

U.S. State Department Fact Sheet on U.S.-Saudi Arabia 75-Year-Relationship

The United States and Saudi Arabia: A 75-Year-Long Diplomatic Partnership FACT SHEET

OFFICE OF THE SPOKESPERSON (United States Department of State)

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“The United States has an important partner in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. They keep Americans safe by being our partner, and for providing the capacity for us to push back against the Islamic Republic of Iran.” – Secretary Michael R. Pompeo, December 9, 2019

Secretary Pompeo will travel to Saudi Arabia from February 19-21 to meet with King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman, Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan, and other Saudi officials to advance our long-standing shared interests, including the stability and security of the Gulf region, as well as economic prosperity and energy security.

OUR PARTNERSHIP ANCHORS PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

- February 14 marked the 75th anniversary of the meeting between President Franklin Delano Roosevelt with King Abdulaziz aboard the USS Quincy in 1945. We have maintained close diplomatic, military, and economic ties ever since.
- The U.S.-Saudi partnership is a critical bulwark for peace and stability in the Middle East, especially in the face of Iranian aggression in Yemen, Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria. Saudi Arabia helps to ensure the stability of global energy markets and participates in multi-nation task forces working to protect freedom of navigation across critical Gulf trade routes.
- The United States is committed to building Saudi Arabia's capacity through programs like Foreign Military Sales (FMS) and combined military exercises to strengthen interoperability with U.S. forces. Saudi Arabia's FMS portfolio, with a total program value of \$129 billion, spans all security sectors.

U.S.-SAUDI ECONOMIC TIES ADVANCE PROSPERITY IN BOTH OF OUR NATIONS

- The United States and Saudi Arabia enjoy strong economic ties. U.S. companies operate across the country. Saudi Arabia is the fifth largest export market for U.S. automobiles, as well as a lucrative market for U.S. airplanes. U.S. exports to Saudi Arabia support more than 165,000 American jobs.
- The United States and Saudi Arabia's extensive commercial ties in the energy sector originated in 1933, when Standard Oil of California started drilling for oil in the Kingdom's Eastern Province.

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- Saudi companies continue to increase investment in the United States, including Saudi Aramco's ownership of the Motiva Port Arthur facility in Texas – the largest refinery in North America.
- Numerous American companies are partnering with Saudi Arabia in its Vision 2030 program to diversify the economy. The largest Six Flags amusement park in the world is slated for construction just outside of Riyadh, AMC is opening 50 new theaters across the country and premiered the first movie in Saudi Arabia in 35 years in April 2018, and U.S. firms are leading the construction of Riyadh's new metro.

THE U.S. AND SAUDI ARABIA ENJOY ROBUST CULTURAL AND EDUCATION TIES

- More than 250,000 Saudi citizens and family members received visas to study in the United States in the last ten years. The United States also provides promising youth and current Saudi leaders the opportunity to experience the best of the United States through our International Visitor Leadership Program and various other exchange programs.
- The U.S.-Saudi partnership is rooted in more than seven decades of close friendship and cooperation, enriched by the exchange opportunities that are key to the promotion of mutual understanding and the long-term development of ties.
- Roughly 3,000 Saudi Arabian alumni of State Department programs have gained skills and firsthand knowledge of America, then returned home to engage their own communities in activities that advance entrepreneurship, empower women and youth, reach underserved populations, and work to improve education.
- Upon request, the United States provides technical support to ministries in the Kingdom, particularly in areas of education, trade, and good governance.

Source

The United States and Saudi Arabia: A 75-Year-Long Diplomatic Partnership, United States State Department, last accessed on February 20, 2020, <https://www.state.gov/the-united-states-and-saudi-arabia-a-75-year-long-diplomatic-partnership/>

Subject Matter Briefing

Vision 2030

Introduction

- Saudi Vision 2030 is an all-encompassing transformative mission that Saudi Arabia is embarking upon this decade.
 - The plan **seeks to revitalize and diversify Saudi Arabia's economy, expand cultural opportunities, and create a modern Saudi Arabia where all Saudis can prosper.**
- Vision 2030 touches on all aspects of Saudi life, from transitioning Saudi Arabia's economy into the 21st century, to creating more athletic opportunities for Saudi citizens, and even empowering women throughout the Kingdom.

Economic

- A key focus of Vision 2030 is to create an environment in which business thrives, the economy is diversified, and all Saudis, men and women, have access to jobs.
 - Saudi Arabia's location on the Arabian Peninsula makes it easily accessible by companies in the East and the West to invest and trade.
- Under Vision 2030 **Saudi Arabia is diversifying its oil-dependent economy** and working towards an economy with numerous distinct and prosperous sectors.
 - This includes investing in some of Silicon Valley's biggest names and startups, becoming a food sustainable and even agriculture exporting country, and focusing and investing in renewable energy sources.

Athletics and Culture

- Saudi Arabia has greatly **expanded its entertainment offerings through Vision 2030.**
 - The Kingdom has hosted Monster Jam, WWE wrestling events, professional golf tournaments featuring some of the PGA tour's top golfers like Phil Mickelson and Brooks Koepka.
- These athletic and cultural offerings are not just for Saudi citizens, but for the global community, as **Saudi Arabia placed an emphasis on encouraging international tourism to the Kingdom.**
 - Saudi Arabia has **issued more than 400,000 tourist visas** since opening its borders for tourism in recent years.
- Saudi Arabia is constructing cities throughout the country that will host many additional attractions including **theme parks like Six Flags** and futuristic urban designs like in the **planned Saudi smart city of Neom.**

Women's Empowerment

- Women have a vital and leading role in Saudi society, and they will continue to do so moving forward under Vision 2030.
- **Women currently make up 22 percent of the Saudi workforce, with a goal of increasing that to 30 percent by 2030.**
- Ivanka Trump has even lauded Saudi Arabia for embarking on "**significant reforms**" for women.

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- **The World Bank Group recently recognized Saudi Arabia has having made the biggest yearly improvement in its Women, Business, and the Law 2020 Report.**
 - These improvements include:
 - **Women can now obtain a drivers' license**, with over 70,000 already being issued.
 - **Sexual harassment is illegal** in both the public and private employment sectors.
 - **Pregnant employees are legally protected from discriminatory dismissal.**
 - The **retirement age is 60-years-old** for men and women.
 - **Saudi women receive equal pay to their male counterparts.**

Conclusion

- Through Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia is transforming its economy, its culture, and its society overall.
 - The economy is diversifying away from fossil fuels, agricultural production is increasing, and Saudi's across the Kingdom are entering the workplace for the first time.
 - Vision 2030 is a unique and unprecedented transformation that benefits people around the world.

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