



Media Note
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United States and Saudi Arabia Sign Memorandum of Understanding on Science and Technology Cooperation

Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, Environment, and Science Claudia A. McMurray and Vice President of the King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST) Prince Turki bin Saud signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on science and technology cooperation between the United States and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on December 2, 2008 in Riyadh.

The United States and Saudi Arabia have a long-standing relationship in science and technology involving cooperation between technical agencies, academic institutions, and private industry. The Memorandum of Understanding will formalize the decades-long relationship between the two countries.

This agreement will permit greater agency-to-agency cooperation across a range of scientific and technological fields. It will enable enhanced cooperation between Saudi Arabia and the United States in priority areas including science and technology entrepreneurship, materials sciences, water purification, education methods, plant genomics, and other advances in agriculture, health, and biotechnology. It will facilitate mutual efforts to develop national and regional capacities in monitoring and protecting the marine environment, studying and identifying ways to mitigate negative aspects of climate change, and the conservation of energy resources.

Saudi Arabian Government science and technology infrastructure is centered at KACST, which performs policy and management functions, as well as resource allocations for research and development through its subsidiary institutes. KACST leadership in Saudi Arabia is slated to implement a five-year, \$30 billion program to upgrade its science and technology infrastructure.

The Memorandum of Understanding will give U.S. scientists greater access to new research opportunities, provide U.S. academic institutions the opportunity to form new partnerships with centers of learning in the Middle East, and provide new ways for the U.S. science and technology business community to be more globally competitive. The United States looks forward to working with Saudi Arabia in building a closer relationship in science and technology cooperation as this ambitious five-year plan moves forward.

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 [BACK TO TOP](#)

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