



# SAUDI ARABIA IN FOCUS

MONTHLY UPDATE | Saudi Mission to the EU

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From the Ambassador

Congratulations for the Holy Month of Ramadan, the month of mercy and forgiveness. Wishing all Muslims around the world and the Muslim communities in the EU, **Ramadan Mubarak** filled with peace and prosperity.

April marked the Europe Celebration month in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Throughout the month, many diplomatic representations of European countries, as well as the EU Residence in Riyadh, opened their doors for Saudi visitors in a series of events that highlighted the deepening of the relationship and cultural exchange between the Kingdom and the European Union.

At the same time, in Brussels, the EU-Saudi bond has become even stronger through a succession of productive meetings with high-profile officials from EU institutions. Significant progress has been achieved in areas where our interests and perspectives are specially aligned, such as cooperation in the areas of mobility, humanitarian aid and combatting terrorism.

While the European Union prepares for the **2019 Parliamentary elections**, one of the most frequently questions asked to the candidates has been "what is your vision for the future of Europe?" The answers to this may vary - however, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has a bold plan for its own future: the ambitious **Vision 2030**, in which solid, healthy Saudi-EU cooperation features as one of the pillars sustaining our common future.

Saad bin Mohammad Alarify

Head of the Saudi Mission to the European Union



## FINANCIAL SECTOR CONFERENCE 2019

This April, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia hosted the most prominent event for the financial sector in the region.

The Financial Sector Conference 2019, held by the Ministry of Finance and Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority (SAMA), received more than three thousand delegates from local, regional and global stakeholders - international institutions, leading globally-recognized consultancy and financial services firms, international rating agencies, financial professionals and experts in investment, stock markets, funding and insurance.



(AN photo/Ziyad Alarfaj)

The event showcased the sophistication of the Saudi financial market, attracting interest with topics as FinTech and Islamic finance. It also highlighted the stability of the Kingdom's financial sector and its internationally-recognized regulatory standards.

Under the patronage of King Salman and aligned with the Financial Sector Development Program of the **Vision 2030**, the conference marked an important milestone in the consolidation of Saudi financial sector as the largest and most important financial market in the Middle East.

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## VISION 2030 CONTINUES TO EMPOWER SAUDI WOMEN, EXPAND GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS



### Princess Reema Bandar Al-Saud appointment as Ambassador to the United States

Her Royal Highness Princess Reema bint Bandar bin Sultan has been appointed as ambassador of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques to the United States of America.

Saudi leadership expressed its utmost confidence in women's capabilities. The Kingdom trusts the princess to be the ideal person to further this prized partnership

Princess Reema has been a prominent figure at the Saudi General Sports Authority, and was instrumental in the inclusion of physical education for girls in Saudi schools.



*"While we continue to work for further progress and development in the Kingdom, we will continue to work with our partners in the United States to ensure the success of this transformation." - HRH Princess Reema Al-Saud*

### The first Arab astronaut leads the Kingdom's gaze upon the stars

Prince Sultan bin Salman, chairman of the board of directors of the Saudi Space Commission - and the first Saudi, Arab and Muslim to fly into outer space - has been shaping up the Saudi space program, gathering expertise and forming key partnerships with similar agencies in allied countries.

The Saudi Arabia National Space Agency will set the Kingdom on a path of autonomy to define its satellite and space policies, to better address the goal of peaceful exploration of the outer space, while also implementing a key pillar of the Kingdom's Vision 2030.

Prince Sultan visited the headquarters of the Russian space agency back in April. In a working session with director general Dmitry Rogozin, both sides reiterated the strategic importance of the relationship between the countries. They discussed possible investments in the space sector, as well as joint training programs and shared technological research.



HRH Prince Sultan bin Salman visits the Moscow headquarters of Russia's mission control center



HRH Prince Sultan bin Salman meets EU Ambassador Michele Cervone d'Urso

In May, the Saudi Space Commission received the head of the EU Delegation of the European External Action Service to Saudi Arabia, Ambassador Michele Cervone d'Urso. In the meeting, Prince Sultan and the Ambassador discussed scientific exchange and cooperation, especially in the fields of space exploration and communications, between the Kingdom and the EU.



The 9-year-old Najd Al-Maliki is the first gold medallist in the history of Judo for girls in Saudi Arabia. Little Najd won the gold medal for the under-10 category in the Tartao International Judo Competition, which brought more than 350 competitors from five countries to Saudi Arabia.

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Hind Al-Zahid's hard work and entrepreneurship have earned her important positions in Saudi business environment. Now, her passion for women empowerment has earned her the trust of Saudi leadership, with her appointment as undersecretary for Women Empowerment in the Ministry of Civil Service.



### Europe Day celebration in Riyadh

The celebration of the EU National day in Riyadh highlighted the expansion of the Saudi-EU close partnership in several areas, such as the Middle East peace process and regional development. Several Arab dignitaries and international diplomats, including HE Ambassador Saad Alarif, took the opportunity to exchange ideas on how Vision 2030 brings unique opportunities for alignment and cooperation between the Kingdom and the Europe.

## COMBATting TERRORISM & TERROR FINANCING



*“We have always stressed that terrorism has no religion, no homeland, no borders, and does not differentiate between one society and another.” – HE Dr. Albanyan, President of NAUSS*

The event laid the foundation for a network of education professionals and specialists in studies to combat extremist discourse and violence. It also showcased and compared best practices around the world in combating violence and extremism through education and restructuring of societal values through educational curricula. The OIC established, since 2017, the Sawt Al-Hikma (The Voice of Wisdom) Center, based in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, to counter deviant ideologies and to clarify the true picture of the teachings of Islam.

### Conference in Riyadh on the role of education in the prevention of extremism and terrorism

In Riyadh, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS) held a joint conference on the Role of Education in Preventing Terrorism and Extremism. The conference presented the efforts of several countries in re-formulating educational curricula to establish values of peaceful coexistence and brotherhood and reject extremism and fanaticism.

In their opening speeches, both HE Dr. Abdulmajeed bin Abdullah Albanyan, president of NAUSS, and HE Dr. Yousef bin Ahmed Al-Othaimeen, Secretary General of the OIC, expressed their appreciation to the Government of Saudi Arabia, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman, and His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman, for their financial and moral support in the fight against terrorism at regional and international levels.



HE Dr. Al-Othaimeen, Secretary General of the OIC, makes his opening speech



The Ambassador signs the book of condolences

### Solidarity with the victims in Sri Lanka

King Salman was in the forefront of the global call for condemnation of the East Sunday bomb attacks in Sri Lanka. In a message to Sri Lankan president Maithripala Sirisena, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques wrote “We are aware of the terrorist attacks that targeted your friendly country and the resulting deaths and injuries, and we strongly condemn this despicable act of terrorism.”

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman also expressed his condolences in a message wishing a expedite recovery for those injured in the attacks.

HE Ambassador Saad Alarify signed the book of condolences expressing Saudi solidarity with the people of Sri Lanka and sympathy to the families of the victims.



## THE LATEST : SAUDI ARABIA IN BRUSSELS



Ambassador Alarify & Mr. Stylianides

### HE Ambassador Saad Alarify enhanced Saudi-EU alignment through engagement in a series of constructive dialogs with senior members of EU Institutions

The Ambassador held meetings with French MEP Jean-Luc Schaffhauser from the Europe of Nations and Freedom Group; Spanish MEP José Ignacio Salafranca from the European People's Party (Christian Democrats); HE Nicolas Suran, permanent representative of France to the Political and Security Committee of the EU; Călin Stoica permanent representative of Romania to the Political and Security Committee of the EU; Christos Stylianides, European Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management; Henrik Hololei, Director-General for Mobility and Transport; and in the scope of Europe Day celebration in Riyadh, Michele Cervone D'urso, Head of the EU Delegation to Saudi Arabia of European External Action Service.



Ambassador Alarify & Mr. Suran



Ambassador Alarify & Mr. Hololei



Ambassador Alarify in the Europe Day reception hosted by the EU Delegation in Riyadh



Ambassador Alarify & Mr. Cervone D'urso

### Working lunch with Arab Heads of Missions

HE Ambassador Saad Alarify held a working lunch with Arab Heads of Missions in honour of Jean-Christophe Belliard. Mr. Belliard is the Deputy Secretary-General of the European External Action Service. A careered diplomat, he served in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Director for Africa and Indian Ocean. He had previously served as personal representative of High Representative Javier Solana for Africa, as well as various other posts as French Ambassador. He was also Permanent Representative of France to the African Union.

