

High Level Political Forum

**“Accelerated action and transformative pathways:
realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable
development”**

July 7-17, 2020

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia - Statement

**H.E. Mohammed Al-Jadaan
Minister of Finance &
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In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Gracious

Your Excellency Madam President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies & Gentlemen

Peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you,

We, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, believe that what the world is experiencing due to the Covid-19 pandemic, despite the pains and the challenges, is a historical opportunity that we must seize.

Undoubtedly, the world after this pandemic will never be the same again. While this pandemic disrupted daily lives impacting healthcare systems, the global economy, employment and supply chains within and across borders, it also created an opportunity to rebuild more sustainable economic, social and environmental systems.

If there is only a single lesson to be learned from this crisis, it would be our need for cooperation and concerted international efforts to find effective solutions that addresses the challenges in light of rapid and unforeseen changes that have curbed the anticipated progress towards achieving social welfare, economic prosperity and environmental development.

Madam President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies & Gentlemen

The overarching theme of this year's Forum illustrates the Kingdom's commitment towards achieving the sustainable development goals in alignment with the Kingdom's 2030 vision.

On the social front, since the spread of COVID-19, the Kingdom prioritized the health and safety of citizens and residents alike, implementing precautionary and preventive health measures in accordance with the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques guidance to take all necessary measures to confront this pandemic and limit its impact. Accordingly, the Saudi government reviewed and redirected spending to the health sector primarily as well as other heavily affected sectors.

As for other development areas, the government immediately adopted a series of initiatives to support the private sector, targeting economic activities most impacted by Covid-19 such as the postponement of tax payments and bearing large sums of salaries to employees and injecting liquidity into the economy. Quality information technology and communication infrastructure continue to play a vital role in combatting the challenges of the pandemic.

Regarding the environment, despite being the least affected by this pandemic, the Kingdom continues to reinforce its climate change actions in alignment with our commitment to the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The Kingdom joined the Framework Agreement on the International Solar Alliance. In addition, Saudi Arabia has reached the most competitive price in wind power generation on a global scale.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning that during Saudi Arabia's G-20 presidency, the Kingdom has adopted two initiatives related to the environment. The first relates to reducing desertification and increasing green areas and the other utilizes the carbon circular economy- both of which will significantly affect the preservation of the environment and sustainability of natural resources.

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This year, the Kingdom is leading the efforts of the G20 with a spirit of global cooperation and strives to reach consensus and achieve tangible results. The Saudi presidency will lead the work towards "Realizing Opportunities of the Twenty-first Century For All" focusing on three main priorities: "Empowering People, Safeguarding the Planet and Shaping New Frontiers" by adopting strategies that utilize the benefits of innovation and technological development.

Madam President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies & Gentlemen

With this unsettling start of the "Decade of Action", we must recognize that despite the efforts, there is a critical need to multiply the efforts to create a sustainable world. We call upon the international community to assess, prioritize and continue to be innovative in achieving sustained economic development, nurturing communities to be resilient to potential disruptions.

Therefore, I would like to affirm the Kingdom's commitment to enhance cooperation with the United Nations and strategic partners. The Kingdom also looks forward to continuing a constructive dialogue and collaboration during its presidency of the G20 to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs locally, regionally and internationally.

Finally, we thank the countries that presented their voluntary national review for this year, and for the success stories and lessons learned included in the field of sustainable development. We hope to share more of our journey with you next year focusing on the Kingdom's Sustainability Roadmap: A National Vision with Global Partnerships.

Thank you, Madam President.