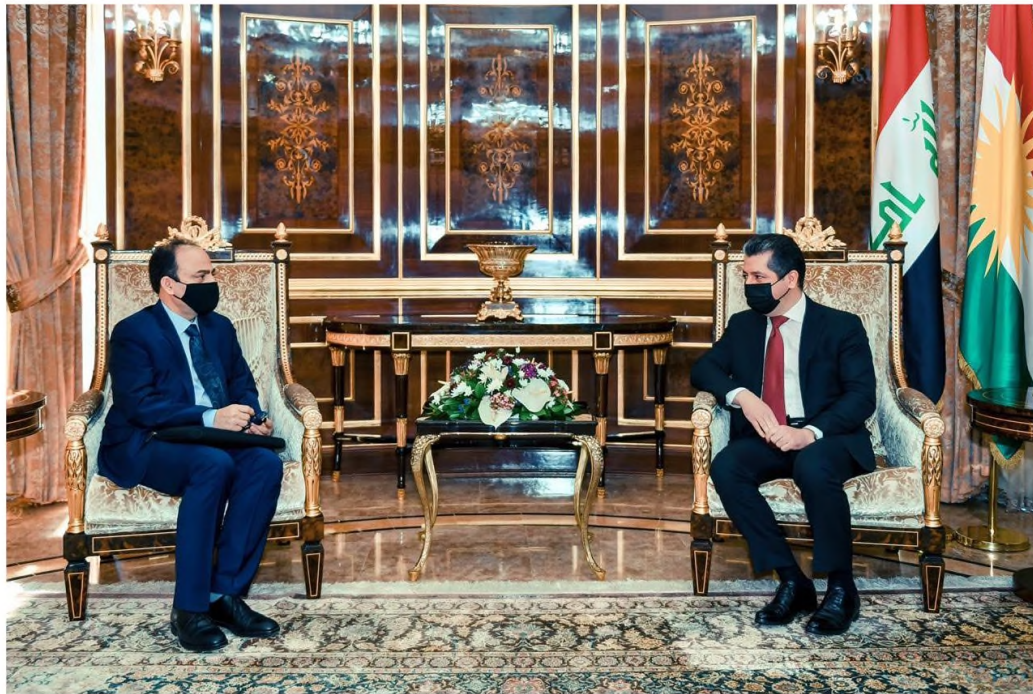


PM Masrour Barzani receives US Ambassador to Iraq

Prime Minister Masrour Barzani today received the US Ambassador to Iraq, Matthew Tuller, to discuss the situation in the country and the deepening of bilateral relations between the...

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PM Barzani receives prominent Kurdish leader Osman Baydemir

Prime Minister Masrour Barzani today welcomed well-known Kurdish politician Osman Baydemir. The meeting between the two officials highlighted the importance of unity between Kurdish...

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Readout of PM Barzani's call with US Secretary of State

Prime Minister Masrour Barzani spoke by phone today with US Secretary of State

Anthony Blinken about yesterday's rocket attack in Erbil.

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PM Masrour Barzani convenes Council of Ministers

Prime Minister Masrour Barzani today headed a meeting of the Council of Ministers to discuss recent developments with Iraq and ongoing efforts by the Kurdistan Regional Government.

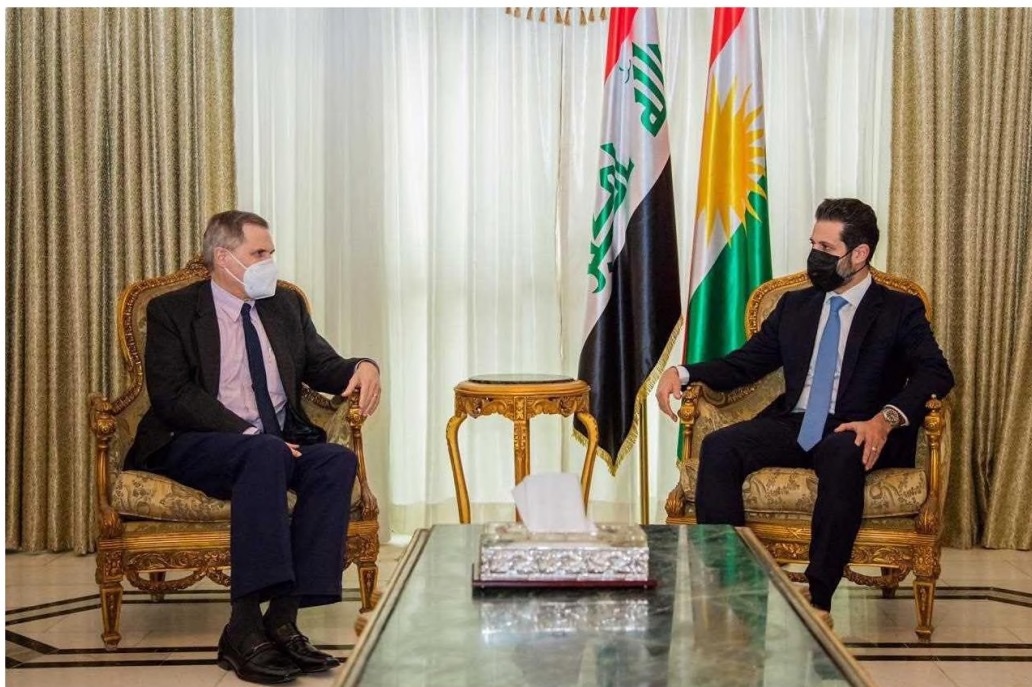
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Statement by PM Masrour Barzani on Dr. Rozh Shawais' passing

Prime Minister Masrour Barzani issued the statement below following the passing of Dr. Rozh Shawais. "It is with great sorrow that I received the news of the passing of a great...

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DPM Qubad Talabani meets with American Ambassador to Iraq

Deputy Prime Minister Qubad Talabani met with the United States Ambassador to

Iraq, Matthew Tueller, to discuss recent political and security developments in the region.

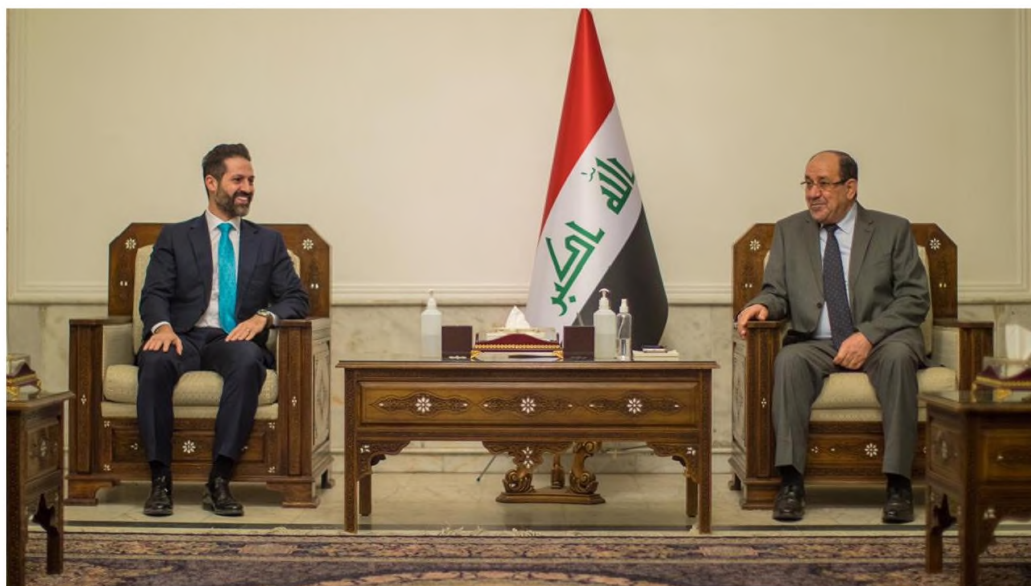
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DPM Qubad Talabani meets with Muhammad Al-Halbousi

The Kurdistan Regional Government high-level delegation leading negotiations with Baghdad, headed by Deputy Prime Minister Qubad Talabani, met with the Speaker of the Iraqi Council of Representatives, ...

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KRG Delegation meets with Nuri Al-Maliki

The Kurdistan Regional Government's high-level delegation leading negotiations with Baghdad, headed by Deputy Prime Minister Qubad Talabani, today met with head of the State of Law...

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Parliament sends best wishes to Yazidis on Khidr Elias feast

On the feast of Khidr Elias following the days of fasting, we convey our best wishes to Yazidis in Kurdistan, Iraq and around the world. On this holy occasion, we ask

God to help all the communities of Iraq and Kurdistan...

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Kurdistan Parliament's statement on rocket attacks on Erbil

Last night terrorists attacked with rockets several locations in Erbil, capital of the Kurdistan Region. On behalf of the Kurdistan Parliament, we condemn in the strongest terms these cowardly acts against Erbil International...

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Parliament pays final respects to former speaker Shawes

The Kurdistan Parliament on 15 February held a funeral ceremony for the late Dr. Rozh Nuri Shawes, a former speaker of the parliament, member of the KDP political bureau and veteran Peshmerga who held leading positions in...

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MPs look into status of ethnic and religious communities

Kurdistan Parliament Secretary Muna Kahveci on 10 February led a delegation of MPs on a visit to Duhok, Sheikhan and Al-Kosh to look closely into the welfare of the original ethnic and religious communities, to understand...

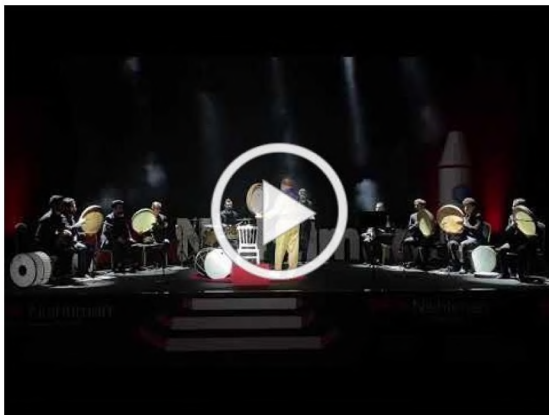
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Kurdistan in the Media



In an exclusive interview with FRANCE 24, Masrour Barzani, the prime minister of the Kurdistan region of Iraq, said the February 15, 2021 rocket attack on a US air base in the Kurdish capital of Erbil that claimed several lives was “definitely a terrorist attack”, and that a preliminary probe into the matter has given “a good indication of who was behind it”.



Prominent Kurdish musician Hazhar Zahawi performs at TEDx Nishtiman 2021 in Erbil

Norway's DNO buys ExxonMobil's stake in Kurdistan license amid spending boost

Norwegian oil and gas operator DNO has bought ExxonMobil's 32% stake in Baeshiqa license in Iraq's Kurdistan region amid plans to boost spending in...

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Popular Kurdish politician exiled from Turkey meets with Kurdistan Region PM in Erbil

Ministry of Health Kurdistan, UNFPA open COVID-19 isolation unit at Soran maternity hospital

The Ministry of Health of the Kurdistan Regional Government through the Directorate of Health in Erbil, with support from UNFPA opened a COVID...

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Yazidis have been forgotten during Covid. They need justice, jobs and a return home

Osman Baydemir, a prominent former lawmaker and mayor from Turkey's opposition Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), traveled to Erbil on Thursday...

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DTM: Urban Displacement in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

As displacement within Iraq becomes increasingly protracted for internally displaced persons (IDPs), further research is needed to understand its...

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Duhok's Christian villagers decry Turkish airstrikes

Christian villagers in Duhok province say sporadic Turkish airstrikes have deprived them of living a normal life, leading many to abandon their villages altogether.

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Kurds Warn of Growing Islamic State Capabilities in Iraq

The recent killing of Islamic State's top leader in Iraq should not be seen as a crippling sign for the terror group, which has in recent months received fresh...

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UAE's Dana Gas CEO says Iraq's federal government interested in its Kurdish gas

Iraq's federal government is interested in acquiring natural gas from an expansion project in the semi-autonomous Kurdish region in the north that is being carried

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Staring at the same four walls day after day, unable to find work, reunite with relatives, or send your children to school. The Covid pandemic has rendered this...

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The Kurds' Quest for Independence: 1920 – 2021

The Kurds are one of the world's largest peoples without a state, making up sizable minorities in Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. Their century-old quest for...

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KRG has no intention of closing down its displacement camps: JCC

The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has "no intention whatsoever" of closing down displacement camps under its control in the near future, a KRG...

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Pope to hold mass in Erbil during visit to Iraq, Kurdistan Region

Pope Francis will hold mass in Erbil's Franso Hariri Stadium on March 7 during a visit to Iraq and the Kurdistan Region, the Vatican has confirmed. The papal visit is the first of its kind to Iraq.

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Hopelessness, continued displacement lead to spike in suicides among Yezidis: KRG

According to 2021 Quarterly Humanitarian Bulletin of the Kurdistan Regional Government's (KRG) representation in the United States...

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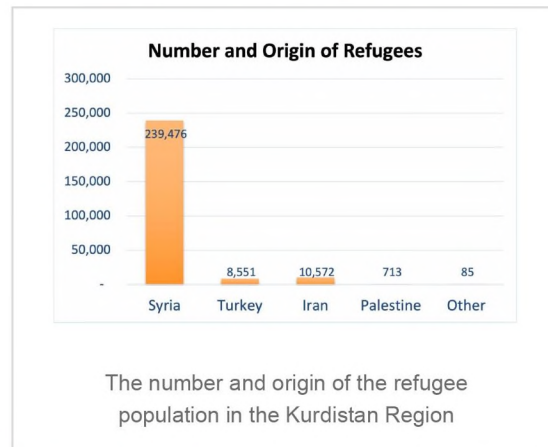
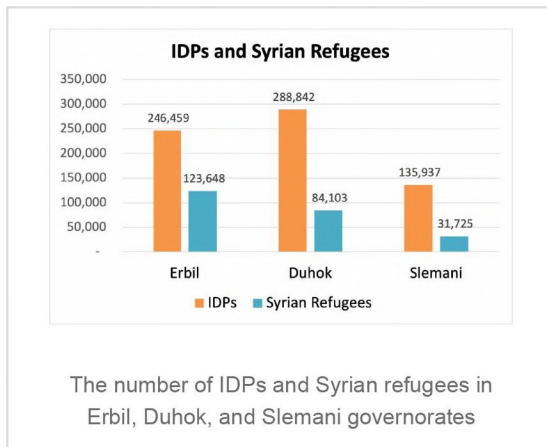
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Coronavirus Dashboard



KRG's Joint Crisis Coordination Center

Meanwhile, the number of COVID-19 cases in the Kurdistan Region has reached 107,933 confirmed cases across Erbil, Slemani, Duhok, and Halabja governorates, of which 103,011 have recovered, and 3,508 have died. A new COVID-19 variant was detected in the Kurdistan Region's Duhok province on January 13 from a person who had returned from the United Kingdom. As of February 21, the health authorities have detected 19 cases of the UK-mutated COVID-19 in the Kurdistan Region. Consequently, the KRG has

placed a travel ban to 21 countries, effective on January 15, 2021, to control the spread of coronavirus's new variant to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Accordingly, Iraqi nationals cannot travel from the Kurdistan Region to Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, India, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, the UK, the USA, Zambia, and the Netherlands. Additionally, foreign nationals coming from the countries mentioned above will not be allowed to enter the Kurdistan Region, except diplomats and official delegations, the staff of United Nations (UN) organizations, International Organizations, and the global coalition against the Islamic State (ISIS). However, the exempted categories must be approved by the Kurdistan Regional Government Ministry of Interior first before traveling.

Baghdad's continued withholding of the KRG's share of the federal budget, coupled with the pandemic and the deep economic recession, have caused hardship to the local population and displaced people inside the Kurdistan Region and the disputed territories. The cost of providing essential services to nearly 1 million IDPs and refugees in Kurdistan is about \$871 million per year, \$72 million per month, and \$2.4 million per day. The KRG has been shouldering about 70% of the costs, but the current economic situation has constrained KRG's ability to appropriately meet the IDPs' and refugees' needs. The KRG calls on the United States and the international community to provide greater assistance during this crisis to adequately maintain the well-being, security, and stability of the displaced people.

To learn more about the humanitarian situation or how you can help support vulnerable communities in Kurdistan, please contact Delovan Barwari, Director of Public and Humanitarian Affairs at the KRG Representation in the United States: delovan.barwari@us.gov.krd.

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Bearing Witness and Learning the Lessons from the Halabja Genocide



Bearing Witness and Learning the Lessons from the Halabja Genocide

When

Tuesday, March 16, 11am EST

Where Virtual Event

On March 16, 1988, Iraqi aircraft attacked the city of Halabja with chemical weapons. Children were lost in the chaos that followed, families were decimated as 5,000 people died and thousands more were injured with poison gas.

This genocide was one of many atrocities committed against the people of Kurdistan by the dictator Saddam Hussein. During his rule, 182,000 Kurds were killed in the Anfal genocide campaign; 8,000 Barzani men and boys were murdered in 1983; thousands of Faylee Kurds disappeared, and thousands more were oppressed, abused, and killed by the Ba'athist regime. The genocide also saw the destruction of 4,500 villages and the razing of cities such as Qala Diza, tearing at the fabric of Kurdish society and economy.

The suffering of the people of Halabja has come to symbolize all of the atrocities committed against the people of Kurdistan. In Iraq, violence and genocide is cyclical, and in 2014 we again witnessed a genocide against the Yezidis, Christians and others in Nineveh.

Join us on Tuesday, March 16th at 11 am EST in a virtual event to commemorate the 33rd anniversary of the Halabja genocide and to discuss the lessons learned from that tragedy. Save the date and look out for future emails on how to register and take part in the event.

ئەم رۆژە لە رۆژمێرە کەت دیاری بکە

شایەتەتە، و وانە بو فۆرەبون لە تاوانی جینۆسایدی هەلەبجەو

کە ی

سێشەممە، ١٦ ی ئازاری ٢٠٢١، ١١ ی پێش نیوەرۆ بە کاتی ئیست کۆست

لە کوی

ئۆنلاین

رۆژی ١٦ ی ئازاری ١٩٨٨ فۆرەکانی عێراق بۆردومانی شاری هەلەبجەیان بە چەکی کیمیایی کرد. شار شلەژا، و مندالان لە دایکوباییان دایران، خیزانەکان لیکتر ونبوون، و

پنج هزار کەس شەهید و هەزارانی تریش بریندار بوون بە گازی کیمیایی

جینۆسایدە کە یەکیکە لەو تاوانە قێزەوانانە کە لە دژی گەلی کوردستان ئەنجام درا لە لایەن سەدام حەسینی دیکتاتۆرەو، کە لە ماوەی حوکمیدا ١٨٢٠٠٠ کورد کوژران لە هەلمەتی بەدناوی ئەنفالدا، ٨٠٠٠ بارزانی لە ١٩٨٣ کۆمەڵکوژ کران، هەزاران فەیلی یێسەرۆشوین کران و هەزارانی تریش کوژران و برینداربوون و چەوسانەو لە لایەن رژیمی بەعسەو. لە جینۆسایدەکاندا هەروەها ٤٥٠٠٠ گوند لەگەڵ زەوی تەخت کران، وەك قەلادزە، بە مەبەستی تیزمەلکردنی تانپووی کۆمەڵایەتی و ئابووری گەلی کورد

نازارەکانی خەلکی هەلبەجە بوو بە رەمز بۆ سەرچەم ئەو جینۆساید و تاوانە قێزەوانانە کە دژی گەلی کوردستان ئەنجام درا. بە داخەو لە عێراق جینۆساید و زەبرۆزەنگ چەندبارە دەپیتەو، لە ٢٠١٤ جینۆساید پرووی دایەو و ئیزیدیەکان و کریستیان و خەلکی تر لە نەینەوا، کۆمەڵکوژ کران

تکایە لە رۆژی سێشەممە ١٦ ی نازار لە کاتژمێر ١١ ی پێش نیوهرۆ بە کاتی ئیست کۆست لەگەڵمان بە بۆ بەرزراگرتنی ٣٣ هەمین سالیادی قوربانیانی جینۆسایدی هەلبەجە و بۆ تاوتویکردنی ئەو وانانە لە تراژیدیایە فیری بووین: ئەم بەروارە لای خۆت هەلگرە و چاوهری بکە ئیمەیلی ترت بۆ بیست چۆن ناوی خۆت تۆمار بکەیت بۆ بەشداریی لە ئیفتینە کە

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