



Statement of The American University of Kurdistan's Board of Trustees

The American University of Kurdistan

June 2, 2024

The Board of Trustees of the American University of Kurdistan, chaired by His Excellency Masrour Barzani, convened on June 2, 2024. The Chairman welcomed the Trustees and highlighted the significance of the Graduation Ceremony taking place later that evening. He provided an update on the political, economic, and security landscape in Iraq, noting improved stability through cooperation with national and regional partners and the government's ongoing efforts in economic diversification and digital transformation.

The Chairman briefed the Board on the "My Account" digital payment system, intended to curb money laundering and modernize the economy by transitioning from cash dependency to digital transactions. He expressed concern regarding a recent decision limiting participation in the program to public banks and emphasized efforts to reverse the ruling. He reiterated AUK's responsibility to prepare students for a technology driven future through programs aligned with artificial intelligence, digital systems, and emerging global standards.

The Trustees received the report of the Facilities Committee. The Board approved the design of the Men's Residence Hall, contingent upon revisions to room layouts and material enhancements, and approved moving forward with the design of the Sports Facilities once the bill of quantity is finalized. The Academic and Student Affairs Committee presented its recommendations. After a thorough review process, the Board unanimously approved the appointment of Dr. Triona Croke as the new Provost of AUK. The Board also approved the conferral of degrees to 53 graduates, the promotions of Dr. Mustafa Amen and Mr. Ahmad Afara, and the establishment of Impact Hub Kurdistan at AUK. Additional approvals included the Freedom of Expression Policy, Student Attendance Policy, and the Teach Out Plan.

The Finance and Administration Committee presented several items for approval. The Board unanimously approved the AUK Budget for Fiscal Year 2024–2025, the Chart of Accounts Maintenance, and the Employee Grievance Policy.

The General Audit and Risk Committee presented the University's Financial Statement for Fiscal Year 2022–2023, prepared by Ernst & Young. The Board unanimously approved the financial statement. The Medical Program Workgroup presented options for establishing a medical school. Of the three proposed models, the Board determined that the most viable option is to build the medical school on AUK's campus while completing the partially constructed public hospital in Sumel/Tenahi. The Board directed the Administration to proceed with feasibility assessments and to consult with NECHE regarding program duration, with attention to U.S. standards and existing six year frameworks.

The Trusteeship Committee reported the approval of several items, including the renewal of Dr. Azad Najar's Board membership, membership assignments for Dr. Ronald Margolin, the annual Board Meetings Calendar, the Governance Effectiveness Report, and updated charters for all standing committees.

The Communication Committee delivered its report focused on restructuring Advancement operations following the departure of the Vice President of Advancement. The Board agreed that fundraising responsibilities should be shared between the President and the Board Secretary, with Advancement and Communications offices working collaboratively.

Under Other Business, the Chairman emphasized strengthening collaboration between AUK and the Kurdistan Innovation Institute to foster innovation and support the development of the private sector.



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He encouraged aligning AUK's academic programs with societal and labor market needs through more customized training programs and closer engagement with companies and governmental bodies. The Board stressed the importance of maintaining AUK's American style model of education and ensuring that graduates are prepared for both public and private sector opportunities.

Dr. Honar Issa,
Secretary of the Board of Trustees