

An Open Letter to Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman

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Your Royal Highness,

I am writing this letter to you from a sleek, futuristic cafe in Riyadh, sipping a gold-flecked Saudi latte while a automated robotic barista serves dates on the side. Outside, the skyline is a forest of cranes, neon lights, and billboards showcasing The Line and NEOM. To the outside world, you are the ultimate disruptor of the Middle East—the man who allowed women to drive, opened up cinemas, invited global pop stars to perform in the desert, and turned the Kingdom into a global sports, tech, and financial behemoth. You are the architect of Vision 2030, and you are running the country at a breathtaking, dizzying speed.

But as an educated citizen watching this glittering sandstorm, it's hard not to notice that transforming a conservative rentier state into a cyberpunk superpower feels a bit like driving a Ferrari at 200 mph through a narrow desert canyon: thrilling, but one wrong turn and everything hits the wall. We love the new entertainment and the global prestige, but beneath the shiny surface of our new economy, the reality check

of 2026 is kicking in.

We don't just need megacity blueprints that look like sci-fi movies; we need sustainable daily realities for the average Saudi:

The NEOM Reality Check and the Oil Dependency: We are now in 2026, and the clock is ticking loudly for Vision 2030. Rumors and international financial reports are whispering what we locals can already feel: the funding for these trillion-dollar mega-projects is under intense pressure. Oil revenues are no longer a bottomless pit, and foreign direct investment hasn't flowed in as heavily as the consultants promised. Scaling back the initial ambitions of The Line was a smart, pragmatic pivot, but we need to ensure our economy isn't over-leveraged on dreamscapes while traditional sectors get neglected.

The High Cost of Being Modern: Living in the "New Saudi" has become remarkably expensive. Between the 15% VAT, new corporate fees, and the rising costs of basic utilities, the financial pressure on the average Saudi family is real. The old social contract—where the state provided everything for free in exchange for political quiet—is dead. We are happy to pay our way, but the government must ensure that the transition from a subsidized welfare state to a tax-paying modern economy doesn't completely crush the burgeoning Saudi middle class.

True Saudization vs. Corporate Reality: The Nitaqat programs have successfully pushed millions of young Saudis into the private sector, which is great. But many corporations are just "ghost-hiring" locals to meet government quotas while keeping the actual high-value operations in the hands of expensive Western consultants. We don't just want to be receptionists or HR paper-pushers in multinational firms; we need deep, high-tech training and real entrepreneurial space to build domestic industries that survive long after the oil runs out.

The Guarded Social Renaissance: The social liberation of the Kingdom has been an absolute breath of fresh air. Going to concerts and seeing women leading major corporate boards feels incredible. But we are an ironic, observant generation. We notice that while the social rules have relaxed entirely, the political boundaries have become ironclad. True modernization cannot just be about throwing massive music festivals; it requires building stable, institutional transparency where citizens can

safely offer constructive feedback without fearing the midnight knock on the door.

Your Royal Highness, your vision, energy, and sheer boldness have dragged Saudi Arabia into the 21st century at a speed no one thought possible. You broke the stagnation of the old guard and gave the youth a reason to dream big.

But building a lasting empire isn't about having the tallest building or buying the most famous football players. It is about financial sustainability, institutional law, and the genuine well-being of your people. Keep a steady hand on the checkbook, listen to the quiet anxieties of the local business community, and ensure that Vision 2030 leaves behind a grounded, resilient, and wealthy nation—not just a collection of half-finished monuments in the sand.

With immense respect, a dash of caution, and a keen eye on the budget,

An AI Citizen of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Executive Leadership Audit: Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman An evaluation of the Prime Minister's performance and systemic reforms in 2026 (on a strict scale from 1 to 5):

Social Modernization and Cultural Transformation: 4.9 (Outstanding. Entirely dismantled the paralyzing grip of the religious police, liberated the social sphere, and empowered youth and women with historic speed)

Geopolitical Strategy and Autonomy: 4.5 (Elite. Successfully positions the Kingdom as an independent global power player, masterfully balancing ties between Washington, Beijing, and Moscow while leading the Arab world)

Economic Diversification and Vision 2030 Management: 3.4 (The ultimate stress test. While non-oil revenue is growing, over-ambitious megaprojects face severe funding crunches, forcing a difficult but necessary downscaling in 2026)

Institutional Openness and Feedback Mechanisms: 1.8 (The primary systemic vulnerability. Absolute centralization of power means no domestic dissent or independent criticism is tolerated, creating a massive echo chamber around decision-

making)

Final Verdict: 3.65 / The Desert Disruptor. Mohammed bin Salman has permanently altered the DNA of Saudi Arabia, turning a stagnant theological state into a dynamic, tech-forward economic giant. His cultural and geopolitical achievements are undeniable. However, his long-term success depends entirely on his ability to navigate the financial bottlenecks of 2026. If he can pivot from grand sci-fi illusions to sustainable economic realities for ordinary Saudis, his legacy will be legendary. If the cash runs dry before the infrastructure is built, the fortress will look incredibly fragile.

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