

Your excellency. Secretary-General, Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen... Peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you,

I am pleased to convey to you the warmest greetings of The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud - and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, who have directed me to meet with your esteemed organization to discuss the Kingdom's interest in communicating and cooperating with your esteemed organization, in the interests of African countries and their people under a framework to coordinate and exchange views on various topics that will serve our common interests.

I look forward to this meeting as a starting point for further coordination and cooperation between the Kingdom and all the member states of the organization, with which the Kingdom has distinguished bilateral relations, within the framework of the joint collective action through the eminent objectives and principles for which this entity was established. The Kingdom also considers the importance of this organization in achieving the objectives of the Arab-African partnership.

Your Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen...

I would like to start my speech with the announcement of His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud on 29 Oct. 2021 where the Kingdom has submitted a formal request to host the World EXPO 2030 in Riyadh. As you may know EXPO is an exceptional global platform where countries meet to discover the latest innovations and pioneering technologies associated with the basic elements of global development (sustainability - transport - economy). The Kingdom's hosting of Expo 2030 is a true reflection of its efforts which coincides with the culmination of its Vision 2030. The Kingdom's geographic position between key global waterways makes it an epicenter of trade and the gateway to the world. The Kingdom is also rich with unique ancient cultural heritage, with 6 registered world heritage sites in The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Kingdom was keen to carry out further economic, financial, and structural reforms, which represents a strategic framework aimed at reducing oil dependency, promoting economic diversity, and developing public services such as health, education, infrastructure, entertainment, and tourism to establish a new economic system capable of meeting modern challenges in various areas such as the Fourth Industrial Revolution, Social Justice, and Climate Change. My country seeks to participate actively and to contribute to building a sustainable and bright future for the whole world, and it definitely has the competencies to achieve its targets.

- The Kingdom's bid to host Expo 2030 is an important and symbolic challenge, and it has the capabilities and credibility to create a historical and successful version of the World EXPO, with the highest levels of innovation, and provide an unprecedented experience in the history of organizing the world EXPO.
- The opportunity to host EXPO 2030 in the kingdom will allow the whole world to look closely at the experiences it has lived, and the results of the efforts related to the Kingdom's vision 2030. Riyadh (the capital of the Kingdom, its largest city and its historical and cultural icon and regional symbol) will open its doors to the world through Expo 2030, making it a destination for tourists and investors, and specialized officials from all over the world.
- My country looks forward to African member states adopting a resolution supporting the kingdom's bid to host the Expo 2030 in Riyadh, a decision that will help us strongly to win the **BIE** elections in Paris November 2023. I do not doubt that you will support us to achieve this goal.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has strong and well-established relations with all friendly African countries, and the wise leadership in the Kingdom has affirmed its interest in developing these relations through a clear and consistent policy, which seeks to help African countries achieve their aspirations in all fields, and achieve productive development benefiting everyone. The Kingdom's leadership interest in the African continent, as a continent of hope, is manifested in the clearest form, as it embraces diplomatic representation in 27 countries, and more diplomatic missions are planned to open soon, aiming to cover all countries of the continent.

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Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen...

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia works through a purely humanitarian mission, guaranteed by all divine religions and other customs and beliefs in which people believe in by their cultural and human heritage towards justice, equality, and development among peoples. My country is the first in the world in terms of the proportion of foreign assistance it has provided and its foreign assistance in the gross national product, and our strategic partners the African countries have been and continue to be at the forefront of the beneficiaries of such assistance.

There are many areas that the Kingdom has contributed to support the African continent, such as education, health, transportation, infrastructure, and facing pandemics such as hunger, poverty, epidemics, and most recently the COVID-19 pandemic. Including the international initiatives it presented through the G20 to reduce the burden on the African continent from health and economic repercussions, in which the Kingdom provided

(500) million dollars for international relief efforts to combat Corona, and its contributions included (150) million dollars to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), (150) million dollars to the Global Alliance for Vaccination and Immunization (GAVI) and (200) million dollars to international and regional health organizations and programs. It also urged the international community, through its presidency of the G20 in 2020 to bridge the financing gap needed to combat the epidemic with an amount of \$8 billion, and supported the UN response plan of the World Health Organization (WHO) with an amount of \$100 million. In addition to donating large quantities of medical devices, tools, and masks to several countries to help them cope with the pandemic, including the countries of the African continent, through which more than 23 countries have benefited from the support of more than \$44 million. Today, we have also been able to see the results of the COVAX Initiative and to raise debts from Africa through the Paris Conference held in January 2021 and there are more initiatives to come.

The clearest example of the Kingdom's interest in the countries of the African continent is that it has pledged to provide \$1 billion as a package of development investment projects during the Paris Conference 2021. This gives us a positive impression of a promising future, and we will work with you as an ally, friend, and partners in strengthening the capabilities of the African economy away from attractive slogans that will not serve the average African citizen. Let us agree to end the era of support and relief and move the African continent to the era of investment growth and economic prosperity through investment projects that will benefit the people of Africa.

I invite you to look at the future in a positive and optimistic manner, and to reject conflicts or their causes or the facts that may hinder the path of investment development. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia seeks to achieve and participate through the giant investment initiatives that will be launched in many African countries in coordination with the competent African regional organizations working in many areas. Your organization and its member states is one of the most important stakeholders that we look forward to working with, through real strategic programs and plans that can be reflected in reality in the field of investment and raising the level of economic performance, and realistic projects that achieve the aspirations of our peoples harmoniously in many fields such as (industry, financial transactions, agriculture Fishing, mining, transportation, regional security, and energy projects of all kinds), which have become one of the most important factors for the success of any investment strategy in our rapidly developing and civilized world.

The Kingdom stresses the importance of the Arab-African partnership at all levels, and considers that the common denominators and issues between the two continents makes

strengthening inter-relationships a must, especially in the current stage that is witnessing regional and international changes that require concerted efforts and joint coordination.

Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen...

Today, we can design the most successful example in the field of attracting development investment through productive cooperation and away from what wastes the components of the national economy, and there must be an exchange of views in a way that contributes to development, peace, building investor confidence, and working on achieving your interests and ours. Therefore, we must all not obey or run after illusions that may be presented by the professionals of “exporting the revolution and the enemies of development” and the methods they use in order to spread their poison and extremist ideas in African societies that aspire to rise and achieve the highest levels of economic development and catch up with the modern world.

The Kingdom's direction to diversify its economy to achieve its 2030 vision depends on pivotal strengths, represented by the following:

- The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the land of the Two Holy Mosques, and the Qibla of more than a billion Muslims, making it the heart of the Arab and Islamic worlds.
- The Kingdom harnesses its investment power to create a more diversified and sustainable economy.
- The Kingdom is harnessing its strategic location to enhance its position as a major driver of international trade and to link the three continents: Asia, Africa and Europe.
- The Saudi Vision 2030 drives a collective commitment towards addressing current and future energy and climate challenges in an innovative and responsible manner. During the Kingdom's presidency of the G20 in 2020, country leaders endorsed the circular carbon economy (CCE) approach.
- One of the pillars of the Kingdom's Vision 2030 is to raise the level of economic and social development and other fields, and it is certain that this will only be achieved through the stability of the Arab and African regions.

On the other hand, The Middle East Green Initiative summit was held in the Kingdom last October, which was attended by prominent leaders from around the world, with the aim of strengthening cooperation and unifying efforts towards implementing common environmental commitments. Proceeding from the commitments contained in the Saudi Green Initiative, the Kingdom will cooperate with everyone to face the challenges of climate change outside its borders as well, and this is represented through:-

- Formation of the first alliance of its kind in the region.
- Forming the first coalition to combat climate change in the Middle East.

- Providing a platform that combines knowledge and capital.
- Enhancing investment and knowledge transfer to face common challenges.
- Laying the foundations for climate diplomacy.
- Strengthening the political will necessary to bring about fundamental change.

Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen...

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has a leading role in advancing development in the countries of the African continent. The Public Investment Fund in the Kingdom has a number of projects and activities in the sectors of energy, mining, communications, food and others, with a total value of nearly \$4 billion. The Public Investment Fund intends to complete efforts in the search for investment opportunities in the African continent, whether directly or indirectly in other countries and sectors. The Saudi Fund for Development has also been actively working in Africa for the past four decades, during which it provided 580 loans and grants to more than 45 African countries, with a value exceeding \$13.5 billion. The Fund also announced an initiative worth 200 million euros to develop the Sahel countries in partnership with the French Development Agency.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has projects, loans and future grants to be implemented by the Saudi Fund for Development in developing countries in Africa, approaching one billion dollars during the current year 2022. In addition to its support for international and regional efforts, in close cooperation with the African Union, to lay the foundations for security and stability. The Kingdom also provides support for international efforts to combat terrorist groups and extremism in both the Sahel and Sahara countries, as it announced a €200 million support to fight terrorism and improve the security capabilities of those countries. The Kingdom also contributed to the G20 initiative to suspend debt service payments, where this initiative provided the historical liquidity of (73) of the poorest countries, including (38) African countries, got more than five billion dollars.

And the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as it extends its hand to the African continent, seeks to jointly achieve the most important requirements of a decent life, and looks forward to achieving strategic partnerships with African countries that seek to achieve prosperity and sustainable development through a package of investment and economic projects in the medium and long term. This proposition is a reality and not a dream, and all we have to do now is to start drawing a roadmap for African-Saudi development investment, and formulating and studying realistic development projects, as we look forward to raising the volume of Saudi investments in the African continent from 2% to higher levels that rise to The size of the African continent and its great investment potentials in many fields, and the Kingdom looks forward to investing in it through partnerships that achieves prosperity for both parties and development for our people.

Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen...

We are meeting today before holding the first Saudi-African Summit and the Fifth Arab-African Summit, which the Kingdom will host this year 2022, with the aim of setting a future framework for joint development investment through giant projects that we are working to implement together through the capabilities of your esteemed organization and its member states. By holding these two summits, the Kingdom affirms its keenness to strengthen and develop its relationships with all African countries in all fields. The Kingdom has many joint committees with many member countries of this organization, and we look forward to consolidate these activities through more regular periodic activities aimed at strengthening the real frameworks by implementing real development through development investment, and a continuous consideration of developing the Kingdom's relations with the countries of the African continent.

We are fully confident that these two summits will benefit the countries of the African continent and the Arab region, in which the Kingdom is keen on stability and security and peace. The Saudi-African summit which will be held for the first time, aims at enhancing outcomes of (health, education, security, and investment development) in the African continent to achieve development and prosperity for its people through giant strategic projects that achieve the aspirations of the African people, away from bargaining, exploitation or looting of their national wealth. In order for both parties to be beneficiaries through an equitable investment formula for the African continent and its people, we must all cooperate for the sake of Africa and work for the success of these two summits and coordinate with African regional organizations to find out the most important facts that serve our people.

The Kingdom hopes that the specialized African organizations will play a positive role in promoting the success of the two summits that will be hosted in Riyadh, and assures that it welcomes coordination and exchange of views and proposals that will assist in reaching this goal. We also hope that the outcomes of these two summits will result in the realization of our ambitions and aspirations for all of us in achieving development or activities in support of international peace and security, especially in the African continent, in a way that ensures confidence-building to attract more investors in the giant development projects that we aspire to achieve as partners in development and investment. And to live in peace far from armed conflicts and destabilization of international peace and security.

On the other hand, the Kingdom's positions assure the importance of development in the African continent, according to the United Nations General Assembly Resolution No. 60/1 of 2005 AD to promote development and investment in it.

Now, let me showcase to you one of the most important achievements of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the true ally of the African continent, which is represented in its initiative to establish the (Council of Arab and African States bordering the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden), whose founding charter was signed in Riyadh on January 6, 2020, and was ratified. This council is one of the most important geopolitical and economic tools that enable the Kingdom and the African continent to ensure the smooth conduct of navigation and international maritime trade between Asia, Africa and Europe, as this corridor constitutes 27% of the global trade volume and is estimated at about 4.2 trillion dollars annually and passes through it 3.3 million barrels of oil per day, which constitutes 40% of global production. Given the importance of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden as an international maritime and trade corridor linking the poles of the East and West, the Kingdom has sought to establish this entity to coordinate, protect and secure the safety of this important waterway, which constitutes a strategic element for regional security and stability and global maritime transport. This is achieved through four pillars:

1. The economic pillar, which aims to benefit from the Council's member states' capabilities, and harness their diverse economic components, according to an integrated development framework and investment projects that spread benefits to the well-being and development of the local communities. This opens the way for development projects in which the GCC states and other countries that share economic interests with them invest, and this reflects the importance of African countries as an important partner in such investments due to the geographical connection and the security and development dimension of the entire continent.

The council also aims to create giant joint partnerships, projects, and investments that stimulate economic development, and the Kingdom's Vision 2030 launched by His Highness the Crown Prince in which its benefits are not limited to the Kingdom only, but extend to the African continent. Examples of such extension are the Red Sea Tourism Project, and (NEOM) City Project at a cost of half a trillion dollars, which includes 9 investment sectors specialized in (energy, transportation, food, water, science, technology, advanced manufacturing, biotechnologies, the future of living, lifestyle, media, and entertainment), and (Amala) tourism project, which is a global investment project available as an investment opportunity, and (Oxagon) the floating industrial city project overlooking the Red Sea & (Trojena) resort.

2. The political pillar to create a political bloc that seeks to protect the stability and collective security of all the countries bordering the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, which achieves the national interests of the member states, and this interest extends to the entire African continent due to the shared interests and investments, the global

transport movement, the exchange of experiences, and the protection of natural and environmental resources from any damage or aggression from external parties to ensure the element of sovereignty over these vital areas.

3. The security pillar aims to enhance cooperation between the GCC states in the field of removing and clearing the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden region of mines planted by some countries and terrorist groups. This enhances the role of the GCC states in protecting global trade and international maritime traffic and developing a maritime strategy through which the security of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden can be protected and preserved from any sabotage.
4. Environmental objectives, which are considered one of the most important pillars of the development work. Therefore, strengthening the environmental protection of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden and the territorial waters of the countries bordering the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden is a matter that requires a collective effort to preserve the natural components and fisheries resources for the optimal use of marine resources and the protection of beaches from dangers. and environmental degradation. Coordination between the member states of the Council focuses on not tampering with the region's environmental security by disposing of atomic and chemical waste in the bottom of the sea, and coordination in the fields of fishing and scientific research through Arab-African regional partnerships, and the success of such initiatives and their realization on the ground provide many benefits. The member states and their neighboring geographical environment on the African continent, as the provision of a specialized international and regional system, provides the aspect of stability and credibility as an attractive environment for investment and development through the data of the security and environmental aspect that helps to raise the ceiling of aspirations in the sustainable development of future projects.

Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen...

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stresses the importance of continuing to take a firm stand against Iran and its destabilizing activities against security and stability, and to stand firmly against any Iranian attempts to threaten energy security and freedom of maritime navigation in the Arabian Gulf, whether such attempts were made directly or indirectly through its arms in the region. Iran's practices and provocations in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz will have a very negative impact on the global economy.

The Kingdom also emphasizes its positions in support of the security, peace, and stability of the region's countries, and has always stood by solving problems and disputes by peaceful means such as dialogue, however, this should be consistent with a practical termination of threats and hostilities, and Iran's expansionist policies based on

the theory of "exporting the revolution" and interfering in The internal affairs of countries and support for terrorist activities and organized crime, especially in the Middle East and the African continent, which requires taking firm measures and directing public opinion against Iran's activities, and exposing the heinous acts and crimes that it practices through its support for terrorism around the world. It should be noted that Iran's terrorist arms, including The Lebanese Hezbollah, with its political and military wings, has been classified by most countries of the world as a terrorist organization, as well as the Houthi terrorist militia, which was classified as a terrorist organization under Security Council Resolution No. 2624 issued on February 28, 2022 AD, which is an important step towards strengthening international peace and security, and I urge the countries of this esteemed organization to classify these as two terrorist organizations in the context of confronting terrorism and terrorist groups around the world.

Today in the Middle East, there are two opposing visions, one of which is the vision of the Kingdom, which aims for construction, prosperity, and peace, and is offset by an Iranian vision to spread destruction, devastation, and chaos in the region and the world, and today's choices will determine the future of the region and the world.

Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen...

The Kingdom upholds its firm stance towards a political solution to the Yemeni crisis based on the three references (the Gulf initiative and its executive mechanisms, the outcomes of the Yemeni national dialogue, and Security Council Resolution 2216), and supports Security Council resolutions (2451-2452) to implement the Stockholm Agreement 2018 aimed at reviving the political process, as it stands by its support for the UN envoy to Yemen in an efforts to end this crisis, and an initiative to end the Yemeni crisis and alleviate the suffering of the brotherly Yemeni people, and responded to the call of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for a cease-fire to confront the COVID-19 pandemic as announced in March 2021, but the Iranian-backed terrorist Houthi militia refused, and has continued its attacks on the cities and borders of the Kingdom, and the Kingdom affirms its right to defend its lands, citizens, and residents from the systematic attacks carried out by this militia against civilian objects and vital and oil installations, which not only target national capabilities but also target the nerve of the global economy and its supplies.

As well as global energy security and international waterways, and the Kingdom stresses that it reserves all its rights to respond to the sources of threat in the world in an appropriate time and form, in accordance with the standards and customary rules of international humanitarian law. For your knowledge, **the terrorist Houthi militia has launched at the Kingdom so far more than (453) ballistic missiles, (888) drones,**

and booby-trapped boats totaling more than (103), and planting sea mines totaling (272), not to mention the indiscriminate projectiles that reached more than one hundred thousand, in which all were supplied by Iran.

The Kingdom also stresses that the coalition countries are not responsible for setting up the floating oil reservoir (Safir), and holds this terrorist militia responsible for any damage that may cause the largest environmental disaster in the Red Sea and its dire consequences in the event of an oil spill, which threatens international shipping and the world at large. It also denounces the role of this terrorist militia in impeding the delivery of humanitarian aid to the Yemeni people, in which the Kingdom will continue to provide its support to the Republic of Yemen, which bring me to the last grant of oil derivatives in the amount of \$442 million provided by the Saudi Program for the Development and Reconstruction of Yemen, for electricity stations in the Liberated Yemeni governorates. **And for your information, the Kingdom has provided more than 19 billion dollars since the beginning of the Yemeni crisis through King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center.**

Unfortunately, my government has noticed the delay in issuing statements condemning these terrorist acts carried out by the Houthi militia from the African regional organizations and some African countries, although the Kingdom never hesitated in condemning any terrorist acts against African countries, nor did it delay providing support and assistance to organizations or its member states in all fields. The condemnation of these practices will be appreciated by the Kingdom's government, as it expresses the extent of solidarity with the Kingdom against the practices carried out by the terrorist Houthi militia, which reveals to local and global public opinion the outrageousness of their actions that violate all international laws and covenants. The Kingdom looks forward to the support of member states in an initiative to end this crisis and alleviate the suffering of the Yemeni people in all international forums.

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Saudi Arabia also welcomes the dialogue between the Sudanese parties and notes the role of the United Nations and the United Nations Mission to Support the Transitional Phase in Sudan. The Kingdom and the Quartet affirm the commitment to continue joint efforts to achieve stability in the Republic of Sudan by facilitating dialogue, encouraging the values of consensus, strengthening the language of dialogue, and reviving the peace process. The Kingdom affirms its support for all that achieves security, peace, unity, stability, prosperity, and development of the Republic of Sudan.

Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen...

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is one of the countries that has suffered the most from terrorism and has sensed the extent of the international responsibility that emanates from the resolutions of the Security Council and the United Nations General Assembly through the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Strategy, which was built on the 2005 Riyadh Declaration and General Assembly Resolutions No. 66/10 and No. 60/288. The Kingdom has taken a firm and strong stance towards the phenomenon of terrorism in order to combat it and contain its destructive effects. The Kingdom has consistently condemned terrorism in all its practices and forms and has joined its efforts with the international efforts made to address this dangerous phenomenon that can only be combated through agreed international action that guarantees its elimination and the preservation of innocent lives. It eliminates all its forms, drains its sources of financing, punishes those who support it and fuels its activities in any way, which preserves the sovereignty and stability of states.

The Kingdom's efforts in this regard are clear to all, as it has made several contributions related to combating extremism and terrorism, namely: (Establishing the Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology (Etidal), establishing the Islamic Alliance to Combat Terrorism comprising of more than 40 countries, mostly African countries, supporting the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Center With \$110 million, and the G5 Sahel Alliance, in which the Kingdom announced a donation of 200 million euros to it.

Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen...

In conclusion, I would like to express my deep appreciation to all the member states of this esteemed organization, which have declared their support for the Kingdom's candidacy to host the Expo 2030 in Riyadh, with the exception of Ethiopia because it is not a member of the International Exhibitions Organization BIE, and we look forward that Ethiopia will become an Effective member in the near future. Therefore, I hope that IGAD will issue today a statement endorsing the Saudi candidacy to host this important global event, as well as to welcome the holding of the first Saudi-African and Fifth Arab-African summits in Riyadh.

Thank you, all & Peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you...

Thank you all ,,,,,,