

## Saudi Arabia gives SA energy sector \$10bn boost

A \$10bn investment pledge into the country's energy sector by Saudi Arabia is set to enhance energy security, create capacity and reduce the cost of energy in South Africa.



Photo: [sanews.gov.za](https://www.sanews.gov.za)

The pledge was made during President Cyril Ramaphosa's State visit to Saudi Arabia.

"This commitment from the kingdom is a demonstration of confidence in our economy and gives further impetus to South Africa's drive to raise \$100bn in new investment over the next five years to create jobs and for development," said Ramaphosa.

He characterised his state visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a remarkable success. He engaged in official talks with King Salman bin Abdulaziz al Saud, Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman and the government of Saudi Arabia during his one-day visit in the Arabic country.

The state visit provided a platform to Ramaphosa and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to deliberate on various issues of mutual concern, as well as to deepen and strengthen bilateral, political, economic and cultural relations between the two countries.

The president was accompanied by the ministers of international relations and cooperation; defence and military veterans; energy; police and the deputy minister of trade and industry.

Ramaphosa was also conferred with the Order of King Abdulaziz, the highest honour by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia awarded to citizens of Saudi Arabia and foreigners for meritorious service to the kingdom and is named after King Abdulaziz Al Saud, the founder of the modern Saudi state.

## **Saudi Arabia backs SA to receive observer status**

During the visit, Saudi Arabia pledged support for South Africa to be accorded the observer status in the Organisation for Islamic Co-operation (OIC).

The OIC is the second largest inter-governmental organisation after the United Nations with a membership of 57 states spread over four continents.

It aims to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world.

An observer status will give South Africa a number of privileges in terms of accessing developmental co-operation support, especially its financial institutions that support infrastructure development as well.

South Africa and Saudi Arabia have also signed memoranda of understanding on defence and on co-operation in the energy sector.

Ramaphosa applauded the significant work done by the South Africa-Saudi Arabia Joint Economic Commission, which is co-chaired by respective ministers of trade and industry.

“The seventh edition of the Joint Economic Commission took place in South Africa in 2016 and we look forward to building on the gains made at the forthcoming meeting, scheduled to take place in October later this year,” said Ramaphosa.

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