

Beat: Business

## **PRESIDENT MACRON AND HH SAUDI RULER PRINCE BIN SALMAN STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIP**

### **LONG TERM BILATERAL STRATEGIC VISION**

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**USPA NEWS** - The three-day stay of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Paris is his first official visit to France from April 9 to 11, 2018 confirmed the willingness from both heads of states, to strengthen a long term partnership. HH the Prince Mohammed bin Salman met Prime Minister Edouard Philippe at Matignon on Monday, before a scheduled visit of the Station F founded by the serial entrepreneur, Xavier Niel (owner and founder of Station F, the largest European Digital campus) to meet French entrepreneurs. This visit was cancelled, and the time "to progress on the definition of entrepreneurial projects", according to the Prime Minister's office, in Matignon. His Highness Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Mohammed Bin Salman, was greeted by President Macron at the Elysée (late afternoon), on the following day, on Tuesday, April 10, just after the visit of another highness, HH Mohammed VI, King of Morocco (early afternoon), who sits down with President Macron for one hour. The same red carpet was therefore deployed and maintained on the Elysée court on the occasion of this "doubled" coming of sovereigns, by virtue of the protocol, the same day.

### **A LONG TERM BILATERAL PARTNERSHIP TO STRENGTHEN BETWEEN FRANCE AND SAUDI ARABIA-----**

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### **PRESIDENT MACRON WISHED A STRONGER ECONOMIC BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITH SAUDI ARABIA--**

"The third axis of the relationship is economic. It has led to several signatures, framework discussions, but it will continue to decline in the coming months until the visit that I will return. This economic relationship, it passes, on the one hand, by the development of French companies that can accompany the projects and Vision 2030 of Prince Mohammed in terms of energy diversification, in terms of sustainable city, in terms of innovation artificial intelligence, large networks, we have skills, know-how that fully justify the share of our companies. And this economic partnership, I hope, will intensify our relationship, development, job creation and, indeed, joint contracts. Explained the French President Emmanuel Macron-----

There is also the will to make investments in France and joint strategic investments and, in this respect, the sectors of media, telecommunications, innovation, leisure and luxury are identified as strategic and are consistent with the will of ours to bring precisely a project for French intelligence and French know-how. And we also have agri-food projects that we really care about. So we talked about several strategic topics, such as the DOUX company where a Saudi investor is already present. And I hope that we can continue these exchanges. Our desire is that the economic strategies that we carry on both sides can find the ability to jointly plan

cross-investments and complementary strategies. Finally, in terms of culture, education and research, a framework agreement has been signed to develop joint programs, to develop in the field of higher education and the promotion of the French language new initiatives on which we will continue to work. by the end of the year. And I think that what we have just signed is a very strong example of this fourth pillar." .Added the French President Emmanuel Macron

By launching a Franco-Saudi partnership to highlight the exceptional site of Mada'in Saleh, in the governorate of Al-Ula, which is a Mecca of Nabatean civilization, we mark a desire to have a partnership that is an archaeological, heritage, cultural, but also tourism, economic partnership, which also participates in a project which is yours, which is to show the depth of your culture and its roots in the most ancient civilizations and the will which is the ours to participate in this business. An agency is created today, partner of the Royal Saudi Commission devoted to this project. It will be led by Mr Gérard Mestrallet and will take action without delay." Acknowledged the head of state Emmanuel Macron \* Gerard Mestrallet, former CEO of Engie was appointed by President Macron as Special Envoy as part of an official mission as part of the project to build a future city in Saudi Arabia." concluded the French President Emmanuel Macron

#### THE FOUR PILLARS OF OUR BILATERAL RELATION FRANCE-SAUDI ARABIA-----

"On all of these topics - I am not exhaustive but I will complete depending on what you want on different points - , we therefore wished to recast on these four pillars the bilateral relationship because I believe very deeply that we are at a moment of our stories and the region that is yours that justifies it. So, I hear all the comments that are there, and we may come back to that in the legitimate questions and questions that come from civil society, human rights journalists, and the various sensitive issues around your issue. country. At the same time, I am also looking at what is going on in the region and other projects. We have a young leader who has eminent responsibilities and is moving to the highest positions in a country where 70% of the population is under 30 years of age. We can have the choice of staying on our classic positions. It may be decided that the first steps of modernizing his society are cosmetic. If we do that, then we let Prince Mohammed face those who, in his region, think the opposite and decide to go back, to stay to a political Islam or to terrorist choices." acknowledged The French President, Emmanuel Macron, during the Press Conference at Elysee Palace.-----

"I do not know everything, I am not a leader of Saudi Arabia and I do not know his society intimately enough. I know one thing is that if there is a chance that his project will succeed, it is France's responsibility to accompany him and therefore tell him: "You have already done a lot for women in your country. country. There is still a lot to do. There are sensitivities because our countries are not at the same level but we have a leader who spent more than 5% of his life time in France, whose population largely today studied in France, in Great Britain, in the United States, in Asia so who has seen other things. And so the seeds of change are there. And so, I will answer all the questions that arise. I know all the imperfections, I know the disagreements that we can have on certain subjects and we have mentioned them with a lot of frankness. France will continue to speak with many partners in the region who are not necessarily partners with Saudi Arabia because our relationship is not exclusive and because it is the strength of French diplomacy. But I know one thing: our determination to fight against terrorism, our desire for stability in the region and our ambition to modernize our societies, our desire to accompany a secular vision of our societies and to have a political project that allows the emancipation of people, has an additional chance of success if we work together. And for all these reasons, I have a lot of hope for the project that is ours and for all that we will do in the coming months until the visit, Your Royal Highness, that I will give you at the end of the year in your country, thanking you for bringing this invitation to your father's title and thanking you for these three days spent in France. Explained The French head of State, Emmanuel Macron, during the Press Conference at Elysee Palace.

#### STATEMENT OF THE SAUDI HH PRINCE BIN SALMAN DURING THE PRESS CONF AT ELYSEE PALACE-----

Prince Mohamed Bin Salmane: Our partnerships are very important especially at this time with changes in Europe and the Middle East as well as the rest of the world and our joint efforts in economy, culture and there are destructive potentials and alas those are in the Middle East, as well as the Iranian regime which is not intended to serve the ideology of the old regimes. With the \$ 150 MDS that was released they did not build anything or any school but only added missiles. They serve the terrorists, not just the tools, including bin Laden's son from Al Qaeda." Acknowledged the Saudi Crown Prince HH Mohamed Bin Salmane.-----

"And we are in contact with our interlocutors to oppose terrorism in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world to combat this instability. From our position in the Middle East and Arab world and in Europe, Saudi Arabia is a power and thanks to a great economy but also because my country is not alone, because its greatness also resides in all its alliances, at the same time Arab, in the Gulf and the Moslem world as well as our strength of ailles with Europe and in particular France to take up challenges. Regarding France, we have warned about security and terrorism in the Sahel for years before it developed so badly for Europe and the rest of the world and President Macron is aware of this. From an economic point of view, France is making reforms. In Saudi Arabia, we only use 10% of our resources and opportunities for trade, privatization. And the power of Saudi Arabia cannot copy, a model that exists elsewhere, in Europe or Africa.-----

The French companies that work for us in Saudi Arabia, and with us, have many common potentials and we are already creating jobs together. By virtue of the 2030 vision, we'd like to be a land of culture, recreation and hospitality. We want France to be our privileged partner. And our role as leaders is to take advantage of these potentialities." The Saudi Crown Prince HH Mohamed Bin Salmane concluded.

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United Press Association, Inc.  
3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168  
Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA  
(702) 943.0321 Local  
(702) 943.0233 Facsimile  
[info@unitedpressassociation.org](mailto:info@unitedpressassociation.org)  
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