



Mission

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

European Union - Brussels

Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the European Union

February, 2021

The first Saudi Vaccine against COVID-19



Message from the Ambassador
**HE Saad Bin
Mohammed Al-arify**

*Welcome to the monthly newsletter of the Mission
of Saudi Arabia to the European Union*



Mission

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

European Union - Brussels

*In this
edition*



I would like to extend you a very warm welcome to our Newsletter. Needless to say, the year 2020 was a year of challenges for the entire world. COVID-19 spread throughout the world in the blink of an eye and is still raging in many countries and regions.

Last year, new normality was established. The new behavioural patterns include home office and online meetings. The technologies of today have drastically changed our societies and lives. But also 2020 brought us the opportunity to work together in solidarity to stop the virus and its consequences.

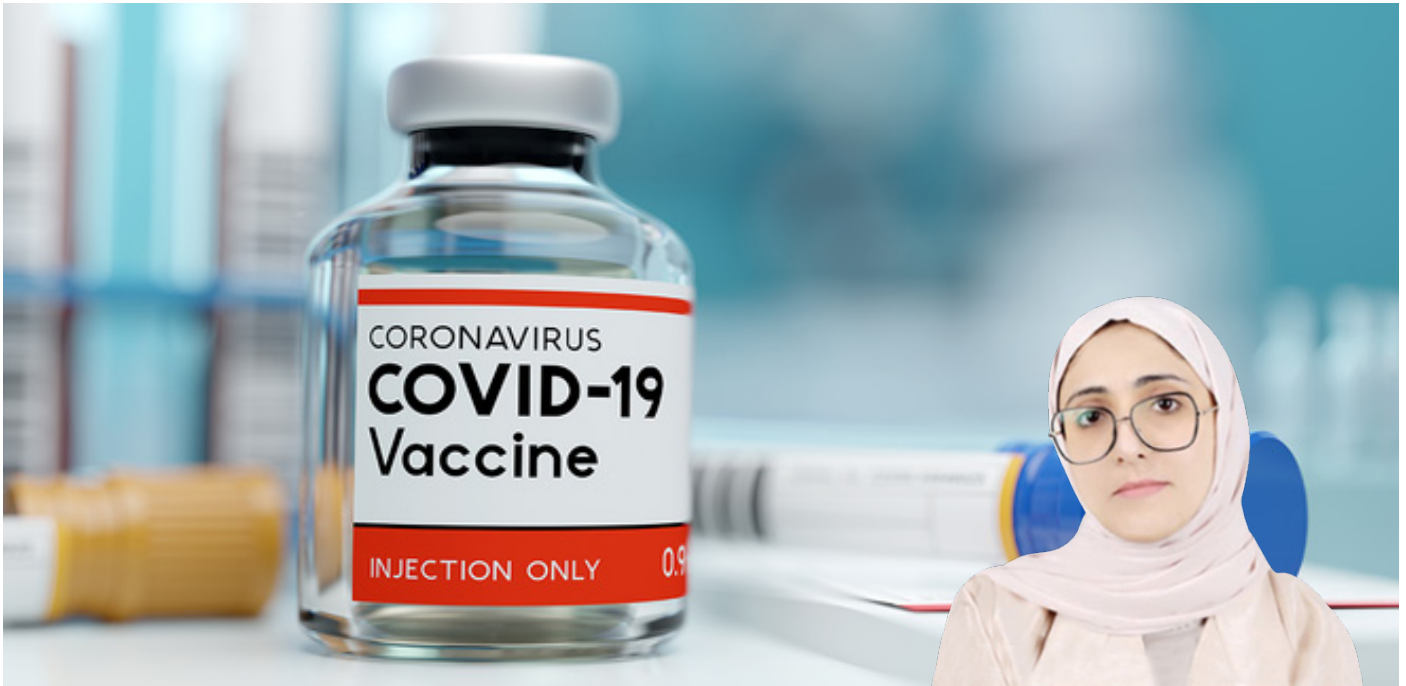
From our side, we seek to continue working with the EU to strengthen our bilateral engagement and cooperation in different areas, including the fight against climate change, the promotion of the digital agenda, and to encourage a more sustainable economy.

On behalf of the Mission of Saudi Arabia to the European Union, we are delighted to have the opportunity of being in touch with you.

**Warm Regards,
HE Saad Bin Mohammed Al-arify**

- » The first Saudi Vaccine against **COVID-19**
- » The **AIUla** Project
- » **Artificial intelligence** working for human health
- » Developing interconnectivity with **climate responsibility**
- » **The Line**, a revolution in urban living
- » Who said **soccer** is not for **women**?
- » **Future Investment Initiative**
- » Faces of Saudi Arabia - **Ms Sarah Al-Suhaimi**
- » **41st** GCC Summit

The first Saudi Vaccine against COVID-19



The Institute for Research & Medical Consultations (IRMC) affiliated to Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University (IAU) in the Eastern Region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia succeeded in inventing the first Saudi vaccine against COVID-19 under the leadership of Dr. Iman Almansour.

The development of SARS-CoV-2 vaccine candidates encoding the viral spike (S) gene generated using plasmid (P)DNA technology, the researchers demonstrated that eliciting of S-specific antibodies in experimental animals after three doses were successful and promising, the magnitude of binding and neutralizing antibody response with three doses of synthetic codon-optimizing, full-length S (S.opt. FL) generated robust immune responses.

Dr. Iman Almansour, who is an Assistant Professor at IAU, Ph.D. from the University

of Massachusetts, confirmed that the invention of this vaccine as the first Saudi vaccine against COVID-19 became a result of one of the research strategic projects funded by the Saudi Ministry of Education in its endeavours and initiatives to combat COVID-19.

[Click here for more information](#)

The AlUla Project



The AlUla project will develop an archaeological, cultural and touristic complex - an open-air living museum - in a region as vast as Belgium. This major investment aims to make the AlUla region the Kingdom's cultural capital.

The AlUla project sets out historic cooperation between France and Saudi Arabia, which aims to strengthen Saudi cultural and historic outreach and make the AlUla region a world-class destination, appreciated by visitors from around the globe.

Following a bilateral agreement signed on 10 April 2018 at the Elysee Palace, the French Agency Afalula was founded in Paris in July 2018 to support Saudi Arabia in the economic, touristic and cultural development of AlUla.

The Agency's mission is to mobilize the full breadth of French expertise (cultural engineering, archaeology, architecture and

urban planning, agriculture and botany, tourism, education, security, water and sustainable environment management) and to support, within a co-construction framework, its Saudi partner, The Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU), located in Riyadh and AlUla. Founded in July 2017 and headed by H.R.H. Crown Prince of the Kingdom Mohammed bin Salman, the RCU aims at protecting and developing AlUla and promoting its cultural and natural heritage, and its population.

Through culture and nature, the project will be dedicated to offering an authentic and sensory touristic experience faithful to the traditions of hospitality in the Arab World. AlUla is the flagship project in terms of sustainable development, focused on the absolute preservation of the environment, respectful of history, and inclusive of local populations.

[Click here for more information](#)

Artificial intelligence working for human health



The Saudi Data and Artificial Intelligence Authority (SDAIA) and the Netherlands-headquartered company Royal Philips have entered a public-private partnership to incorporate Artificial Intelligence (AI) into the Kingdom's healthcare system.

On 8 February 2021, the SDAIA announced it has partnered with Royal Philips, a global leader in health technology, to further support Saudi Arabia's goal of becoming a leader in driving AI in healthcare. The Memorandum of Understanding between Philips and the SDAIA, which underpins the partnership, is in line with the Kingdom's Vision 2030 blueprint for diversifying the economy and enhancing public service sectors, including healthcare, by employing the most advanced technologies available.

The joint effort will create an AI ecosystem that incorporates education, science and technology, supported by knowledge sharing and worldwide collaborations. Philips combines AI with in-depth knowledge of clinical and operational context to develop integrated solutions that improve the performance and productivity of healthcare systems. The collaboration, which includes a scientific exchange program and investment in local training, aims to empower Saudi Arabia's data scientists and healthcare professionals with the latest health technologies, enabling them to pass on the benefits of AI in healthcare to the Kingdom's citizens, making Saudi Arabia one of the world's most technologically advanced countries.

[Click here for more information](#)



Developing interconnectivity with climate responsibility

Saudi Arabia is working on comprehensively enhance the interconnectivity of the kingdom and the development of major rail and metro projects, in line with its Vision 2030.

In alignment with the kingdom's overall growth and response to the ever-increasing public demand for the expansion of land transportation services, Saudi Arabia has continuously reiterated its commitment to developing an additional 10,000km of rail and metro by 2030.

A key factor in this commitment is the country's ambition to lead the way in reducing transport emissions, relieving traffic congestion, improving residents' health and quality of life, and progressively decarbonising rail transit in the Middle East.

At the forefront of the investment in rail transport is the Riyadh Metro: the largest single-phase metro system project ever launched in the world.

[Click here for more information](#)



The Line, a revolution in urban living



His Royal Highness Mohammed bin Salman, Crown Prince and Chairman of the NEOM Company Board of Directors, announced on January 10, 2021, The Line, a revolution in urban living at NEOM, and a blueprint for how people and planet can co-exist in harmony.

The Line, a 170km belt of hyper-connected future communities, without cars and roads and built around nature, is a direct response to some of the most pressing challenges facing humanity today such as legacy infrastructure, pollution, traffic, and human congestion.

A cornerstone of Saudi Vision 2030 and an economic engine for the Kingdom, it will drive diversification and aims to contribute 380,000 jobs of the future and SAR180 billion (USD48 bn) to domestic GDP by 2030. A city of a mil-

lion residents that preserves 95% of nature within NEOM, with zero cars, zero streets and zero carbon emissions.”

The Line will comprise carbon-positive urban developments powered by 100% clean energy, providing pollution-free, healthier and more sustainable environments for residents. Mixed-use communities will be built around nature, instead of over it.

Construction of The Line will commence in Q1 of 2021.

[Click here for more information](#)

Who said soccer is not for women?



إدارة تطوير كرة القدم النسائية
Women's Football Department



On January 2021, the Referees Committee of the Saudi Football Association, in cooperation with the Women's Football Development Department, approved 63 female referees to work under the federation's umbrella.



Immediately after the referees' approval, the Referees Committee held a workshop with the new referees approved through the Zoom app, chaired by Youssef Mirza, Vice President of the Referees Committee and in the presence of the Director of the Women's Football Development Department, Lamia Bhayan, and Dalia Al-Obeikan, the official in charge of the referees in the administration.

At the end of the workshop, the Director of the Women's Football Development Department congratulated the new referees on their accreditation under the umbrella of the Federation, wishing them continued success in their arbitration journey in future women's football competitions.

[Click here for more information](#)

Future Investment Initiative



The Future Investment Institute hosted the Fourth Edition of the Future Investment Initiative (FII), a multi-hub conference held under the theme of “The Neo-Renaissance” that engaged leaders, investors and policymakers as they reimagined the global economy amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

The conference was held in Riyadh from January 27-28, 2021, with speakers joining physically and virtually from the FII satellites in New York, Paris, Beijing and Mumbai. The two-day conference saw over 150 leaders, investors, tech pioneers and policy makers connect in a new extended reality conference format.

The Fourth Edition of the FII closed with an exceptional day of prominent speakers -- including His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman -- who discussed urban development and advances in Artificial Intelligence.

More than 4 million people watched online as speakers provided their insight into how the global community can work together to


bring about a Neo-Renaissance and fuel a re-birth. This pandemic showed the real urgency to move beyond the status quo and cooperate to create a positive impact on humanity.

Conversations focused on how to enhance the end-to-end consumer journey through innovative tech solutions and digitisation. The plenary sessions focused on how the pandemic has accelerated the pace of change in frontier technologies.

The FII Institute signed Memorandums of Understanding to drive the not-for-profit foundation’s mission forward, including with Tadawul to cooperate on Environmental, Social and Governance and with KAUST to cooperate on research and events that facilitate access to science. The Institute also signed a letter of intent with the African Continental Free Trade Area and OriginAll to develop a technology to protect nations from counterfeit and illicitly traded products.

[Click here for more information](#)

Faces of Saudi Arabia

A close-up portrait of Ms Sarah Al-Suhaimi, a woman with dark hair, wearing a black hijab and a black garment. She is smiling warmly at the camera. The background is a plain, light grey color.

Ms Sarah Al-Suhaimi

Ms Al Suhaimi is the chairperson of Tadawul, the Middle East's largest stock exchange. Last year the exchange saw the listing of the world's largest company, Saudi Aramco at a value of \$1.7 trillion.



She has also been the CEO of NCB Capital since March 2014 and a member of the company's Board of Directors. Since then she has played a pivotal role in restructuring NCB Capital, leading to growth, product development and major technological advances for the company and its clients.

Previously, she led the asset and wealth Management Division at Jadwa Investment Company, where she was also the Chief Investment Officer and a member of the Jadwa Management committee. Before that, she was a member of the Asset Management team and Investment Management at Samba Capital.

On the Academic aspect, Sarah received a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting with Honors from King Saud University, and a certificate of Public Administration Executive Program from Harvard Business School.

[Click here for more information](#)



41st GCC Summit



The 41st Summit of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC), was held on January 2021 in Al-Ula, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with the participation of Their Highnesses and Excellencies heads of the delegations.

Through the “Al-Ula Declaration”, the GCC affirms the commitment of the Member States to achieve coordination and integration between the Member States in all fields to eventually reach a union of states, and to achieve security, peace, stability, and prosperity in the region by working as a single, unified economic and political group.

The GCC recognized that the world’s answers to the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have demonstrated what can be achieved when the global community works together. The Member States will continue strengthening the regional and international role of the GCC by unifying policy and developing

strategic partnerships between the GCC and other states, groups, regional organizations, and international organizations in the interest of serving common goals.

Additionally, the Cooperation Council celebrated the honest efforts by the late Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah of ending the differences between the member countries. “This summit sends a message to the entire world that no matter how much disagreements are there in one house, it takes wisdom to overcome all these and take the region to a safety land,” said Foreign Minister Prince Faisal Bin Farhan in a joint press conference with the GCC Secretary-General Dr Nayef Al-Hajraf at the end of the summit.

[Click here for more information](#)

