

## Egypt and KSA look to stronger business ties, including steel sector

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Egypt and Saudi Arabia, which have common cultural aspects, have been talking about the expansion of business ties. Both are looking to integrating the industrial sectors, including steel segment. It might be a win-win situation.

Being the two biggest economies in the MENA region, Egypt and Saudi Arabia have to develop cooperation, Ahmed Ezz, founder and chairman of Ezz Steel, mentioned during the 2nd Saudi International Iron and Steel Conference (SIIS). "One of the largest countries in the Arab world is Egypt and Saudi Arabia. We can cooperate in many sectors. The most vivid is the automotive industry as the Kingdom aims to lift production to the highest level. Secondly, in the various projects' implementation. Egypt is right on the other side of the Red Sea, we do not need anything more," he said.

Saudi Arabia is thought to take advantage of the close cooperation with Egypt as well. The workforce is believed the key one. "Egypt is a cradle for engineers. Most of the graduated specialists find their place in the position in the Saudi steel industry", a participant of SIIS underlined.

Taking into account the determination of the two countries to tighten cooperation, more cases are about to be heard soon. "We have more than 70 years of success in the direct and indirect investment in the industrial sector of Egypt. We can always find the sphere, where to cooperate. No matter if it is iron ore, steel or hydrocarbon sector," Ahmed Ezz, resumed.

According to the Export Council for Building Materials, Refractories and Metal Industries, Saudi Arabia became the third largest sales destination for Egyptian steelmakers in H1 2022 as the iron and steel trade expanded by 16% on an annualised basis, hitting \$95 million.