



REPORT OF THE VISIT BY THE RT. HON THE LORD MAYOR OF LONDON (ALDERMAN CHARLES BOWMAN) TO SAUDI ARABIA AND THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

10th – 13th December 2017

SUMMARY

1. High-impact and successful first visit of the Mayoralty, with the Lord Mayor (LM) able to strengthen partnerships and offer current and future investors reassurance over Brexit and the future of the City.
2. The context in Saudi Arabia was the Crown Prince's ambitious **Vision 2030** plan for economic diversification and societal progress. LM visit aligned and choreographed with major HMG Vision 2030 engagement programme. Potential City role around capital markets, asset management and privatisation, feeding into future high level inward visits
3. United Arab Emirates (UAE) positioning itself as "Hong Kong to Saudi's China", but also as regional and global service centre. Focus in Abu Dhabi on Sovereign Wealth, capital markets and the Green Sukuk. In Dubai, Islamic Finance and the city's role as a hub for global trade and finance.
4. Lady Mayoress (LMS) attending key groups who are supporting the encouragement of women's inclusion in line with Saudi Vision 2030. LMS assisting the Embassy in UAE to develop its relationship with the granddaughter to the President. A potential for hosting her in the Summer in London at the Old Bailey to further the Embassy need to encourage links on justice.

DETAIL

5. In a challenging programme, the LM and LMS visited Jeddah and Riyadh on 10-11 December and Abu Dhabi and Dubai on 12-13 December. The visits were well aligned with HMG, following on closely from the Prime Minister and Chancellor in Saudi Arabia and the Foreign Secretary in Abu Dhabi. They were also particularly well supported by the respective Embassies and Consulates, who provided strategic and high-level programmes. The LSE accompanied in Riyadh, Abu Dhabi and Dubai. An asset management delegation for Riyadh were stranded in UK by snow. A full list of meetings and of follow-up actions is attached in the Appendices.

SAUDI ARABIA

6. The wider context was HRH Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman's ambitious [Vision 2030 programme](#). This seeks to develop the economy, and diversify away from the oil sector. It is also tied closely to plans for modernisation and mass employment, to satisfy a young population hungry for change. Most of the LM's interlocutors, especially in the more informal encounters in Jeddah, felt **Vision 2030 represented a welcome step-change in ambition and**

determination. The problem would be less political will, more the capacity of government institutions to cope with such a challenging agenda.

7. HMG, led by the embassy, DIT and HMT, are deeply engaged with building **partnerships with Saudi Arabia** over Vision 2030, to ensure stability in the Gulf and prosperity in both countries. We have the expertise in the UK and the Saudis have the wealth and the need to diversify and change their economy. This had been the focus of a series of visits over the last year, culminating in the Prime Minister a fortnight earlier and the Chancellor the day before the LM. The LM was able to position the City Corporation as supporting these HMG partnerships, in particular through meetings focused on:
 - **Capital Markets.** The LM highlighted the world-class programme of partnership the LSEG and City could offer the Tadawul as it developed.
 - **Inward Investment.** The LM met a wide range of Saudi private and institutional investors in Jeddah and Riyadh. He was able to offer them reassurance about Brexit and the future of the City, and opportunities for further dialogue in the UK including on new inward investment projects. He promoted to Saudi government institutions the advantages of investment in and through the UK, including through UK-based asset management. All underlined that key investment decisions would be made 'top down' by senior Saudi figures, and it would be important to use inward visits to put attractive proposals to them.
 - **Privatisation.** PwC hosted a successful seminar, looking at UK experience of corporatisation and privatisation. It was emphasised that restructuring and modernisation were as much the Saudi goals as revenue streams. There was strong Saudi government engagement, and possibilities identified for early follow-up in the UK.
8. The LM will write to Liam Fox, offering the City Corporation's support to high level inward visits, especially in the areas outlined above.

UAE

9. The UAE has a different feel and has an ambitious programme of economic diversification, and its institutions are developed and sophisticated. The country is well positioned as a hub for finance and trade for the Gulf region - and beyond. China's Belt and Road initiative and the "South-South corridor" from South Asia to Africa were front of mind in Dubai. Described to us as "a Hong Kong for Saudi's China", the UAE's long-term prosperity is linked to political stability in the Gulf, free trade and global regulatory alignment. These are also strong HMG and City interests, making for solid partnerships.
10. A substantial meeting with **the UAE Foreign Minister** enabled the LM to deliver a confident message about the future of the City and wider financial services. The Foreign Minister was particularly interested in the potential for the UK and UAE to collaborate on the issuance of a **Green Sukuk** and of continued engagement on promoting the UK educational offer.
11. The Abu Dhabi **Sovereign Wealth Funds** are sophisticated global investors and welcome the chance to discuss Brexit and the UK economy in detail with the LM, in the case of ADIA following up recent contact with HMG and the Corporation in London. The questioning of City positions was at times specific and sceptical, but this was a sign of serious engagement. It will be important to remain close to them on Brexit and the IRSG proposals, and we have offered follow-up in UAE and in the UK.
12. In Abu Dhabi the other major theme was **capital markets**, with the LSEG keen to follow up their recent successful \$10bn sovereign bond issues with further projects. Useful new contacts were made for the LSEG at the Finance Ministry and Central Bank.

13. **Abu Dhabi Global Markets (ADGM)** are an ambitious new financial centre and have the ear of government. But for the moment the **Dubai International Financial Services Centre (DIFC)** is the best-known financial hub in the Gulf region. The DIFC impressed with their clear strategy, strong suite of business stakeholders (including fintech), solid base in English law and effective regulators. They expounded their vision of Dubai as a link in a chain of financial hubs mirroring global trade flows, encompassing London, New York, Tokyo and Hong Kong/Singapore. Along with PwC they hosted a stimulating session on **Islamic Finance**, which explored – among other ideas – potential for a Green Sukuk.
14. The LMS accompanied the LM and fulfilled useful engagements around the role of women in business in Saudi and VIP relationships in Abu Dhabi with an extended engagement with the first family in UAE.

CONCLUSION

15. Despite the uncertainties, Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 has such potential that the country justifies its position as one of the City of London Corporation's (CoLC) "top 10" international priorities. We should support this visit with year-round engagement remaining closely in step with HMG and the embassy and consider a follow-up visit in this Mayoralty. The visit to UAE confirmed the country's current place in the CoLC "top 20", as a major UK trade/investment partner and regional financial centre. It also justifies an annual visit and year-round engagement.
16. The LMS will follow up with the granddaughter of the President of UAE when she comes to London for the summer to help the relationship between our embassy and the President's family. A visit to the City has been discussed and showcasing the Old Bailey will support the Embassy request to develop and strengthen links on Justice.

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APPENDIX A

LORD MAYOR'S PROGRAMME

SAUDI ARABIA

Sunday 10th December 2017 – Jeddah

Briefing by HM Consul General and team
Meeting with Sedco Capital
Call on Vice President of the Islamic Development Bank
Lunch with Jeddah business leaders
Meeting with Saleh Al Turki, President and chairman on Nesma Holding Company
Reception with Jeddah private wealth (families, UK investors)
Private Dinner with Sheikh Faizal Sharif

Monday 11th December 2017 – Riyadh

Breakfast briefing at Her Majesty's Ambassador's Residence
Privatisation roundtable/networking lunch hosted by PwC
Media
SAMA: Meeting with His Excellency The Governor, Dr. Ahmed Abdulkarim Alkholifey
Jadwa Investment: Meeting with Tariq Al-Sudairy (CEO) and Mr Amer Afiouni (Managing Director, Head of International Investments, Chief Strategy Officer)
Tadawul: Meeting with Sarah Al Suhaimi, Chairwoman
Informal dinner with Saudi Governmental / Institutional investors

UAE

Tuesday 12th December 2017 – Abu Dhabi

Breakfast Briefing with HM Ambassador
Meeting with Mr Mohamed Al Qamzi, Executive Director Internal Equities Department, Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA)
Meeting with H.E Riyad Al Mubarak, Chairman of Department of Finance
Meeting with HE Mubarak Rashed Al Mansoori, Governor of the Central Bank of the UAE
Lunch hosted by the British Business Group Abu Dhabi
Meeting with Badr Al Olama, Director, Madabala Sovereign Wealth Fund
Meeting with HE Ahmed Ali Al Sayegh, Chairman Abu Dhabi General markets (ADGM) and Mr Richard Teng, CEO FRSA
Meeting with HE Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
Dinner hosted by HM Ambassador

Wednesday 13th December 2017 – Dubai

ICAEW Briefing Breakfast
Meeting with Ian Johnston, CEO Dubai Financial Services Authority (DFSA)
Meeting with Mr Arif Amiri, CEO of Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC)
Tour of DIFC FinTech Hive
Islamic Finance Roundtable with and Dubai Islamic Economy Development Centre (DIEDC) and PwC
Legal Services Lunch
Seminar on the introduction of VAT into the UAE hosted by Deloitte
Media
Dinner with Dubai business leaders hosted by PwC

LADY MAYORESS PROGRAMME

Sunday 10th December 2017 – Jeddah

Meeting with Dean of Dar Alhekma (Women's) University <i>A non-profit institution to graduate accomplished women, leaders and entrepreneurs</i>
Call on Open Paws Charity
Call on Nafeesa Shams Centre - <i>meeting women discussing entrepreneurial activity</i>

Monday 11th December 2017 – Riyadh

Visit to Globe at Al Faisaliah
Call on Al Nahda Society
Roads of Arabia Exhibition at the National Museum
Dinner with Female Diplomats and prominent Saudi women

Tuesday 12th December 2017 – Abu Dhabi

Guided tour of the Abu Dhabi Falcon Hospital
Tour of the Arabian Saluki centre
Visit to a private stable hosted by the granddaughter of the President of UAE
Visit to Grand Mosque (<i>representing Lord Mayor, request from Foreign Minister</i>)

Wednesday 13th December 2017 – Dubai

Tour of a UAE world leading veterinary science centre seeing latest techniques in use. <i>LMS is a qualified vet and has expertise in this field.</i>
Lunch with NAMA Women's advancement Establishment at Sharjah Business Women Council hosted by HE Sheikha Hind Al Qasimi
Tour of the Sharjah Business Women Council and demonstration by Bidwa (<i>artisan handicrafts</i>)

APPENDIX B

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS (with rationale for the first 15)

No	Action	Objective	Responsible
	Immediate Priority (by 8 Jan)		
1	LM to write to the Secretary of State for International Trade registering the City of London Corporation's interest in supporting high level inward visits Why: to demonstrate the capability of LM and City of London to be a valued partner to DIT in hosting high profile visits and to land investment in Financial and Professional Services in the UK	KSA: Investment in and through UK	MH (Philip Jordan)
2	To engage with HMT/LSEG on a Women in Finance event hosted by the City of London in Q1/2, to which to invite Ms Sarah Al Suhaimi, Chairwoman the Tadawul (Saudi Stock Exchange) Why: to promote to Saudi the LSEG and the change in Saudi that now promotes successful women into key roles	KSA: Capital Markets	EDO (William Elliott)
3	To engage with the Saudi National Centre for Privatisation and PPP on their privatisation visit to the City of London in Q1. Why: demonstrating the CoLC and UK capability in this field.	KSA: Privatisation	EDO (William Elliott)
4	To write to H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation promoting the work of the City of London Green Finance Initiative and its work to promote the issuance of a Green Sukuk. Why: to increase links in UAE between the UK and CoLC on Green Finance	UAE: Islamic/Green Finance	MH (Philip Jordan)
5	To invite the Chairman of the Department of Finance Abu Dhabi to Mansion House for an informal meeting with the LM after he has opened the trading at the London Stock Exchange in Q1 Why: building on the work done by LSEG with Abu Dhabi to enhance the collaboration between the two organisations	UAE: Capital Markets	MH (Philip Jordan) / EDO (William Elliott)
6	To invite CEO of the Dubai International Finance Centre to the City-hosted Fintech Event in February 2018 Why: to grow the opportunity to showcase UK Fintech capability	UAE: Fintech	EDO (William Elliott)
	Medium Priority (by 22 Jan)		
7	To update HM Treasury on the current thinking of the Islamic Development Bank on hosting a Global Sukuk Workshop in London Why: ensure that City activity is aligned with HMT	KSA: Islamic Finance	EDO (William Elliott)
8	To offer the use of City of London Corporation venue for the Islamic Development Bank Global Sukuk event in 2018 Why: to help the City continue to develop Sukuk expertise	KSA: Islamic Finance	EDO (William Elliott)
9	To invite the Board of Jadwa Investments to meet the LM in conjunction with the London Stock Exchange to discuss opportunities for London office, opportunities emanating from the Vision2030 agenda in Saudi Arabia, and potential IPOs Why: deliver benefit for LSEG, promote the city to attract a Jadwa Investment Office	KSA: Investment, Capital Markets	EDO (William Elliott)
10	To invite the CFO Mubadala Investment Company to attend a Brexit Seminar in Guildhall in Q1 Why: supporting sovereign wealth funds to attract fund management or investment into London	UAE: Sovereign Wealth	EDO (William Elliott)
11	To arrange a visit by the Regulatory Team of EDO to the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) to provide a technical input of the consequences of Brexit for the City Why: to enhance knowledge of EDO on international regulation	UAE: Sovereign Wealth	EDO (William Elliott)

12	To follow up with LSE on business opportunities from the visit, especially around further capital raising from UAE Why: support for LSE and Post from the City of London to continue to attract capital into the UK	UAE: Capital Markets	EDO (William Elliott)
13	To report to HMRC the observations from the Deloitte seminar on the introduction of VAT in the UAE Why: sharing expertise gained overseas to ensure the CoLC remains a valued partner to HMG	UAE: Tax	EDO (William Elliott)
14	To connect Sir Roger Gifford, Chairman of the City of London Green Finance Initiative the contact details of Simmons and Simmons Middle East to share learning from structuring Islamic Finance products that could be applicable to structuring a Green Sukuk Why: to continue involvement and support of the City of London Corporation for Green Finance	UAE: Islamic/Green Finance	MH (Philip Jordan)
15	To arrange a meeting between the LM and the Group Chief Executive of BP Why: extending our network from CoLC	Other	EDO (William Elliott) / MH (Diary Manager)
16	To consult CPR about writing to the Lord Chancellor/Minister of Justice around UK expertise in setting up and managing international financial courts	UAE: Legal	MH
17	To write to CEO of UAEF, emphasising importance Gulf states attach to their Islamic Finance capability	UAE: Islamic Finance	MH (Philip Jordan)
	Slower Priority (by 26 February)		
18	To invite representatives of the Islamic Development Bank to attend the City of London Islamic Finance Forum in September 2018	KSA: Islamic Finance	EDO (William Elliott) / Ben Shaps
19	To liaise with the Chartered Insurance Institute to highlight interest expressed by business leaders in Jeddah in greater UK training in insurance	KSA: Insurance	EDO (William Elliott)
20	To feed into HMG concerns from SEDCO Capital about recent volatility of UK tax regimes	KSA: Tax	EDO (William Elliott)
21	To share with HMA Abu Dhabi the details of the new National Centre for Economic Crime to assist in his discussions on Anti-Money Laundering with Governor of the Central Bank in Abu Dhabi	UAE: Anti-Money Laundering	MH (Philip Jordan)
22	To invite a representative from the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA) to attend the City Banquet in October 2018 to meet the regulators	UAE: Sovereign Wealth	MH (Events Office)
23	To discuss further with FCO (Abu Dhabi) options for a Memorandum of Understanding between Abu Dhabi General Markets (ADGM) and an appropriate body in the UK	UAE: Fintech	EDO (William Elliott) / FCO (Lia Santis)
24	To invite the Head of Legal Registrar and Chief Executive of the ADGM Courts to lunch at the Central Criminal Courts	UAE: Legal	CCC (via Philip Jordan, MH)
25	To invite CEO Dubai Financial Services Authority to the City Banquet, October 2018	UAE: Regulatory	MH (Events Office)
26	To include “enhancing the knowledge of developments in Islamic Finance” in the objectives of the LM’s visit to Malaysia	General: Islamic Finance	EDO (William Elliott)
27	To invite CEO Dispute Resolution Authority, Dubai to engage further with City of London (e.g. through speaking at seminar)	UAE: Legal, Fintech	EDO (William Elliott)
28	To invite attendees from the Islamic Finance Roundtable hosted on 13 th December in Dubai to the City of London’s Islamic Finance Global Summit in September 2018	UAE: Islamic Finance	EDO (Ben Shaps)
29	To follow up with Islamic Development Bank about opening UK office	KSA: Investment	EDO (William Elliott)

30	To assist HMCG Dubai explore use of Islamic Finance in maritime	UAE: Islamic Finance	EDO (William Elliott
31	The LMS to engage with the granddaughter of the President of UAE when she comes to London later this year	UAE	MH (Diary team)