

PRINCE FAISAL BIN FARHAN AL SAUD

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia

Let me start with the message of Islam, peace be upon you. Before I deliver the statement on behalf of His Highness the Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the UAE for three occasions: first, their 50th National Day anniversary, second for the inauguration of the Expo, and third for hosting this conference in the capital, Abu Dhabi.

Your Excellency, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your kind invitation to speak at the official opening of the World Policy Conference. Such an occasion represents a unique opportunity to enhance dialogue and engagement on issues, regional and global concerns. The insights you have here work towards informing policymaking by gathering officials, researchers, business leaders and industry experts under the same roof. A wide area of topics is under discussion, from the shifting state of global geopolitics to the challenge of global health, energy, and climate change. The variety and intensity of the challenges facing the international community require careful attention and deliberation, making matters of global governance very timely indeed.

At the outset of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Kingdom made decisions to address these challenges sustainably and inclusively. The most effective method to do that is by relying on global efforts within multilateral frameworks. This approach is an extension of decades-long diplomacy that sought to bring nations together, narrowing differences in order to focus on the broader picture, the shared challenges facing the international community. In an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, the pandemic highlighted our common threats and intensified challenges. Unfortunately, this was also accompanied by increased polarization around geopolitical and global hotspots. Communities struggled in terms of lives and livelihoods. These factors increasing international cooperation and paving the way for sustainable economic recovery became the vital path we choose.

Recent challenges emphasize the importance of our ambition, Vision 2030. The need to diversify public revenue streams, develop human capital and create sustainable economics is a challenge relevant to most nations. We have been investing in Saudi youth, enabling them with the necessary skills and diverse opportunities that enhance the quality of life in our society. The various programs such as the recently announced Human Capability Development Program and the National Transport and Logistics Strategy, help our economy to better integrate with regional and global opportunities. We have also opened new sectors for employment and investment, such as tourism, entertainment, technology, and green solutions.



The Kingdom's foreign policy is driven by dedication to this vision, a commitment to regional security and deep formation of our global partnership. We believe that this will act as a catalyst for transformation across the region, creating an environment more receptive to the ambitions of our youth. The Kingdom is equally committed to addressing the challenges of energy sustainability and climate change and lending a helping hand to countries in need. The Kingdom proudly ranks as the third highest provider of humanitarian aid and both our Islamic and human values drive our solidarity with countries in need. The main platform for our donations is the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center, which supervises over 1,727 projects in more than 70 countries, amounting to more than USD 4 billion in aid. Another key provider of Saudi assistance is the Saudi Fund for Development, which has been operating in Africa for the last four decades. Its grants and loans amounted to nearly USD 13.5 billion in the last 45 years, in 45 countries and with projects that span different areas such as food, security, health and education.

Your Excellencies,

Joining the world in achieving a sustainable recovery also means working together to find creative ways to tackle climate change while maintaining energy security and efficiency. In addition to the Kingdom's adherence to the international climate accords, such as the Paris Agreement, and supporting the success of COP 26, we believe we can do more. Based on this conviction, His Royal Highness the Crown Prince has launched ambitious projects such as the Saudi and the Middle East Green Initiatives. Within the Kingdom, we aim to reduce emissions, significantly raise our dependence on renewables and plant more than 10 billion trees. We also plan on hosting a Green Initiative Forum at the end of this month, inviting our friends and partners to participate. With our regional partners, we are embarking on the largest forestation project with the aim to plant over 40 billion trees across the Middle East. This is part of the larger commitment to cater for the needs of the planet as we support innovation in renewable and green energy, as well as pioneering innovation in marine and land conservation in the Red Sea, Neom and across the Kingdom.

Making this ambitious plan real and strengthening global partnerships, require a regional environment that is stable, and we cooperate on tensions. We are keen to shift the region towards stability, cooperation, and mutually beneficial partnerships. Saudi diplomacy is full of examples showing its dedication to finding peaceful solutions to conflicts and disputes. The Kingdom's efforts to facilitate peace and transition in Sudan through the Friends of Sudan group were vital. We supported the UN Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan towards inclusive transition. We continue to stand with the people of Sudan in maintaining state institutions and supporting the country's stability and prosperity. I would also like to highlight the Al-Ula Declaration, which asserts the solidarity and friendship within the GCC. It was a landmark moment in which the region's leaders chose to come together and pave a bright future for the region. We have also been advancing peaceful solutions to the conflict in Yemen, but unfortunately the Houthis have yet to engage with our unilateral ceasefire and they seem unreceptive to international pressure. We call on them to cease their campaign, which jeopardizes the future of Yemen and stands in the way of establishing long-lasting peace and stability through the region. Facilitating peace will always remain a top priority for the Kingdom, which is the way forward to improving global governance and enabling a more open world.



Your Excellencies,

The world is undergoing profound transformation and we need to adapt if we are to rise to the occasion of fulfilling the aspirations of our youth. Creating opportunities, enhancing connectivity, and strengthening partnerships should guide our path forward. The Kingdom will continue to act as a strong advocate of multilateral frameworks to address common challenges, and to work towards building a safe and secure future for the region where this can be achieved.

Thank you.