[Visit of the Crown Prince](https://nation.com.pk/17-Feb-2019/visit-of-the-crown-prince" \t "_new)

Senator Rehman Malik February 17, 2019 the nation

The world is changing fast with multiple issues; meanwhile terrorism has changed the face of the world. The incident of 9/11 brought various regional conflicts and a worldwide economic meltdown. Middle East and South Asia are experiencing the worst period of the present times.

We witnessed Iraq war with highest death toll and massive destruction of almost the entire infrastructure. It was followed by Arab Spring, which spread to Egypt resulting in the ouster of President Hosni Mubarak.

Let me highlight that Arab spring brought number of adverse changes in Middle East and many Muslim countries suffered its bad effects which will continue for a long time. The present efforts by Saudi Arabia will help in normalising the situation in these countries.

The war syndrome was prompted by Daesh in the Middle East. Daesh adopted the form of guerilla warfare and in a short span of time it expanded and emerged as a most brutal terrorist organisation after Al-Queda.

Saudi Arabia played a wise key role as an elder brother of Muslim world in containing the further destruction in the Middle East. King Salman bin Abdul Aziz took over the reins in difficult days and created a new team with new vision for his people. I happened to meet King Salman bin Abdul Aziz during one of my visit to Saudi Arabia and I recall my interaction with him sitting side by side in a dinner hosted by King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz in the Royal Palace; I found him a pleasant, polite and wise dignitary.

Appointment of Prince Mohammad bin Salman as Crown Prince of Saudia was an apt decision by his father in prevailing situation. In considerably short span of time he acquired firm grip over the national and International affairs.

With the young and farsighted leadership, the Kingdom took substantial measures to set its national priorities and started implementing new reforms; that includes economic reforms as well as the austerity drive. The actions taken against corruption brought every renowned figure of the country under accountability process.

The Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman has emerged as the driving force behind ‘Vision 2030’; the kingdom’s long-term economic plan in order to stop its dependence on Oil. This was the biggest initiative taken to restore the Saudi kingdom’s stake in global oil markets by keeping the oil price low enough for a sustainable longer duration.

The kingdom successfully lobbied for laws restricting the powers of the religious police. The kingdom decided the women participating and empowerment in the national building and resultantly, in February 2017, a Saudi woman took the top slot in the Saudi Stock Exchange. The most remarkable move of the kingdom was the removal of ban on female drivers in September 2017, which was the first step towards giving more confidence to woman elite of the Kingdom.

The government took a great step by eradicating Saudi Arabia’s Wali system. The various administrative reforms are making the kingdom as a moderately modern Islamic State which is giving more confidence in Public.

It was HRH Mohammad Bin Salman who announced Saudi Arabia’s first nuclear reactor in November 2018. The kingdom aims to build 16 nuclear facilities over the next 20 years which is a great initiative. I recall that Saudia was the first country which expressed great happiness when Pakistan announce to be the first Islamic nuclear country and we still remember the gesture of then King of Saudia announced 100000 bbl of oil per month as support to Pakistan.

The initial steps taken for the collection of taxes and cuts in subsidies, a diversification plan, the creation of a $2 trillion Saudi sovereign wealth fund, and a series of strategic economic reforms called the National Transformation Program.

It was good note that an austerity drive slashed the state budget, freezing government contracts and reducing the pay of civil employees but with additional benefit to the employees.

I also feel that the recent reforms introduced in Saudi Arabia will have a positive impact on the Middle East, as it will bring a modern approach to governance as well as social and political structures of Arab states. The wave of modernisation will also prove helpful in de-radicalising the youth and Saudi has excellent program of de radicalisation of youth infected with terrorism from neighbouring Yemen.

I hope that the newly formed Islamic force does not remain restricted to the Middle East but also play a constructive role in many other Muslim counties including Afghanistan.

I feel proud of this fact that the concept of this Islamic force was initiated by me and it was discussed with King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz after discussing with UAE leadership in Abu Dhabi and later on I handed over its draft to the Saudi Ambassador in UAE.

I proposed in my draft, that this Islamic force should continue to be increased and strengthened to help the needy Muslim countries facing internal and external threats and should be strong arm of OIC. There should be revolving command of three years from every Muslim Member State .This force should consist of troops from all the Muslim States with reasonable contribution of funds by member states. I hope this Islamic force becomes a strong arm of Muslim Ummah.

I hope General Raheel Sharif will organise the Islamic Force on above mentioned lines.

The biggest challenge for Muslim Ummah is to defeat Daesh, which is likely to become a more lethal terrorist organisation with the passage of time. Halting its growth should be the priority of this newly created Islamic Force.

I propose that Crown Prince Muhammad Bin Salman may take initiative to mediate peace in Afghanistan and his personal attention and initiative for peace will help to bring all the stakeholders on the table including USA because of his personal equation with President Donald Trump.

I would also like to appeal that HRH may use his influence over PM Modi to stop killing of innocent Kashmiris Muslims who are peacefully demanding their rights of self-determination. He perhaps may also express his solidarity with Kashmiris in their just cause during his upcoming visit to India.

He may perhaps also consider to consolidate Muslim Ummah by bringing all of them on one forum and in the meantime other Muslim countries including Iran hostile to Saudia Arabia should give up their false and complexes reservations and join our elder brother Saudi Arabia to make the Muslim Ummah a strong fort of Islam.

Saudi Arabia is very dear to us and we respect Saudi Arabia as elder brother and the solid bond is due to presence of Holy Places in Saudi Arabia and due to strong bilateral relationship. Saudi Arabia has always stood with Pakistan in its hours of need and played very important role in the development of Pakistan. Recent commitments of the Saudi leadership including the King Salman bin Abdul-Aziz and the Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman to help Pakistan to come out of Economic crises are in lines with their love for Pakistan and Pakistani people. Every Pakistani is always ready to stand with Saudi brothers to defend the Saudi interests.

I remember the visit of late King Faisal bin Abdul Aziz during the Summit Conference in 1974 and his love for Pakistan and his friendship with Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. Since then, the relations between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan kept on growing and strengthening. I am of firm belief that these relations would continue to get stronger and stronger with the passage of time.

In the end I would like to welcome HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman to his second home Pakistan

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