



Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

European Union - Brussels

# Mission of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the European Union

May, 2021



**EU-Saudi Partnership**  
a shared forward-looking spirit

Message from the Ambassador  
**HE Saad Bin  
Mohammed Alarify**

*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*

- » **The Saudi Green Revolution**
- » **EU-Saudi Partnership**, a shared forward-looking spirit
- » What is the **Saudi Green Initiative?**
- » **Vision 2030**, working on a sustainable future for our planet
- » UN urges **immediate cease-fire** in Yemen
- » **Saudi women** will fill the oil and gas industry's talent gap
- » **Sports, a key component** of Saudi Vision 2030
- » AlUla confirms **\$15 billion masterplan**
- » **IMF** highlights the effects of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030
- » **IQVIA-Saudi Partnership**, looking for health innovation
- » Faces of Saudi Arabia  
**Dr. Hayat Sindi**

Welcome to our monthly Newsletter. In May we celebrated Europe Day. It represents an opportunity to take a look at the EU-Saudi Partnership, our common values and goals. Read more about this and other interesting topics in this edition.

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

**Warm Regards,**  
**HE Saad Bin Mohammed Alarify**



# The Saudi Green Revolution

**State owned energy company ACWA Power launched its first utility-scale renewable energy project, the 300 Megawatts (MW) Sakaka solar initiative. Following the launch, the government announced the signing of seven power purchase agreements (PPAs) for solar projects spread across the Kingdom.**

The PPAs follow the state-owned Aramco's announcement that it plans to use a recently acquired shale investment, the Jafurah gas field, to produce blue hydrogen instead of exporting liquified natural gas. Aramco's CEO stated the company's immediate plan is to produce enough natural gas for domestic use, and convert the remainder into hydrogen for export.

While Saudi Arabia have long been synonymous with spectacular fossil fuel reserves and low break-even thresholds, their potential for renewable energy production is also world-class. Its landscape provide a large capacity for both solar and wind energy capture.

By pairing these natural resources with cutting edge technology, Saudi renewable

energy projects have the potential to generate massive surpluses of electricity. This excess electricity can be used to generate green hydrogen for export, allowing Saudi energy producers to tap into the global hydrogen economy. Coincidentally, the global hydrogen economy will only reach maturity once hydrogen fuel costs come down.

The hydrogen economy is growing rapidly. Hydrogen fuel is at the centre of the EU's Green Economic Recovery. Korea and Japan have both rolled out hydrogen roadmaps to guide investment and policy, including encouraging hydrogen fuel cell vehicle production. The Green Hydrogen Catapult, a global coalition of seven major energy companies, will look to increase their combined green hydrogen capacity by 50-fold in the next 6 years to 25 GW. The coalition also has stated its goal to achieve sub-\$2/kg green hydrogen within the same period. At \$2/kg, hydrogen fuel would become price competitive with fossil and renewable sources. Saudi Arabia's ACWA is one of the companies behind the Green Hydrogen Catapult.

[Click here for more information](#)



---

---

# EU-Saudi Partnership, a shared forward-looking spirit

**On May 9 each year, the European Union celebrates Europe Day in recognition of the continent's integration, diversity and decades of peace. The day is an opportunity for it to look ahead, according to Patrick Simonnet, the EU ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Oman.**

Simonnet believes the EU and the Kingdom share the same forward-looking spirit, creating a dynamic partnership. He draws parallels between the European Green Deal and the key development goals of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 agenda, a plan to diversify the Kingdom's economy away from oil, empower its citizens, and encourage openness to visitors and investors.

"I was very happy to celebrate the fifth anniversary of Vision 2030, with 10 years to go until full implementation," Simonnet told Arab News. "It's a critical subject. I think you will hear that from all Europeans, but we truly find it a remarkable agenda, which also speaks very much to some of the aspects of the European Green Deal, which is the equivalent of Vision 2030 for Europe.

"It's very ambitious. It's an inspiration for the rest of the region. We think it's an excellent basis for us in terms of economic cooperation.

There are many sectors of common interest where we think we can work together."

Currently, around 28% of all imports to Saudi Arabia come from Europe, making the EU the Kingdom's second biggest trading partner.

"There's great potential for hydrogen exports from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Europe at a time when we, as Europe, are trying to become cleaner in the type of fuel we consume. The ambition of the Kingdom is to be one of the leading exporters of hydrogen, whether blue or green, it is really very important for us. It could help us reach our own climate goals", he said.

Simonnet has thrown his support behind the Saudi and Middle East Green initiatives, two programs launched in April this year to reduce carbon emissions, boost renewables, protect ecosystems and reforest parts of the Kingdom and the wider Middle East. He reserves particular praise for Vision 2030's commitment to tourism, including the AIUla development plan launched in April, which he says will attract foreign investment while sharing the diversity and richness of Saudi culture with the world.

[Click here for more information](#)

# What is the Saudi Green Initiative?



**The Saudi Green Initiative is an ambitious national initiative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that aims to improve the quality of life and protect future generations. Under the patronage of HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the Saudi Green Initiative will increase the Kingdom's reliance on clean energy, offset the impact of fossil fuels and combat climate change.**

Since the launch of Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia has made tremendous progress in addressing its unique environmental challenges, but there is much more to be done. As a leading global energy producer, Saudi Arabia fully recognizes its share of responsibility in advancing the global fight against the climate crisis. With its ambitious plans and targets, the Saudi Green



Initiative is a leap forward within the ambition to become a global leader in forging a greener future.

The Saudi Green Initiative and Middle East Green Initiative are a continuation of environmental efforts that have taken place since the launch of Vision 2030 in 2016 to address the environmental challenges Saudi Arabia faces. The Saudi Green Initiative includes planting 10 billion trees in the coming decades, and the Middle East Green Initiative planting an additional 40 billion trees, which the prince said would be the world's largest reforestation program.

Saudi Arabia has already raised the percentage of natural reserves from 4% to more than 14%, getting closer to its goal of 30%, and increased vegetation cover by 40% in the past 4 years.

This is a long-term plan to protect the planet. The targets span the next two decades. Saudi Arabia will be establishing a foundation to oversee the delivery of the initiatives under the Saudi Green Initiative and the Middle East Green Initiative. To support its ambitions and targets, the initiative will draw on the expertise



and resources of multiple Saudi ministries and private sector partners.

A detailed roadmap for the Saudi Green Initiative will be published in the coming months. "The Saudi and Middle East Green Initiatives are only a start. The Kingdom, the region and the world needs to go much further and faster in combatting climate change. Beginning this journey to a greener future has not been easy, but we are not avoiding tough choices. We reject the false choice between preserving the economy and protecting the environment." Said HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud.

[Click here for more information](#)



# Vision 2030, working on a sustainable future for our planet



The Minister of Education Dr. Hamad Bin Mohammad Al-Sheikh conveyed on 17 April 2021 the greetings of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman and the Crown Prince to participants in the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Conference on the Implementation of Education for Sustainable Development 2030, wishing for a better and more sustainable future for our societies.







“We meet today to be proud of our achievements, as we reaffirm that we will continue joint efforts to achieve the seventeen sustainable development goals through our educational systems”, said Dr Al-Sheikh. He stressed that the sustainable future lies in our educational systems and the development of our societies.

Dr. Al-Sheikh pointed out that Saudi Vision 2030 aspires to a prominent international position for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in all economic, social and cultural fields, indicating that this vision directs all efforts towards what achieves sustainable development, realizing a higher standard of living and a better quality of life for the Saudi people.

For example, the Crown Prince launched the “Saudi Green” and the “Middle East Green” initiatives to cultivate 50 billion trees to confront the climate crisis.

Saudi Arabia is aware of its responsibility

towards our planet and chooses what will achieve a more sustainable future. For this reason, the Crown Prince announced THE LINE, a city of a million residents with a length of 170 km that preserves 95% of nature within NEOM, with zero cars, zero streets and zero carbon emissions. In the Crown Prince’s recent interview on April 27, 2021, he spoke of education as a major driver to support the realization of Vision 2030, in line with the 17 sustainable development goals, the minister added.

The minister concluded his speech by reiterating that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is determined to continue its noble work towards achieving a sustainable future for our planet and by expressing his confidence that through continuing to work together, we will provide at least a solid foundation for the sustainability of our societies and this planet for future generations.

[Click here for more information](#)



# UN urges immediate cease-fire in Yemen

The UN Security Council called for an immediate halt to fighting in Yemen, saying that only a lasting cease-fire and political settlement can end the six-year conflict in Yemen. An initiative to end the war was already put forward by Saudi Arabia, requiring the involvement of the UN, the immediate introduction of a ceasefire and political negotiations, the initiative has already been welcomed by UN Secretary General, António Guterres

In calling for a cessation of hostilities, the UN Security Council singled out the military escalation by Iranian-backed Shiite Houthi rebels in the central province of Marib. The offensive has put at risk an estimated 1 million civilians who have fled there since 2015 to escape fighting elsewhere.



The council's press statement followed a briefing by UN special envoy Martin Griffiths, who said he couldn't emphasize enough that the more than yearlong Houthi offensive "has caused an astonishing loss of life, including children who have been mercilessly thrown into the battle." Displaced people in Marib are living in fear for their lives, he said, "and the offensive has been until now constantly disrupting peace efforts." Griffiths expressed fear the Marib offensive may suggest to some that the war can be won militarily, but he said military conquest will only fuel further cycles of violence and unrest. He said Yemen can only be governed effectively by an "inclusive partnership" of "different political forces and components."

Since March 2020, Griffiths has been trying to get the Houthis and the government to commit to a nationwide cease-fire, and to resume a political process aimed at reaching a political

settlement. "There is strong international backing and there is regional momentum for the UN's efforts," he said, expressing gratitude to Oman, Saudi Arabia, the United States and others. They are working closely and "without any differences between us," he said.

Griffiths said the differences between the parties in Yemen "are not unbridgeable" and "a deal can be achieved easily, very quickly," if both sides agree. But he told the council that on several occasions during negotiations, the Houthis refused to meet with him, including recently. "To say this sends a wrong signal is an understatement," he said.

Security Council members expressed support for Griffiths "and expressed their expectation that the Houthis meet him soon".

[Click here for more information](#)



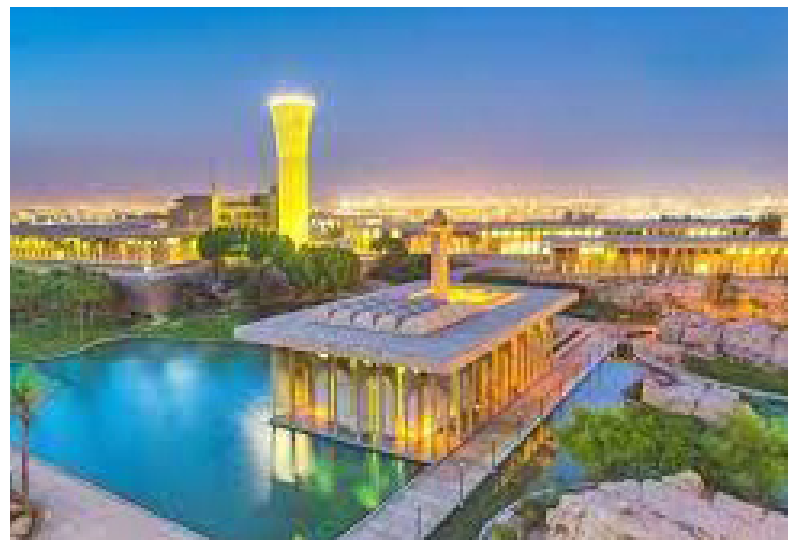
---

# Saudi women will fill the oil and gas industry's talent gap



**Saudi Arabia will soon fill the oil and gas industry's talent gap with King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals opening admission for female students for the first time in the Kingdom's history.**

The move comes at a time when the industry's appeal worldwide is declining among younger people. A decade ago, oil and gas was the 14th most attractive employer among engineering and IT students; now it is 35th. Globally, there is a long way to go. Currently, women comprise only 15% of the oil and gas workforce.





The giant leaps that Saudi Arabia has made in implementing historic reforms have put the Kingdom on top of the list of 190 countries that are most advanced and reformed in the areas of empowering women and strengthening their role in building society. Women's empowerment, economic advancement, and gender equality are at the forefront of the country's reforms.

Despite the great challenges that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and its negative effects on all aspects of life, the Kingdom continued to move toward its goals and ambitions on the economic empowerment of women.

Saudi Arabia has adopted a package of legislative reforms and introduced regulations and policies toward the advancement and empowerment of Saudi women, specifically in the areas of their mobility, workplace, entrepreneurship, and pensions.

The nation also encouraged women to compete in the entrepreneurial sectors by introducing legal amendments aimed at protecting women from discrimination in the work sectors, including a ban on gender discrimination from accessing financial services, and sacking of women during their pregnancy and maternity leave.

[Click here for more information](#)



# Sports, a key component of Saudi Vision 2030



**Sports is considered as one of the major components of a vibrant society and is one of the most popular means of entertainment. The Ministry of Sports has worked out several programs to expand the base of sports practitioners on a regular basis in the Kingdom, to limit the spread of chronic diseases such as diabetes and obesity.**

One of the ministry's remarkable achievements is the development of the "Sport for All" mobile application, which serves all segments of the society, by displaying all sports events available in the designated areas of the people concerned, and the users can register to participate in them.

These sports initiatives target professionals and non-professionals, in addition to creating jobs and volunteer opportunities for Saudis in the sports field.

The Quality of Life program, one of the Vision 2030 programs, pays great attention to the sports aspect, as it has positive impacts on citizens and expatriates in Saudi Arabia through improving their physical and psychological health by participating in sports activities, in addition to hosting sporting events.

On the occasion to mark five years since the launch of Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia has succeeded, through a number of government



# وزارة الرياضة Ministry of Sports

agencies, in activating several objectives of the Quality of Life program on its major entertainment area of sports.

Saudi Arabia witnessed a multitude of new established federations, spreading awareness around more than 50 various sports. As a result of these new engagement opportunities, mass participation and activity levels increased. There has also been a significant increase in the amateur-level practice of sports.

Hosting various sporting events comes on top of the most important goals that have been achieved in a short period of time, until Saudi Arabia has become a compass for athletes

around the world to participate in events being held in the Kingdom.

In a short period of time, Saudi Arabia was able to host major international events. It also enhances the values and position of the Kingdom regionally and globally, and its ability to host these major global events, to create a vibrant society with the highest standards of quality of life.

[Click here for more information](#)





# AlUla confirms \$15 billion masterplan

**Saudi Arabia has invested \$2 billion in initial seed funding for the development of the AlUla historical development area. And a further \$3.2 billion, which will come from public-private partnerships, has been earmarked for spending on priority infrastructure ahead of the completion of phase one of the project in 2023, the chief executive officer overseeing the development told Arab News.**

“We are well into executing phase one. This includes the upgrade of the airport, which has been completed. We will start our low-carbon

tram development infrastructure as well. And, so far, our visitor experience centres in the heritage and nature site are being upgraded,” said Amr AlMadani, CEO of the Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU), the entity set up by the Saudi Ministry of Finance in July 2017 to manage the development of the site.

The full \$15 billion AlUla masterplan will be developed in three phases in 2023, 2030, and 2035. Located 1,100 kilometers from Riyadh, AlUla consists of 22,561 square kilometers of lush oasis valleys, sandstone mountains, and ancient cultural heritage sites, including





Hegra, Saudi Arabia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The "Journey Through Time Masterplan" was recently announced by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Upon completion in 2035, the development project aims to create 38,000 new jobs, attract 2 million visitors a year, expand the population of the area to 130,000, and contribute \$32 billion to the Kingdom's economy.

"We're in the market. We are already actively engaged with multiple investing firms and fund structures to participate starting today. The business plans for these investments are becoming more viable for investors to look at. This is an interactive journey with investors, and our portal online invites all investors to register and seek to engage today," added AlMadani.

One of the first opportunities for private participation in the project is in the hospitality

sector. The site will have 9,400 hotel rooms when complete, with work on the first resorts set to start in October.

[Click here for more information](#)





# IMF highlights the effects of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030

**Saudi Arabia's successful economic reforms, as well as an expected decline in the jobless rate and inflation, were underscored in a concluding statement issued as part of the preliminary findings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) staff at the end of a recent official visit to the Kingdom.**

The IMF staff forecast that real gross domestic product (GDP) will grow by 2.1% this year and by 4.8% in 2022 (compared with a 4.1% contraction in 2020).

The IMF mission praised the Saudi government's successful efforts to contain the spread of the COVID-19.

It also commented on the effective role of fiscal policies, and financial sector and employment initiatives launched by the government. The Saudi Central Bank efforts, in connection with

supporting the private sector, were viewed positively by the IMF mission, especially the programs designed to provide breathing space for small and medium-size enterprises.

Efforts concerning labor market reforms were also highlighted by the IMF, since these have resulted in a significant increase in female labor force participation and should enhance job mobility for expatriates working in the private sector. In addition, the statement welcomed the Saudi Green Initiative and its potential in boosting growth and employment, as well as reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The IMF concluding statement also commended the Kingdom's strong economic fundamentals supported by Vision 2030, which enabled establishing robust governance and cooperation between ministries and entities.

[Click here for more information](#)



# **IQVIA-Saudi Partnership, looking for health innovation**

**US-headquartered IQVIA is the latest health information technology and clinical research company to partner with the Saudi Data and Artificial Intelligence Authority (SDAIA).**

The multinational – described as “a leading global provider of advanced analytics, technology solutions, and clinical research services to the life sciences industry” – signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Saudi government agency to “explore opportunities of mutual interest and support innovation in the field of health data in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).”

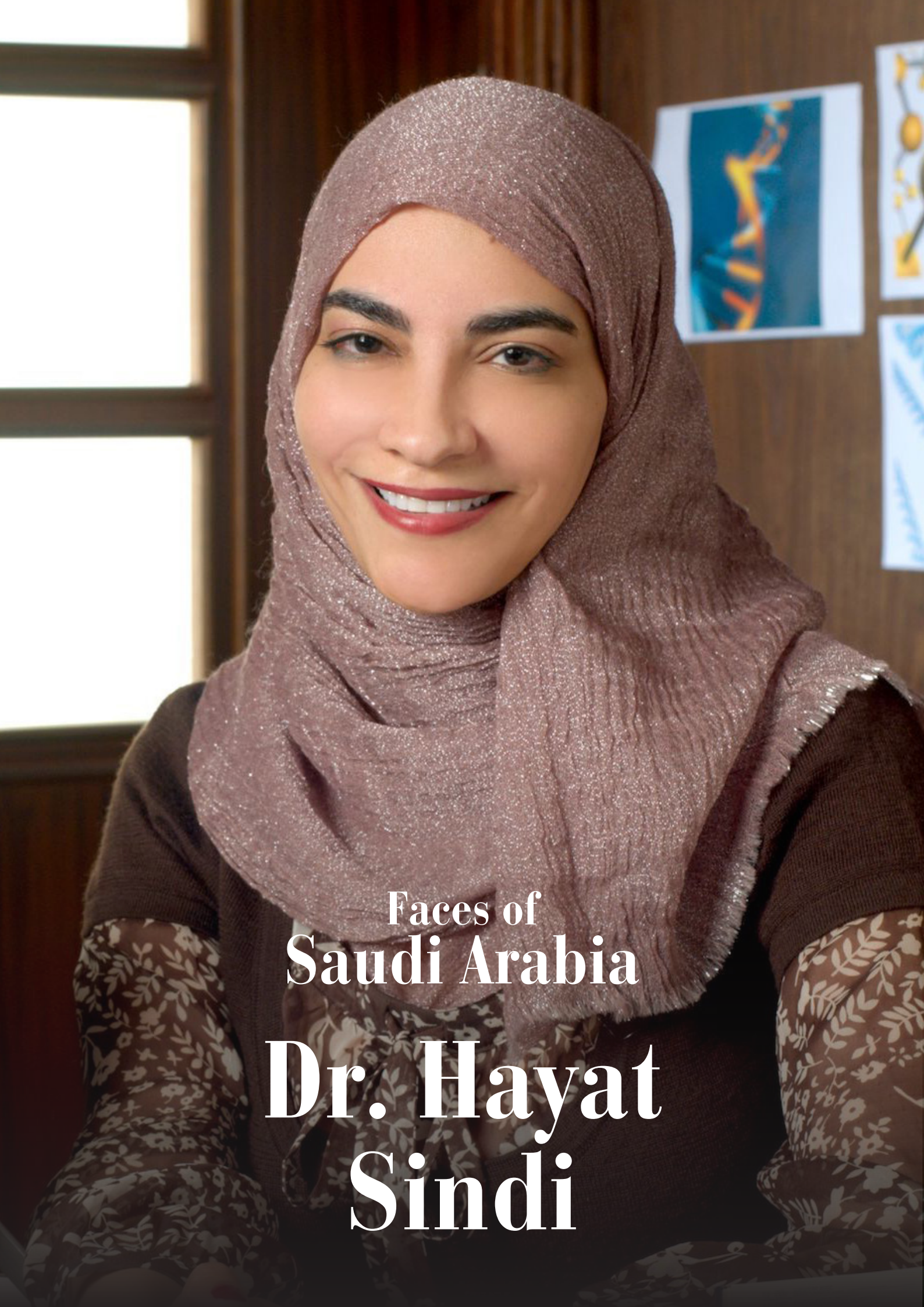
Both parties will reportedly collaborate on joint ideas and research in data and artificial intelligence (AI), build a centre for “innovation and knowledge”, and develop training programmes that can make use of this data and AI in the health sector.

The agreement was co-signed by Majid Mohammed Al-Tuwaijri, supervisor of the National Center for Artificial Intelligence (NCAI) at the SDAIA; and Mohamed Mostafa Elbadawy, IQVIA’s General Manager for KSA and Egypt.

“This MoU will contribute towards creating opportunities for development and growth in the health sector, supporting the goals of Vision 2030,” said Al-Tuwaijri.

According to a recently released report in the Journal of Epidemiology and Global Health, “Data and AI could be used to target three of Vision 2030’s strategic objectives: ease the access of healthcare services, improve the value of healthcare services, and strengthen prevention against health threats – to help achieve the overarching goal of increasing life expectancy from 74 to 80 years.”

[Click here for more information](#)



Faces of  
Saudi Arabia

Dr. Hayat  
Sindi



**Dr. Hayat Sindi studied at King's College London, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Harvard University.**



She received her PhD in biotechnology from Cambridge University in 2001. In doing so, Sindi became the first woman from the Persian Gulf to receive a doctorate.

Sindi co-founded a non-profit in 2007 called Diagnostics for All. Sindi helped create low-cost devices that can be used in developing countries to help diagnose diseases. To this end, she has invented a biochemical sensor that features thermoelastic probes, and she created the Magnetic Acoustic Resonance Sensor (MARS), both of which help diagnose illnesses quickly and on-site. In 2011, Sindi founded another organization, the Institute for Imagination Ingenuity (i2institute), which strives to encourage science education and innovation in younger generations.

In 2012, Irina Bokova, the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), selected Sindi as a Goodwill Ambassador to encourage education, especially among young women, in STEM fields. Sindi was selected “in recognition

of her work to create an ecosystem of entrepreneurship and social innovation for scientists, technologists and engineers in the Middle East and beyond, her efforts to bring the youth closer to innovators and her dedication to the ideals and aims of the organization,” according to a UNESCO press release.

In 2013, just three years after she received her doctorate, Sindi became one of the first thirty women selected to be on the Shura Council, which is Saudi Arabia’s highest consultative body. The main job of this council is to “advise the King on issues that are important to Saudi Arabia,” according to the Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

“If anything, I would like to think that I have inspired girls to pursue a career in science if that is what interests them. I advocate thinking outside the box, if one’s situation is tough, in favor of their ambitions,” Sindi said in an interview with UNESCO.

