

Qubad Talabani

Summary

Qubad Talabani is the deputy prime minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and a member of the Leadership Council of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). He has become an influential member of the PUK since his late father Jalal Talabani, then Iraqi president and party leader, suffered a stroke in December 2012. Qubad soon became the face of the PUK and the Talabani family inside the KRG. He was born on 21 July 1977.

Education

Diploma in Motor Vehicle Engineering at Carshalton College, London. Date unknown

Degree in Mechanical Engineering at Kingston University, UK. Date unknown

Media

[Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)

Family

Married to American citizen Sherri Kraham Talabani. Reports sometimes highlight that she is Jewish. She is the co-founder of the Seed Foundation, which promotes social, educational and economic developments in the Kurdistan Region. The couple have two children.

Father: Jalal Talabani (deceased), PUK co-founder and former president of Iraq

Mother: Hero Ibrahim Ahmad, PUK official and de facto party leader between 2013 and 2019

Brother: Bafel Talabani, PUK co-leader

Cousin: PUK co-leader Lahur Talabani

Languages

Kurdish (mother tongue) and English

Alternative names, spellings

Qubad Jalal Husamaddin Talabani

Timeline

2020, 3 February

Talabani's office in a [statement](#) rejects a report by Kurdish NRT TV, which alleges that Talabani receives monthly "hush money" from the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) in return for not sharing information about KRG oil revenues with his party and authorities in Sulaimaniyah. His office threatens legal action, but no suit is confirmed in following months

2020, 30 January

Meets a Russian delegation headed by the deputy foreign minister and special presidential representative for the Middle East and Africa, Mikhail Bogdanov. They discuss de-escalating tensions in Iraq and a peaceful solution to the war in Syria that protects Kurdish rights

2020, 5 January

Attends a funeral ceremony at the Iranian consulate in Sulaimaniyah held to commemorate senior Iranian military commander General Qassem Soleimani, who was killed in a US drone strike in Baghdad two days earlier

2019, 21 December

[Elected Leadership Council member](#) at the PUK's fourth conference

2019, 10 November

Sworn in for second term as as KRG deputy prime minister

2019, 10 October

Urges the international community to halt Turkish attacks on Syrian Kurdish-led forces, saying military offensives would not break the will of the Kurds. KRG officials rarely comment on Turkish attacks on Syrian Kurds

2018, 8 December

Makes efforts to "normalize" PUK-Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) relations which had been strained by the appointment of PUK official Barham Salih as Iraq's president on 2 October. The KDP saw the appointment as a stab in the back after bargaining for the post in Baghdad

2018, 30 September

Leads the PUK electoral list in the Kurdistan Region elections. The PUK regains its place as the second largest party in the region in the polls. He reportedly wins most votes as a single parliamentary candidate, but does not assume the post of a lawmaker

2018, 12 August

Appears in an entertainment programme on Net TV to talk about his personal life and work routine, as a spike in his social media activities is observed ahead of the Kurdistan Region parliamentary election

2018, 1 August

Some PUK officials express disappointment at the exclusion of Talabani from a KRG delegation in Baghdad headed by PM Nechirvan Barzani for negotiations with the Iraqi government

2017, 10 December

Tells his party's media that the time is ripe for the PUK and the government to take a strong stand against Kurdish officials involved in corruption, smuggling and killing of journalists. His comments are interpreted as a verbal attack against PUK Commander Mahmoud Sangawi. The commander responds by saying that Talabani is a "weak" deputy PM "used" as a tool to serve the interests of the KDP in the cabinet

2017, 16 October

Does not respond to accusations of betrayal and treason directed at his party by KDP officials and their media following deadly clashes between Iraqi troops and peshmerga forces in Kirkuk and other disputed areas during the federal takeover. His silence continues despite continuing allegations by the KDP and its media apparatus. They claim that the PUK handed over most of the disputed territories in a deal struck behind the backs of the KDP and other Kurdish parties

2017, 3 October

His father Jalal Talabani – PUK co-founder and Iraqi president – dies aged 83. He gives a speech on behalf of the Talabani family three days later during a state funeral

2017, 25 September

Casts ballot in the Kurdish independence referendum and votes for secession

2017, 23 September

In an op-ed in the Washington Post he argues that the Kurds in Iraq deserve secession to establish an independent state

2017, 1 June

Accompanies PM Nechirvan Barzani at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum to discuss Moscow-Erbil energy ties with Russian government officials

2016, 9 December

Suggests Iraq is a “failed state” in interviews with British media and that the Kurdistan Region would negotiate parting ways for independence

2016, 10 October

At an inaugural event in Erbil with KRG PM, launches the biometric system of registration to digitize the data of 1.3 million KRG employees as part of a reform initiative against “ghost workers” and others on double salaries. He oversees the design and the registration process, with local media considering it his landmark task in the cabinet. The move does not yield a tangible outcome during the cabinet’s lifetime

2015, 30 April

Faces detention in Germany after a court in Hamburg issues an arrest warrant for him for having allegedly threatened German-Kurdish businessman Aram Abdul-Rahman, according to German newspaper Süddeutsche Zeitung and public radio Norddeutscher Rundfunk. English-language Kurdish media relay the news. His office rejects the accusations. No more has since been reported about the case

2014, 6 November

In a speech to a conference of the Middle East Research Centre held in Erbil on ties with Baghdad, he argues for a decentralized Iraq where the Kurdistan Region and every other province would have their own budget and manage their own natural resources, while making contributions to fund the central government

2014, 11 August

In media interviews he says that the Kurds hope to see PM Nouri Al-Maliki step down per the constitution, blaming the PM for the country’s disintegration amid the IS onslaught

2014, 7 July

Visits Mosul dam exposing IS propoganda that claimed the group had captured the strategic site in a photoshopped picture. Talabani’s photo at the dam widely circulates on social media and online publications as a counterweight against the IS propoganda

2014, 18 June

Sworn in as KRG deputy PM

2014, 16 June

Tells international media in separate interviews that Iraq is disintegrating under IS attacks and links the rise of the jihadist group to poor governance

2013, 11 October

Denies media reports that he has been offered the post of the PUK secretary-general to replace his ailing father as Kurdish media continues to speculate about Jalal Talabani's successor

2012, September

Takes office as the head of the KRG's department of coordination and follow-up to oversee inter-ministerial coordination of the government which was formed five months earlier

2012, January

Leaves the post of KRG representative in the US six months after assuming the position

2011, June

From Washington, he blames opposition for February anti-government protests in Sulaimaniyah province, which the KRG clamped down on in a heavy-handed crackdown. He maintains that the KRG cannot be compared with dictatorial governments in Egypt and Tunisia because 60 per cent of voters had elected the Kurdish ruling parties that formed the government. Accuses opposition of instigating violent protests because of their failure at the ballot boxes

2006, October

Appointed as the KRG's representative to the US after the formation of the first unified cabinet in over a decade by the KDP and the PUK

2004, October

Appointed as the representative of the PUK's Sulaimaniyah-based KRG administration to the US

2003

Returns to the Kurdistan Region and works for one year as a foreign relations officer of the PUK

2000, January

Works in Washington as special assistance officer to Barham Salih, the PUK representative to the US

1977, 21 July

Born in Damascus, Syria. Not much is known about his childhood except that he later grew up in London, where he and his elder brother Bafel were raised by their maternal grandparents