



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

The American University of Kurdistan

June 6, 2022

The Board of Trustees of the American University of Kurdistan, chaired by His Excellency Masrour Barzani, convened on June 6, 2022. The Chairman welcomed all Trustees and expressed his appreciation for their continued dedication to the University. He commended the President for the strong performance of AUK and noted that the University is progressing toward becoming a leading institution in the Kurdistan Region and Iraq.

The Chairman briefed the Board on the current economic and political challenges facing the Kurdistan Region. He emphasized ongoing disputes with the Iraqi federal government, external pressures from neighboring countries, and the broader regional implications of these issues. He highlighted his government's initiatives to reform the education sector, including the creation of the Kurdistan Accrediting Association for Education, which will serve as the first accreditation body in Iraq. He also noted the importance of research, innovation, and economic diversification, especially in light of global challenges and the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on food security.

The Board received an update from the Facilities Committee on two meetings held earlier in the year. The conceptual design for campus expansion was reviewed, reflecting a projected student population of 3,000 by 2030. Proposed developments included a male residence hall, additional academic buildings, a Convention Center, an Amphitheatre, a Teaching Hospital, a Medical School, and sports facilities. While discussions were productive, the Board agreed that detailed prioritization and market studies are required before final approval. The Board unanimously approved the Vehicle Policy, Campus Visitors Policy, Activity and Facilities Usage Policy, and Lost and Found Policy.

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee presented its recommendations, all of which were unanimously approved. These included consolidating three business programs into a single Bachelor's in Business Administration with defined specializations, separating Electronics and Telecommunications Engineering into two distinct programs, approving the Academic Calendar for 2022-2023, and conferring degrees on 54 graduates. The Board also approved several academic and administrative policies, such as the Academic Integrity Policy, the Extracurricular Participation and Student Engagement Policy, the Hiring Policy, the Time and Attendance Policy, and the Sexual Harassment Policy. The Employee Code of Conduct Policy was postponed for revision.

The Trusteeship Committee presented several key items for approval. The Board unanimously elected His Excellency Masrour Barzani as Chairman for a five year term, renewed the terms of nine Trustees, appointed Dr. Dawood Atrushi as a new Trustee, and confirmed committee assignments for both Dr. Atrushi and Ambassador Khalilzad. The Committee also presented recommendations to strengthen governance practices, including more frequent committee meetings, improved communication between the administration and Board, expanded Trustee engagement in recruitment and employment outreach, enhanced fundraising involvement, and the establishment of an annual Board retreat.

The Finance Committee presented Revision 0 of the Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023. The Board unanimously approved the budget, along with the Salary Policy, the Inventory Management Policy, and the Travel Policy.

The Advancement Committee provided updates on its activities and recommended the approval of the Gift Acceptance Policy, which the Board unanimously approved.

In other business, the Board approved revisions to the Policy Management framework. A recommendation to add the President to the Audit Committee was not approved. The Board also discussed commemorating the late Ambassador John Menzies, former President of AUK, and requested that the administration propose suitable options. The Chairman encouraged the University to advance sustainable campus initiatives, including integrating solar technology and exploring the possibility of establishing AUK as the first "green campus" in Kurdistan and Iraq. The Board also discussed future academic opportunities in the agricultural sector to support economic diversification.

Dr. Honar Issa,
Secretary of the Board of Trustees