

Airbus opens Riyadh headquarters

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Riyadh: Airbus has officially inaugurated its new Regional Headquarters in Riyadh, underscoring its long-term commitment to Saudi Arabia and the Middle East.

This milestone strengthens Airbus' presence in the Kingdom, enhancing its operations across commercial aviation, defense, space, and helicopters in the region.

The new HQ highlights Airbus' growing involvement in Saudi Arabia's aviation and aerospace sectors, where the company has been active since the 1970s. Airbus currently employs over 350 people in Saudi Arabia, with 30 percent of its workforce being Saudi nationals. The company aims to further boost local talent development and technological expertise.

This move aligns with Saudi Arabia's regional headquarters program,

which offers incentives such as a 30-year corporate income tax exemption, withholding tax immunity, and various support services for businesses.

Eid Al-Qahtani has been appointed as the president of Airbus' Riyadh-based regional headquarters. With more than 20 years of leadership experience — including his previous role as head of operations for Airbus Helicopters in Riyadh — Al-Qahtani will focus on strengthening partnerships with governments and stakeholders, as well as driving new business in the region.

Wouter Van Wersch, president of Airbus International, praised the appointment: “We are privileged to have Eid Al-Qahtani leading our operations in Saudi Arabia. His deep understanding of the country's goals and his proven leadership in the region make him the ideal person for this role.”

Earlier this year, Airbus signed an Industrial Participation agreement with Saudi Arabia's General Authority for Military Industries, supporting the Kingdom's Vision 2030 objectives.

This collaboration includes technology transfers and initiatives for industrial localization, such as SAMI Airbus Aircraft Maintenance Services — a joint venture between Saudi Arabian Military Industries and Airbus.

Al-Qahtani expressed his enthusiasm: “I am honored to lead Airbus from our new headquarters in Riyadh. Saudi Arabia is a strategically important market for us, and we are committed to supporting the Kingdom's long-term goals while nurturing the next generation of aerospace leaders.”

Saudi Arabia's efforts to attract international businesses are paying off. The Kingdom has already surpassed its 2030 target of 500 regional headquarters, with 540 international companies now established in Riyadh, according to Minister of Investment Khalid Al-Falih.

“Investors are coming not only for our vibrant market but also to explore the broader region,” he said.

