

NEOM Tech & Digital Holding Company and OneWeb sign \$200m JV for satellite network

OneWeb Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites to service NEOM, the Kingdom and MEA, transforming connectivity to businesses and rural communities

High-speed connectivity will be a vital enabler of groundbreaking ecosystem of cognitive technologies

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NEOM Tech & Digital

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RIYADH, Saudi Arabia, Oct. 26, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- NEOM Tech & Digital Holding Company – the first holding company to be established as a subsidiary of NEOM – and OneWeb, the global communications network powered from space, have signed a \$200 million (SAR 750m) joint venture agreement to bring high-speed satellite connectivity to NEOM, Saudi Arabia and the wider Middle East and neighboring East African countries.

The partnership will see the deployment of OneWeb's Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite constellation, which will not only provide the rapid and reliable connectivity to enable NEOM's ecosystem of cognitive technologies, but also transform businesses and rural communities in the region where access to fiber-like internet was previously unimaginable. The agreement also includes a long-term strategic partnership regarding research and development of future connectivity systems.

It also builds on the relationship between OneWeb and the Ministry Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) and Ministry of Investment of Saudi Arabia (MISA). Established in 2017, they are focused on unlocking Saudi Arabia's nascent orbital space technology sector for private investors. In addition, it further strengthens ties between Saudi Arabia and the UK Government, which is a major strategic investor in OneWeb.

NEOM Tech & Digital Hold Co. and OneWeb, the second largest LEO operator with 358 satellites and the only licensed operator in Saudi Arabia, expect to complete ground infrastructure in 2022. NEOM Tech & Digital Hold Co. and the new JV entity will have exclusive rights to distribute OneWeb services in its target regions for seven years from the initiation of the LEO satellite network, which is expected to commence in 2023.

Joseph Bradley, CEO, NEOM Tech & Digital Hold Co., and Neil Masterson, CEO, OneWeb, formalized the agreement at a signing ceremony at the Kingdom's flagship Future Investment Initiative event. Also in attendance were: His Excellency Khalid Al Falih, Minister of Investment, Saudi Arabia; His Excellency Abdullah Alswaha, Minister for Communications & Information Technology, Saudi Arabia; Lord Gerry Grimstone, Minister for Investment at Department for International Trade and Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy, UK; Nadhmi Al Nasr, CEO, NEOM; and Sunil Bharti Mittal, Executive Chairman, OneWeb.

H.E. Al-Falih said: "It is a great pleasure to witness the signing of the joint venture between NEOM and OneWeb, which is a testament to Saudi Arabia's promising future in the space technology sectors. Today's agreement will contribute to economic growth and accelerate digital and communications knowledge transfer to the Kingdom through the transformative NEOM vision. As the Ministry of Investment works to implement the National Investment Strategy recently launched by HRH the Crown Prince, we will continue to provide support to this and other differentiated initiatives and projects and look forward to seeing it come to fruition in the near future."

H.E. Al Swaha said: "This ground-breaking joint venture shows the power of collaboration between nations, and with the private sector. By working together, we will bring digital connectivity to a region of more than a billion people, opening access to life-changing opportunities in education, healthcare and the job market. We are one step closer to ensuring that no child is left on the wrong side of the digital divide."

UK Investment Minister Gerry Grimstone said: "This joint venture brings together two emerging space and digital technology champions to deliver connectivity for the Middle East. It demonstrates that the UK Government's investment in OneWeb continues to be a catalyst for international collaboration, while securing jobs at home and driving investment into the UK space sector."

Mr Bradley said: "We aim to connect 100% of NEOM's territory yet we must also preserve the natural environment. This is what drives us to innovate with partners such as OneWeb to create sustainable ways to accelerate human progress. The partnership has the potential to transform the way governments, businesses and communities connect to the internet."

Mr Mittal said - "This agreement will help realize our joint vision of boosting connectivity in Saudi Arabia, Middle-East and East Africa. It exemplifies the model through which OneWeb's services will reach unconnected or poorly connected regions – through cooperation with international governments and local partners."

Mr Masterson said: "This agreement represents OneWeb's global vision to help bridge the digital divide through our innovative LEO satellite network. By working with NEOM Tech & Digital Hold Co., OneWeb will support the ambitions of NEOM, connecting businesses and communities and supporting the resilience of connectivity systems across the wider region."

Currently, OneWeb uses the latest security protection employed in advanced mobile networks. NEOM Tech & Digital Hold Co. will be trialing technologies to provide further security protection as well as testing new, more robust and resistant positioning and navigation solutions.

The partnership supports NEOM Tech & Digital Hold Co.'s international connectivity strategy, which will use connections to sub-sea and terrestrial communications cables, the construction of 5G and fibre networks, and now LEO satellites to secure access to tens of terabytes of scalable capacity for both urban and rural businesses and communities in NEOM by 2030.

About OneWeb

OneWeb enables connectivity for governments, businesses, and communities. It is implementing a constellation of Low Earth Orbit satellites with a network of global gateway stations and a range of user terminals to provide an affordable, fast, high-bandwidth and low-latency communications service, connected to the IoT future and a pathway to 5G for everyone, everywhere. www.oneweb.net

OneWeb's constellation and deployment strategy is unique in the industry:

- **Truly global service and coverage:** OneWeb satellites, once fully deployed, will uniformly cover the earth's surface, including the Arctic and northern latitudes.
- **Spectrum priority:** OneWeb holds ITU priority rights in the Master Register for Ku band usage in LEO satellite systems. This means other LEO

operators must not interfere with OneWeb signals and must co-ordinate if they wish to also offer services.

- **Working with local service providers:** As a B2B operation, OneWeb partners with local service providers in each market to ensure connectivity amplifies what is already available, rather than offering LEO connectivity as an alternative, helping providers expand their services to new areas.
- **Local system ensures secure data management for countries:** OneWeb's deployment structure means it can ensure data traffic from one place is securely transmitted back to that same place without the need to travel through neighboring satellites or geographies.
- **Sustainability in Space:** OneWeb promises to leave no trace in space with its 'Responsible Space' commitments, based on the premise that space is a shared natural resource, which can help transform the way we live, work, and connect.

About NEOM Tech & Digital Holding Company

NEOM Tech & Digital Holding Company is a world-leading technology company powering the world's first ecosystem of cognitive technologies at NEOM. Evolving from its Technology & Digital sector, it was the first holding company to be established as a subsidiary of NEOM, a region in Saudi Arabia charting the course for a new future fueled by technology. NEOM Tech & Digital Hold Co.'s digital infrastructure will be the operating system of NEOM, enabling its communities and industries. In partnership with global tech-industry leaders, it will co-invent the future of living with pioneering cognitive technologies. Consent, trust and transparency are fundamental to NEOM Tech & Digital Hold Co.'s license to operate, providing the ethical foundations to collect and leverage customer data to realize bold ambitions. NEOM Tech & Digital Hold Co. will use accurate, consented to and protected data to learn the day-to day rhythms of residents to deliver predictive, personalized and autonomous services. Its solutions will be powered by unrivalled connectivity and computing capability, as well as cutting-edge Artificial Intelligence (AI) and robotics, all underpinned by global security standards.

For further information visit : <https://www.neom.com/en-us/sectors/technology-and-digital>

About NEOM

NEOM is an accelerator of human progress and a vision of what a New Future might look like. It is a region in northwest Saudi Arabia on the Red Sea being built from the ground up as a living laboratory – a place where entrepreneurship will chart the course for this New Future. It will be a destination and a home for people who dream big and want to be part of building a new model for exceptional livability, creating thriving businesses, and reinventing environmental conservation.

NEOM will be the home and workplace to more than a million residents from around the world. It will include towns and cities, ports and enterprise zones, research centers, sports and entertainment venues, and tourist destinations. As a hub for innovation, entrepreneurs, business leaders and companies will come to research, incubate, and commercialize new technologies and enterprises in ground-breaking ways. Residents of NEOM will embody an international ethos and embrace a culture of exploration, risk-taking and diversity - all supported by a progressive law compatible with international norms and conducive to economic growth.

For further information email media@neom.com or visit www.neom.com and newsroom.NEOM.com.

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