

## Saudi Arabia national day

## Striving for development in many areas

Ahmad Younos S. Al Barrak  
AMBASSADOR OF SAUDI ARABIA

The national day anniversary of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia comes at a time when the comprehensive development renaissance, the foundation of which was laid by the kingdom's Founder King Abdulaziz Al Saud, has continued apace during the reigns of his faithful sons and successors down to the present reign of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. Building on the intellectual, institutional and management foundations laid by the founding king and guided by his ideas and practices in development planning and economic management, his faithful sons have continued the efforts that have resulted in remarkable achievements and successes. These can be seen in the continued rise of living standards, improvement in the quality of life, comprehensive construction and industrial renaissance and advanced economic and social services throughout the country.

These achievements are eloquent testimony to the effectiveness of the developmental approach that has been adopted by the kingdom; an approach that combines scientific planning, targeted rationalization and continued support for the private sector within the framework of economic freedom and individual initiative.

Over more than three decades, structural and socioeconomic advances have been achieved, at both the macro and sectoral levels. The Saudi economy has gained enormous strength, increasing its ability to adapt to changes and developments and withstand global

economic fluctuations.

At the macroeconomic level, the GDP has greatly increased at a constant pace. This steady growth has been accompanied by expanded use of advanced production technologies in many of the activities of the national economy, as well as by diversification of the economic structure and maximization of the role of the private sector. Successive development plans have created a climate that is conducive to the Saudi private sector, contributing increasingly to production, investment, export and provision of employment opportunities for citizens. In this positive environment, the private sector, characterized by vitality and institutions having advanced technical and organizational abilities, has grown. Employing these capabilities efficiently, the private sector has made praiseworthy achievements.

Over the past years, the kingdom has taken several important institutional and administrative development measures. These have included creating new economic entities and restructuring others; accelerating the pace of privatization; and adopting several sets of regulations aimed at the controlling various aspects of economic activities, improving their efficiency, providing more incentives and guarantees to foreign investors, and simplifying and speeding up administrative procedures relating to their activities.

Institutional and administrative modernization, development of regulations and facilitation of procedures have led to a significant improvement in the business environment and to the attractiveness of the kingdom for foreign direct investment. The volume of foreign direct investment increased markedly, so much so that the kingdom has come to be at the forefront in the Middle East in this regard.



Founder of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the late King Abdulaziz bin Abdulrahman Al Saud



King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud



Crown Prince Muhammad bin Naif bin Abdulaziz Al Saud

Considering the Saudi citizen to be the focus and the ultimate goal of the development, the government of Saudi Arabia has accorded special importance to human resource development. As a result, education has grown remarkably to an unprecedented level. Similarly, higher education has achieved notable quantitative and qualitative progress. Concurrently, efforts have continued to develop programs, raise quality and intensify scientific and technological research at universities. Equally important are the advances being made in training. Similar achievements have also been made by the private sector.

Interest in the field of health care has also been keen. Hospitals, primary health care centers and supportive health care services expanded significantly, resulting in the availability of preventive and curative health services throughout the country.

Remarkably, when the development process of the kingdom is examined, similarities in some important aspects between its beginnings, during the reign of the founding king and the realities of the moment become evident. The founding

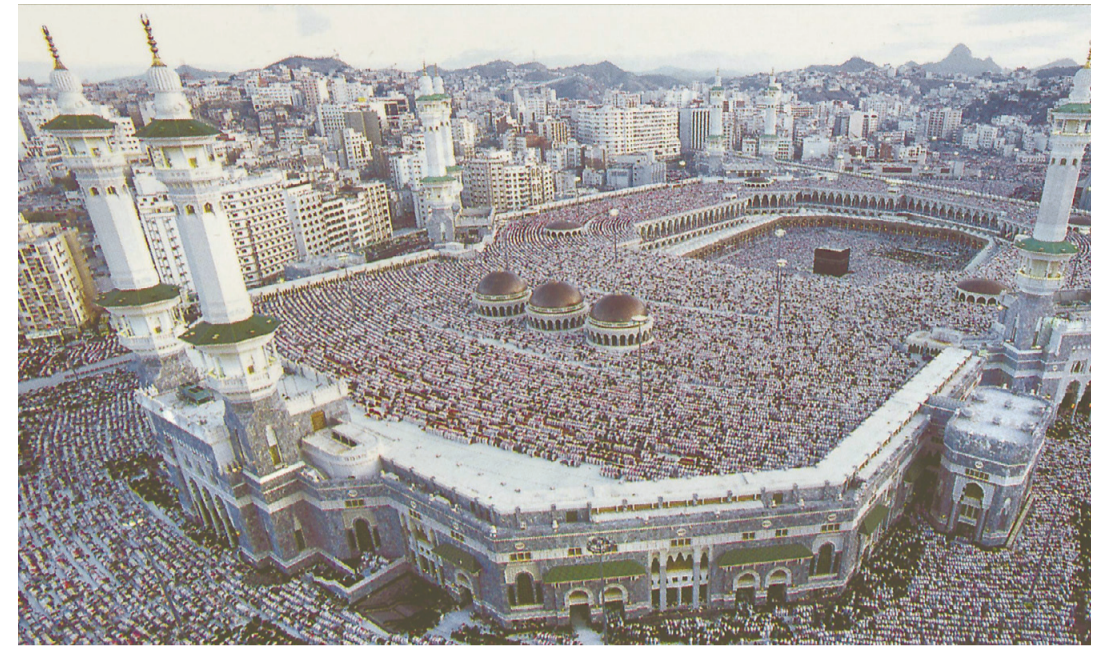
king adopted modern methods for developing agriculture and water resources, as well as for the management of oil exploration, building transportation and communication networks, provision of educational services and health care, and building state institutions by utilizing expertise from home and abroad. Following in the footsteps of the founding king, the kingdom seeks to expand the use of science and technology in all productive and service fields.

The kingdom is also keen on transfer of knowledge and advanced technology, through foreign trade and foreign direct investment, as well as on seeking the help of experts and specialists from various advanced countries, and on increasing the number of people sent on scholarships abroad to acquire modern knowledge and expertise. In furtherance of this trend, the kingdom has made great strides and has begun to move toward carrying out mega-projects, in its quest to lay the foundations of a knowledge economy and an information society. Thus, following a tradition of looking to the future set by the founding king, his worthy sons are using development

planning as an effective means for building the socioeconomic future of the kingdom on sound, scientific bases.

I would also like to acknowledge the important diplomatic relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Japan. These relations have been built from the start based on mutual respect and the understanding of common strategic interests. The seeds of cooperation were planted more than sixty years ago in 1955, when the two countries established diplomatic relations. Since then, the two countries have worked closely together to expand relations through a variety of political, cultural and economic channels, as well as cooperation and coordination in various areas at all levels. The Saudi-Japan Forum for 60 years Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two friendly countries held last May illustrated the strong and deep relations that exist between the two friendly countries.

The Saudi-Japanese bilateral relations in the early stages witnessed a number of achievements, with the participation of Japanese experts and technicians in the kingdom to



Mecca is considered the holiest place of Islam and the site of the annual Hajj pilgrimage.

EMBASSY OF SAUDI ARABIA

modernize its infrastructure, mainly with the implementation of projects covering roads, public buildings, water desalination, power generation, information technology and many other industrial projects. This was, indeed, quite enough to make Japan more qualified — thanks to its companies, experts and well-trained manpower — and thereby able to win a significant share of large-scale projects carried out in the kingdom. It also paved the way to conclude more deals between the two countries to carry out such projects, based on the needs of the kingdom and the requirements of its development.

Those who review the economies of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Japan, including each country's potentials, as well as their status in the global economic system, will not be surprised at the solid Saudi-Japan partnership over the last 60 years and their capabilities to create a productive environment. The countries also became members of the G20 and are among the wealthiest countries in the world. The friendship between the two countries, similarities of policies and opportunities of avail-

able integration between the two countries enabled both governments to draw a road map of their bilateral relations with specifications appropriate for both sides, and help in making it to the later stage of the distinguished partnership by enhancing the yearly value added of the relationship.

A number of agreements and committees, particularly the Saudi-Japan Joint Committee, connect both countries and assure they build a genuine partnership that does not exclude any activity, ensuring bilateral cooperation is comprehensive and responsive to the interests of the peoples of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Japan.

The bilateral relations in the political domain have also witnessed similarities in views regarding their positions toward the global issues and developments over the sixty years. Both sides confirm their willingness and strong intention to continue this relation after the 60th anniversary of their establishment by the same determination to develop them according to the principle of mutual benefits, common interests, policies and denominators that unite them.

In the field of trade, the King-

dom of Saudi Arabia is one of Japan's major trading partners, as the kingdom is the sixth-largest trading partner to Japan and Japan is the kingdom's third-largest trading partner. There are many joint projects between the two countries and the size of bilateral trade volume has increased over the last four years to reach \$55.43 billion in 2014. Such extending growth in trade relations has been attributed to the complementary elements between the two countries.

Furthermore, relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Japan have taken an important turn, thanks to the advantages of Japanese experience in the field of education. A number of Saudi students have enrolled in prestigious Japanese universities and the Saudi Arabian Cultural Office in Tokyo has opened, the first Arab and Islamic cultural office accredited in Japan, to guide and follow up on Saudi students' education. The number of Saudi students in Japan pursuing various majors has now reached over 500. The bilateral cooperation in the education field has extended to exchanges and cooperation among universities of both countries.

## Congratulations

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on the Occasion of  
Their 85th National Day



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# Saudi Arabia national day

## Promoting Japan-Saudi Arabia friendship, cultural exchanges

Hiromasa Yonekura  
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-SAUDI ARABIA SOCIETY

On this auspicious occasion of the 85th National Day of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, I would like to offer on behalf of the Japan-Saudi Arabia Society our best wishes to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Naif bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, His Royal Highness Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, His Excellency Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to Japan Ahmad Younos S. Al Barrak, and the people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

I would also like to extend our heartfelt congratulations on the 60th anniversary of the diplomatic relations of Japan and Saudi Arabia. Over the past six decades, Japan and Saudi Arabia — located in the east and the west of Asia, respectively — have built strong bonds of friendship and trust, overcoming the geographic distance and the difference in culture and language. Bilateral relations, which began with collaboration in the energy sector, have been developing into a multilayered strategic partnership, encompassing a wide range of areas such as industry, technology, environment, education, science and culture. The ties of Japan and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were further strengthened by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to Saudi

Arabia in 2013 and the royal visit to Japan in 2014 by King Salman, who was crown prince at the time.

To commemorate the 60th anniversary of Japan-Saudi diplomatic relations, various events were held this year in Japan and Saudi Arabia. In May, when H.E. Minister of Economy and Planning Adel M. Fakeih, H.H. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Mohammad bin Saud bin Khaled Al Saud, H.E. Gov. and Chairman of the Saudi Arabian General Investment Agency Abdullatif Al Othman and Saudi Arabian delegations came to Tokyo, the Saudi government hosted the "Saudi-Japan Forum for 60 Years Anniversary" in Tokyo, staging exhibitions and lectures featuring Saudi Arabia's people, history and art, along with live performances of folk music and dance. In addition, the 15th session of Japanese-Saudi Arabian Business Council was also held, where attendees from Japan and Saudi Arabia discussed ways to enhance investment, expand trade and further strengthen business partnerships between Japan and Saudi Arabia.

In July, Ambassador Al Barrak succeeded H.E. Abdulaziz Turkistani as Saudi Arabian ambassador to Japan. Immediately after the succession, I paid a courtesy call on Ambassador Al Barrak and asked the ambassador to become honorary chairman of the Japan-Saudi Arabia Society, as was the case with the former Saudi Arabian ambassadors to Japan. It gave all of us at the society great pleasure that Ambassador Al Barrak readily accepted the request. We are firmly convinced that the

friendship and partnership between Japan and Saudi Arabia will continue to grow and strengthen under Ambassador Al Barrak's leadership.

Ever since its inception in 1960, the Japan-Saudi Arabia Society has been working on various cultural exchange programs, including Arabic language courses and publication of books on Arab-Islamic subjects, to promote mutual understanding and enhance friendship between our two peoples. This year, in celebration of the 60th anniversary of Japan-Saudi diplomatic relations, the Society published "A Visualized 60-year History of Japan-Saudi Arabia Friendship," a photo collection that features visits by important people of the two countries, as well as economic and industrial collaborations and cultural exchange activities. We also published "Japan as Observed by a Saudi Ambassador," a collection of essays written by former Saudi Arabian Ambassador to Japan Mohamed Kurdi. Going forward, we will continue working, under Ambassador Al Barrak's guidance, to further promote Japan-Saudi friendship and partnership. Additionally, we will strive to live up to the expectations of King Salman, who wishes to see bilateral relations strengthen even further.

Last but not least, I heartily wish the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman, H.R.H. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Naif, and H.R.H. Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman good health and happiness, while also most sincerely wishing H.E. Ambassador Al Barrak every success.



Warmest Congratulations to  
**The Custodian of  
the Two Holy Mosques**  
**King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud**  
of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and his People  
on the Occasion of the 85th Anniversary of  
Their National Day

**JAPAN-SAUDI ARABIA SOCIETY**

Chairman: Hiromasa Yonekura

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