

# PREFACE

The Ninth Development Plan comes at a crucial distinctive point in the history of the development of the Kingdom. Subsequent to the remarkable comprehensive achievements and the quantum leap accomplished by the Kingdom since the inception of its five-year plans, nearly four decades ago, the Ninth Five-Year Plan comes at a time when speeding up the process of development has become imperative. The world is witnessing accelerated developmental dynamics that require enhancement and acceleration of development efforts. Determination by the State to achieve this is reflected in the expenditure programme embedded in the plan.

Since the inception of its five-year plans, Saudi Arabia has adopted comprehensive planning as the ideal framework for guiding development towards consistent comprehensive goals, while carefully balancing economic growth with safeguarding our great values and heritage.

Successive development plans adopted a scientific approach, making for the rational use of national resources, which enabled the Kingdom to achieve significant developments, exemplified by significant gains reflected in the various indicators of socioeconomic development.

Accumulated development over the past decades has achieved significant improvement in standards of living and the quality of life. Moreover, the Saudi economy has attained a prestigious status, becoming the largest and most vital Arab economy, having, for example, the largest industrial base, the largest business sector, and the largest financial market in the Arab world.

The Saudi economy is globally one of the largest and most powerful nineteen economies, allowing the Kingdom to join the group of twenty largest economies (G20), and to participate in its summits. Furthermore, the Kingdom has been selected for membership of the enlarged Global Financial Security Board. Such are the very significant signs of high

status of the Kingdom regionally and globally that they confirm the validity and efficacy of the development process pursued.

The Ninth Development Plan was being formulated while the global economy was in the throes of a severe financial and economic crisis. Nonetheless, the development programme adopted by the plan reflects the determination of the State to accelerate development and enhance the momentum gathered throughout the past decade, especially during the period of the Eighth Development Plan. The development programme of the plan is based on the wise directives of the leadership, urging continued investment and accelerated implementation of strategic projects in the coming years, to consolidate gains and keep pace with rapid international developments. The programme is also based on the solid foundations of the national economy, built progressively through the cumulative effects of numerous achievements of development over the past decades, as well as on many positive conditions; including the high level of solvency and liquidity of the banking sector, the low level of public debt, in addition to the excellent ratings of the business environment and investment climate as reflected by abundant global indicators.

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Aiming to reduce the impact of the global crisis on the national economy in the coming years, the Plan adopted a strategy based on attaching greater importance to intensifying the role of internal sources and driving forces of economic growth, as well as to developing the structure of the national economy. Hence, the Plan has paid special attention to the development of non-oil natural resources to enhance their contribution to local value chains, and to achieving a steady expansion in the use of modern technologies and improved production methods. Moreover, the Plan aims to achieve high rates of accumulation of fixed capital, expansion of the capacity of the national economy for absorbing high levels of investment, and increased export capacity, particularly of non-oil products and industries; in addition to upgrading of skills and productive capacities of Saudi labour and increasing its share of the national labour market.

The Ninth Development Plan constitutes the second stage in a strategic course that extends over the coming fifteen years, and has been prepared with the prospect of achieving sustainable development in mind. In the formulation of objectives, policies and programmes and the selection of projects, the Plan was guided by the speech of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, opening the second year of the fourth session of the Shura Council, in which he advised that the Kingdom's way forward is "comprehensive development, seeking, through well-thought development plans, the welfare and happiness of citizens; hoping to provide them with housing, work, education, health care and other services and amenities", adding "we are eager to eradicate poverty and give consideration to areas that did not undergo their share of development". The Plan was also guided by the resolutions of the Shura Council on the development plans and its reports on implementation.

The Ninth Development Plan is based on five main themes, together forming an integrated framework for furtherance and acceleration of balanced, comprehensive development in the coming few years, as well as for laying the foundations for sustainable development in the long run. These five themes are: continuing efforts to improve the standard of living and quality of life for citizens, development of national human resources and their employment, restructuring of the Saudi economy, balanced development among regions, enhancement of the competitiveness of the national economy and Saudi products in both the domestic and external markets.

In addition, the Plan focused on numerous other issues, such as continued expansion and maintenance of infrastructure, acceleration of the pace of economic and institutional reform and the privatization programme, promotion of technological and informatics development, as well as raising economic efficiency and productivity in the public and private sectors, development of natural resources, especially water, and development of environmental protection systems.

In conclusion, I wish to pay tribute to the fruitful cooperation and effective contribution by all government and private agencies

throughout the stages of preparing the Plan. This work would not have been possible without continued support and guidance from the wise leadership of our cherished country.

**Minister of Economy and Planning**

**Khalid bin Mohammad Alghosaibi**

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