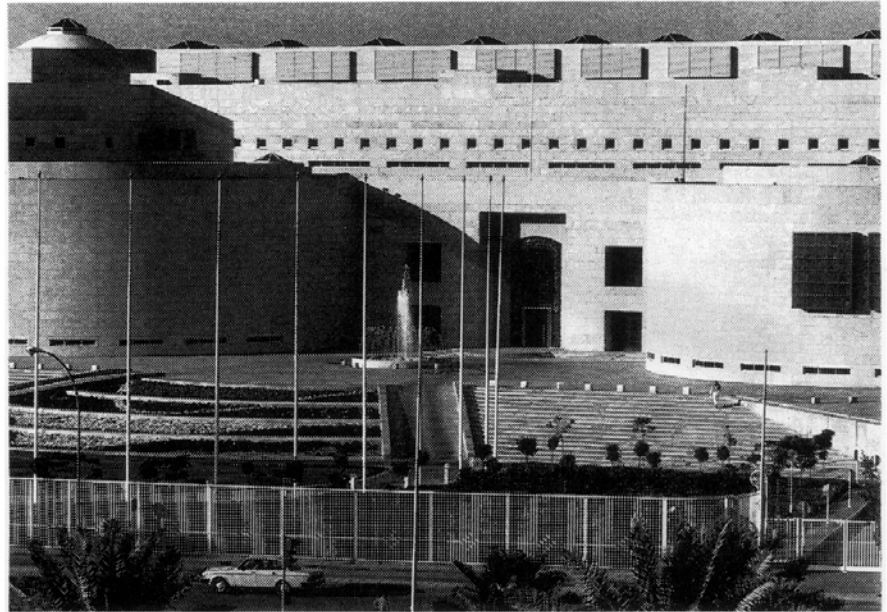




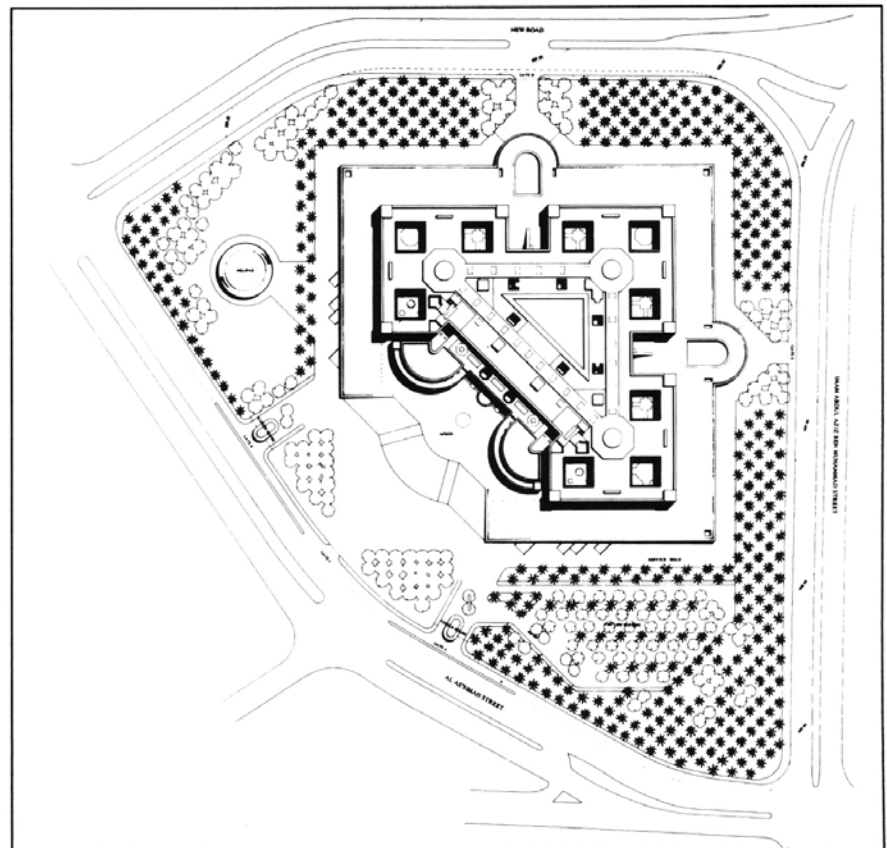
Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

<i>Architect</i>	Henning Larsen Copenhagen, Denmark
<i>Client</i>	Ministry of Foreign Affairs Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
<i>Consultant</i>	Folmer Andersen A/S (engineering) Lyngby, Denmark
<i>Completed</i>	August 1984
<i>Site area</i>	83'000 square metres
<i>Ground floor</i>	30'300 square metres
<i>Total floor</i>	85'000 square metres
<i>Costs</i>	SR 615'000'000 (US\$ 150'000'000) SR 7'235 per square metre (US\$ 1'764)



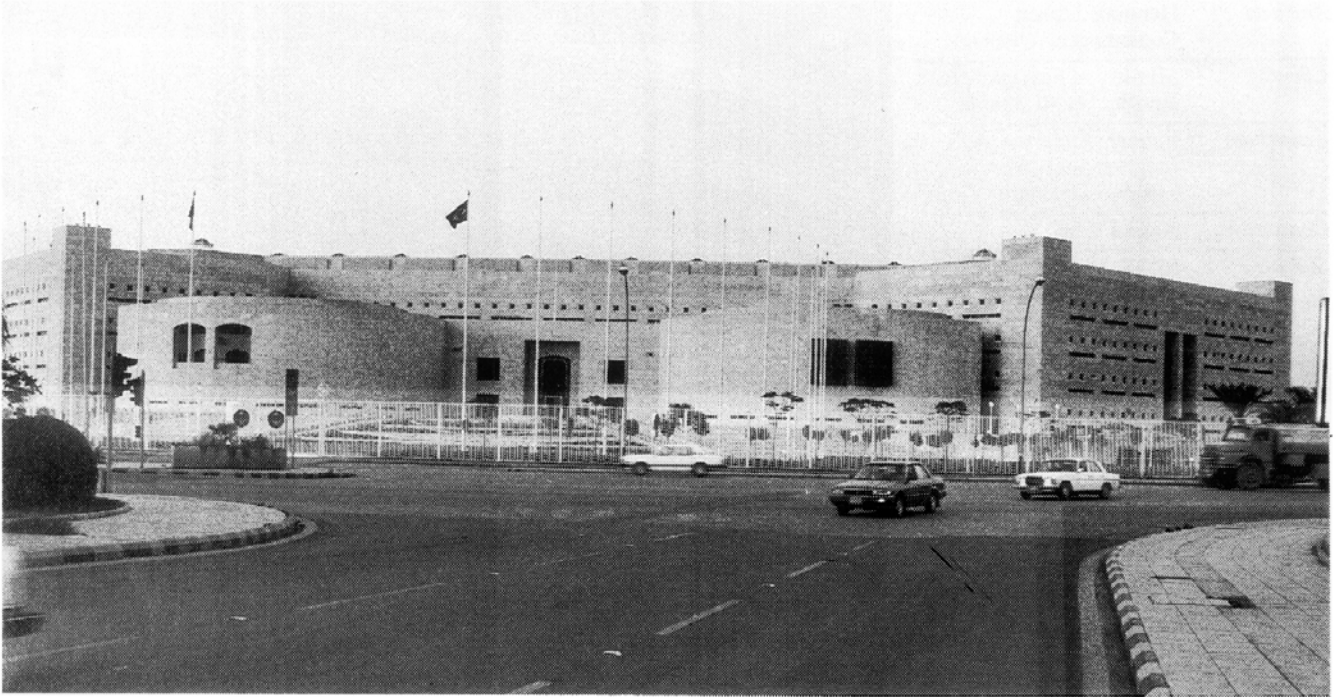
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<i>Building type</i>	312
1989 Award Cycle	563.SAU

1. General view with main entrance
2. Site plan



3

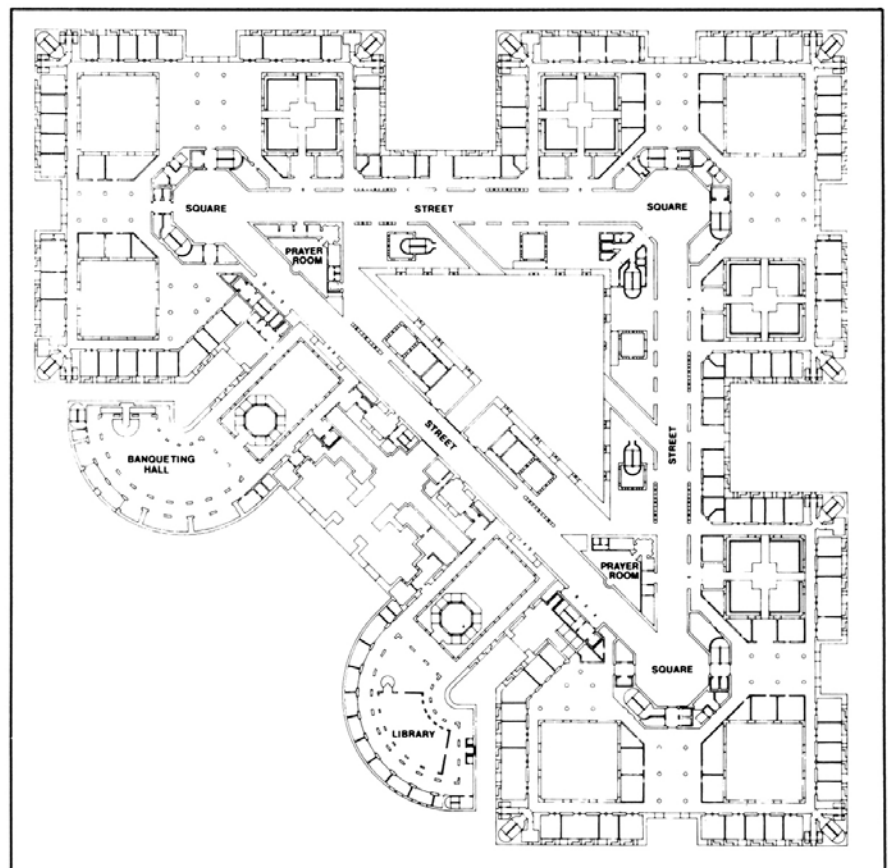
This imposing free-standing building was designed to house the headquarters for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, following a decision to relocate the latter government department from Jeddah to Riyadh.

Site

The Masrujah district of Riyadh lies some 2 km northwest of Old Riyadh and is mainly occupied by villas, government or business office buildings. Car access from the new ring road which winds around the building is through a tight turn off.

Functional Requirements

The scheme aimed at providing office space for 1000 employees as well as meeting, conference and prayer rooms, a banquet hall, a library, an auditorium, an exhibition hall, a parking and ancillary facilities. Both security (which imposed small prayer



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3. External view of the building

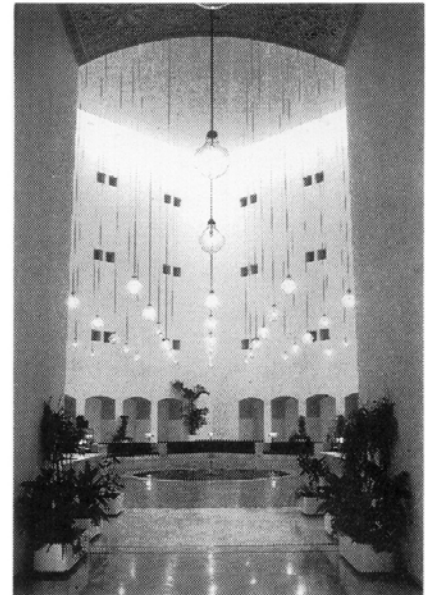
4. The third floor



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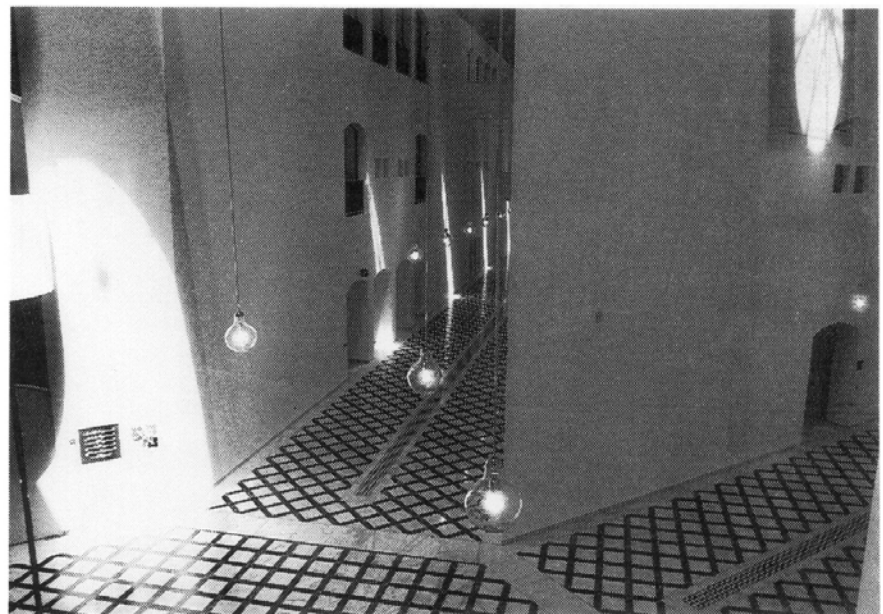
rooms - 2 per floor - instead of a larger mosque) and stateliness were also designated as priorities.

Description

The present project was singled out of another 11 schemes on the basis of an international architectural competition which took place in 1979.

The overall triangular shape of the four-storey building conforms to that of the site. The raised entrance is flanked on each side by a semi-circular structure and leads into the four-storey high triangular lobby. A system of barrel-vaulted "streets" (inspired from traditional city suqs) articulates the three main octagonal office areas. Most spaces are either indirectly or top lit. The temperature is regulated by way of thick walls, high quality insulation, mashrabiyyas and small openings (unfortunately the patios fail to fulfill their function as they actually trap the heat).

The exterior façade, clad with Italian *cremo mora* stone, displays no decoration and few openings. The approaching visitor faces a fortress-like structure, intended as a prestige monument embodying the "front door" to the Kingdom.



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The architect drew his inspiration from a wide range of Islamic buildings (extending from local Najdi architecture and city bazaars to the Alhambra and Mughal monuments).

Project Significance

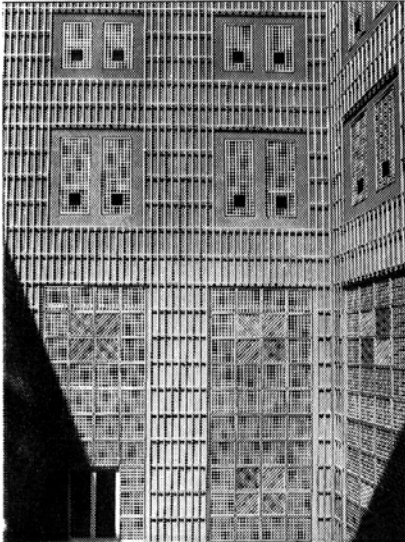
The building's significance is closely linked to that of the function it has been assigned; in that, it constitutes a

statement asserting the power of the ruling dynasty.

Construction

Steel frame, cast concrete or dry wall construction, marble or colour-rendered finishes. Most material, technology and labour were imported.

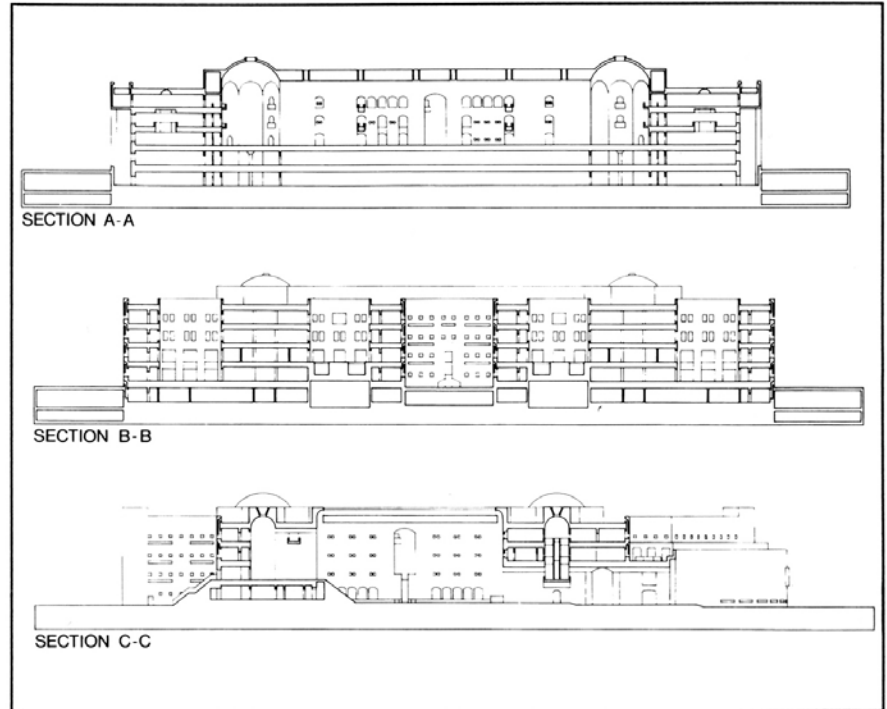
5., 6., 7. & 8. Interior views



9

9. Treatment of interior façade over-looking patio

10. Sections



10

Building type	312
1989 Award Cycle	563.SAU

I. IDENTIFICATION**Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Date Completed : 1984, August

Architect : Henning LARSEN, DenmarkClient : Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Saudi Arabia

Building Type I : (312) ADM/COM : Official : National

Building Type II :

SC Preferred

II. DESCRIPTION

The four-storey building housing the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs is located on a triangular site in the Masrujah district of Riyadh. In keeping with the site, a symmetrical, triangular plan consisting of 3 linked squares was evolved. It comprises office accommodation for 1000 people, a library, an auditorium, exhibition galleries, a banquet hall, prayer rooms (2 per floor) and auxiliary facilities.

The main entrance is flanked by a semi-circular volume to either side (exhibition and auditorium). The main axis leads directly to a large, triangular, centrally located, covered court which serves as a lobby and reception area. Internal 'streets', characterized by barrel vaults and modelled on the 'suq' of traditional Arab cities, form an isolated triangle which links the three office quadrants. An octagonal tower brings light into the building where two such 'suq' intersect at the centre of the 3 quadrants. In addition, each office quadrant is pierced by three open courtyards designed as Islamic gardens. Surrounding flexible office space is oriented to the outside and overlooks the garden courts within.

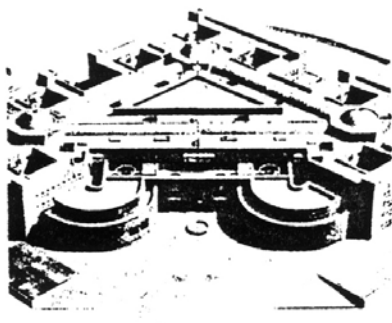
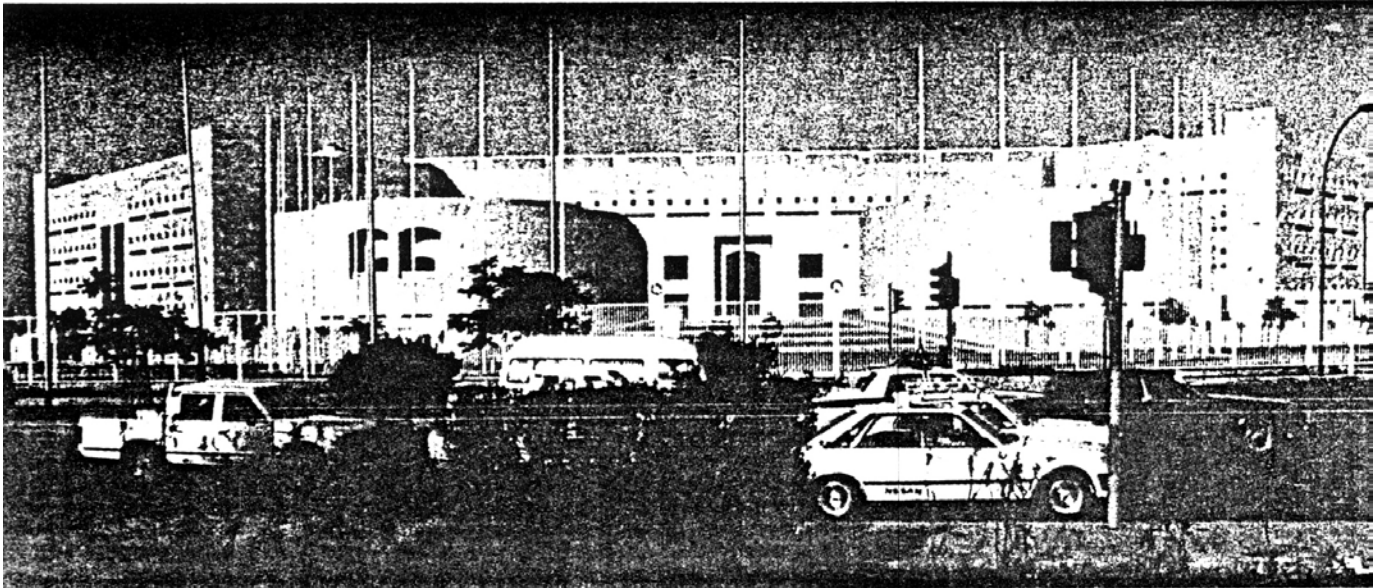
Externally, the marble cladded façades are relatively featureless with small, deep-set window openings.

Construction:

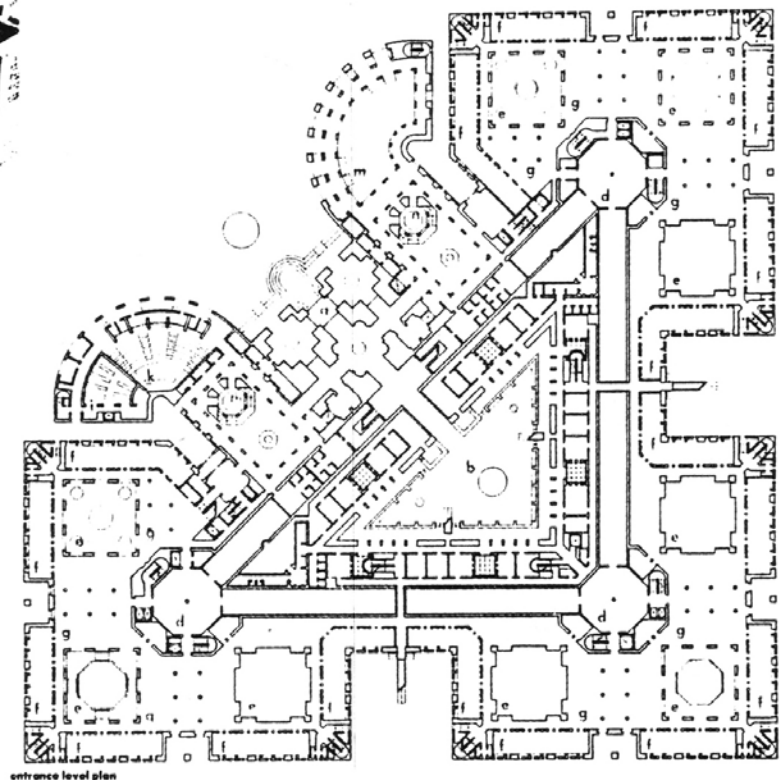
Prefabricated steel columns and beams on construction grid of 7.2 x 4.8 meters. Cast in-situ reinforced concrete external walls. Composite floors of steel decking and reinforced concrete. External finishes of marble cladding or coloured rendering.

III. AREA and COSTS :**Site and Building Area (in square metres):**Site 83'000 Ground Floor 30'300 Total Floor 85'000**Costs :**

Total cost : US\$ not available



- key to plan**
- a. main entrance
 - b. central courtyard
 - c. sunken
 - d. light towers
 - e. open courts with gardens
 - f. individual offices
 - g. reception suite
 - h. library
 - i. auditorium
 - j. exhibition
 - k. light shaft



entrance level plan