

Saudi Arabian King's Visit

Comprehensive partnership spans range of areas

Ahmad Younos S. Al Barrak
AMBASSADOR OF SAUDI ARABIA

The official visit of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud to Japan has great importance and special significance because of the profound respect and appreciation he — may Allah

the Almighty protect him — enjoys among various Japanese circles, as he sits among the top people on the list of the most powerful and influential personalities in the world. He is a king of humanity whose deeds on the humanitarian side have transcended the boundaries of the Islamic and Arabic world, covering most of the countries on Earth. He is a king of resolutions for his determined decisions on both domestic and foreign policies.

His visit takes on special significance in light of the acceleration of international and regional changes that require the exchange of views and the coordination of positions between the kingdom and its friendly allies. On the other



Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud



King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud



Crown Prince Mohammad bin Naif bin Abdulaziz Al Saud

hand, this auspicious visit constitutes a major event in the course of Saudi-Japanese relations; a culmination of the distinctive relations of friendship between the two countries translating and reflecting the size and strength of these relationships. It is of particular importance since it is the first visit to Japan by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques since taking the reins of power in the kingdom.

Japan contributes positively to promoting peace and stabil-

ity in the world, including the Middle East, and participating in the efforts being exerted by the international community in shouldering the responsibility of different issues. There is political coordination and conformity with the kingdom in various situations regarding many regional and international issues.

The work schedule of the visit is tight and intense. There is a meeting with His Majesty Emperor Akihito and with H.I.H. Crown Prince Naruhito.

An official dialogue will be held with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe regarding cooperation between the two friendly countries in various fields. This will serve the interests and prosperity of the people in our two countries, including political dialogue, coordinating positions on various regional and international issues of common interest, consolidating economic and trade cooperation and enhancing cooperation in the fields of investment, science and culture, as well as medical exchange. There will be signing of memorandums of understanding between the two countries in these areas in addition to others to strengthen cooperation in a number of spheres opening new horizons for cooperation. He (may Allah the Almighty protect him) will also meet a number of senior officials in the Japanese government.

The kingdom and Japan have developed a good relationship over the more than 60 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1955. This relationship has seen a quantum leap and the evolution of remarkable growth steadily covered all areas, responsive to the policies and principles designed and stipulated by bilateral agreements and visits between officials of the two countries, making the relationship one of the most important for both.

The economic and commer-



The Great Mosque of Mecca EMBASSY OF SAUDI ARABIA

cial data and statistics confirm the volume of trade exchange between the two countries goes beyond \$50 billion, placing the kingdom among the top-10 trading partners of Japan, while Japan is the third-largest trading partner of the kingdom. Additionally, there are several joint projects between the two countries. The kingdom occupies the top place in providing Japan with oil and its byproducts, accounting for more than one-third of Japan's total oil imports. The two countries endeavor to promote the comprehensive partnership in broad areas in relation to culture, economics and politics, in addition to the unique security dialogue between the two friendly countries, including many issues such as the regional situation, piracy, nuclear non-proliferation, the fight against terrorism, humanitarian aid, disaster relief and a

number of other topics. There is cooperation to develop and exchange views regarding international terrorism conditions, as well as defense cooperation between the two countries. This is reflected by the continued exchange of visits at the level of senior officials in the security sectors between the two countries.

Cultural and educational relations between the kingdom and Japan made great strides since Japan became a destination for Saudi students to continue their educational careers, whether pursuing graduate or postgraduate degrees. There are currently 400 students, most of them studying various scientific majors, especially in the fields of engineering and technology, in Japan. The two countries are linked by many conventions in the field of higher education and scientific research, aiming to encourage scientific and

educational relations between universities and scientific research institutes in Japan.

Additionally, Japan is seeking to develop ideas and visions to support economic partnerships, investment and trade with the kingdom. This is in line with the "Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030," which includes the transfer of technology, investment in the industrial sector and technology industries, as well as expansion in the areas of knowledge, the economy and energy. Additionally, the vision calls for the strengthening of the partnerships in the nuclear, renewable energy and petrochemical fields to contribute to the diversification of the economy through multiple sources, increasing trade exchange and mutual benefits by maximizing the partnership in programs. The visit of the Deputy Crown Prince, Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (may God protect him)

to Japan last year established a solid ground for the form and nature of the joint strategic framework between the two countries with ambitious and promising visions and ideas. There is a joint working team that meets periodically to achieve this, God willing.

The successive summit meetings, dialogues among senior officials and a number of agreements and committees, especially the joint Saudi-Japanese ministerial committees, confirm the devotion of the two governments to build a true partnership that does not exclude any activity and ensures that cooperation is comprehensive and responsive to the interests of the people of both countries. This is in conjunction with the sincerity of the leadership in both countries to promote and strengthen these relations through the exchange of bilateral visits, continuous work and efforts to strengthen and expand these distinguished developing bilateral relations in all fields.



Kingdom Centre in Riyadh EMBASSY OF SAUDI ARABIA



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Our Heartiest Welcome to
**The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques
Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud**
King of The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
on the Occasion of
His Visit to Japan

 **JAPAN-SAUDI ARABIA SOCIETY**
Chairman: Hiromasa Yonekura

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Saudi Arabian King's Visit

Ongoing bonds of friendship and trust

Hiomasa Yonekura
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-SAUDI ARABIA
SOCIETY

On behalf of the Japan-Saudi Arabia Society, I would like to extend a hearty welcome to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.



King Salman visited Japan in 1998 as the governor of Riyadh province and in 2014 as the crown prince. This visit marks the king's first after his accession. The last time a Saudi Arabian king paid a visit to Japan was 1971, 46 years ago, when King Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud was on the throne.

It is a great pleasure and honor for us to welcome King Salman as the bonds of friendship and trust between Japan and Saudi Arabia have been growing even stronger at an accelerated pace since the 60th anniversary of our diplomatic relations in 2015. I truly believe that this visit by King Salman should hold a special place in the pages of history of friendship between the two countries.

Saudi-Japan relations, which started with cooperation in the energy sector, have grown into a multilayered, strategic partnership encompassing a wide range of domains, from energy to industry, technology, the environment, education, science and culture. Last year, Saudi Ara-

bia set out "Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030," which expresses its commitment to economic reform that seeks to shift from an oil-driven economy to a diversified economy by promoting investment, tourism, manufacturing and logistics, and under King Salman's strong leadership, bold economic reform measures are in progress.

In August and September, when His Royal Highness Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud visited Japan, Saudi Arabia and Japan agreed to explore possible collaborations toward the realization of Saudi Arabia's economic reform laid out in "Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030." In October, the first ministerial conference was convened in Riyadh to discuss specific collaboration projects. Backed by these efforts, Saudi-Japan partnerships are expected to further expand, mainly in the areas of economy and industry.

We at the Japan-Saudi Arabia Society will continue working on various cultural exchange initiatives that have spanned more than five decades since the society's inception in 1960 and thereby contribute to further promoting mutual understanding and strengthening the ties between Saudi Arabia and Japan.

Last but not least, I most sincerely hope that the visit to Japan by King Salman will be successful and that Saudi-Japan relations based on friendship and trust will continue to thrive for many more years to come.

Some recent bilateral visits

In April and May 2013: Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visits Saudi Arabia

In February 2014: Crown Prince Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud visits Japan

In August and September 2016: Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud visits Japan

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