

SIIS 2022: Next decade to be time of Saudi Arabia, transformations irreversible

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The innovative approach of Vision 2030 is gradually crystallising in changes in one of the most traditional industries in Saudi Arabia, which is steel. The opening day of the 2nd Saudi International Iron and Steel Conference (SIIS) held on September 12-14 in the sunny and hospitable Riyadh gave a strong message about the irreversible transformations in the Kingdom.

The transformations and innovations in the steel industry became one of the topics of the SIIS 2022. While some of the steps are already implemented, plenty of new recommendations and policies are underway, Metal Expert has learnt. “National development plan for the steel industry includes of expansion of production potential in hot flat steel, tin plates and some other value-added segments to cut imports by half,” Bandar Al Khorayef, the Minister of Industry and Mineral resources, mentioned during his speech. “The expected to see 6.2 million tpy capacity coming on stream in few years. One of the projects is an integrated 1.2 million t sheet mill, which provides shipbuilding, pipes sector and producers of reservoirs with steel. Another one is more than 1 million tpy project for the needs of automotive, pipes, and home appliances,” the minister added.

The key pillar of such an approach is the development of different industrial clusters, which are providing new business opportunities for Saudi steelmakers in view of massive localisation efforts. The automotive industry is among the pioneers in this field. “We decided to enter mobility with 100% electrical vehicles factory giving the signal that green transition is irreversible. However, it is not the sole EV, it is a cluster. We are no longer satisfied with stand-alone production. The aim is to develop the entire chain,” Khalid Al-Falih, the Minister of Investment, said. “We start with the automotive industry, it is easier to enter other sectors, such as trains white goods etc. as there are many overlaps with automotive,” he underlined during the ministerial panel.

While the process is not to be easy due to some global factors, Saudi Arabia is considered the country, which has the ability to handle the massive transformation programme. “Saudi Arabia has strong industrial and logistic potential and the government will cope with

challenges. COVID proved this. Now we are even more ready to withstand challenges,” Bandar Al Khorayef said. “We look at existing capacity and try to reuse it in an efficient way to create more added values,” he mentioned.

Considering the number of participants and the tight agenda more news has yet to come. Metal Expert is ready to provide our subscribers and followers with the latest developments.