

## Press release

Paris, 28<sup>th</sup> October 2021

### Thales and the Royal Commission for AlUla sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for smart and sustainable city development

---

The French group Thales has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with The Royal Commission for AlUla – the remarkable natural and cultural heritage destination in north-west Saudi Arabia – to implement its smart and sustainable city.

With a strong track record in delivering solutions that support smart, livable and sustainable cities, Thales will provide the Royal Commission with innovation excellence, technological expertise and global experience to support the ambition of becoming a global benchmark destination in sustainable development and as a place to visit, live and work.

The development of AlUla encompasses a broad range of initiatives across archaeology, tourism, culture, education and the arts, reflecting the ambitious commitment to cultivate tourism and leisure in Saudi Arabia set out in the national Vision 2030 transformation program.

Drawing on its experience in complex, high-tech programmes and its expertise with the latest digital tools, Thales's smart city solutions help authorities and operators optimise the management of sites, public spaces and the services offered to residents and visitors.

By harnessing technologies such as Big Data and Artificial Intelligence, Thales offers complete and scalable solutions to large areas seeking to improve the efficiency of their cities.

Mobility, conservation of natural resources, safety and security, crisis management, energy management and other functions all rely on systems requiring an extensive network of specifically designed sensors. Thales's digital platform fuses, analyses and aggregates this information to meet the specific requirements and operating constraints of each customer. By doing so, Thales' solution combines all the information to provide meaningful insights and improve the customer's operations.

The Royal Commission for AlUla and Thales will work within a co-construction framework to make AlUla a unique model of economic, social and environmental development with the best standards in the fields of security, sustainability and well-being for the city and its inhabitants.



"This Memorandum of Understanding, signed through the French Agency for AIUla Development, demonstrates the multi-sectoral and high-level expertise we are making available to the Royal Commission for AIUla. We are fully committed within the framework of the intergovernmental agreement of 10 April 2018, alongside the Royal Commission for AIUla to make the development of AIUla County and its openness a global reference." **G rard Mestrallet, Executive Chairman of AFALULA**

"As guardians of a unique location featuring a UNESCO world heritage site, our goal is to responsibly and sustainably regenerate the cultural and natural landscape of AIUla for future visitors and to improve quality of life and liveability for AIUla's residents. Delivering a smart, safe and sustainable city is implicit in achieving our ambition" **Amr AIMadani, CEO, Royal Commission for AIUla**

"We are honoured to be part of this exceptional project, to contribute to the quality of life of the inhabitants, to the development of this unique tourist destination and to the stimulation of the local economy. To take part in all the development life cycle of AIUla, Thales will mobilize and federate the best-suited companies from KSA and France to create an ecosystem of local players. Thales is committed to transferring knowledge, with the express purpose of developing local competencies for the technologies and services implemented in AIUla." **Pascal Lesaulnier, Chairman and CEO, Thales Saudi Arabia**

---

#### About AFALULA (French Agency for AIUla Development)

The French Agency for AIUla Development (Afalula) was founded in Paris in July 2018 following an intergovernmental agreement signed by France and Saudi Arabia in April of that year. Afalula aims to support its Saudi partner, The Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU), in the co-construction of the economic, touristic, and cultural development of AIUla, a region located in the North-West of Saudi Arabia which benefits from outstanding natural and cultural heritage. The agency's mission is to mobilize French knowledge and expertise and to gather the finest operators and companies in the fields of archaeology, museography, architecture, environment, tourism, hospitality, infrastructure, education, security, agriculture, botany and the sustainable management of natural resources.

---

#### About RCU (Royal Commission for AIUla)

The Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU) was established by royal decree in July 2017 to preserve and develop AIUla, a region of outstanding natural and cultural significance in north-west Saudi Arabia. RCU's long-term plan outlines a responsible, sustainable, and sensitive approach to urban and economic development, that preserves the area's natural and historic heritage, while establishing AIUla as a desirable location to live, work, and visit. This encompasses a broad range of initiatives across archaeology, tourism, culture, education, and the arts, reflecting a commitment to meeting the economic diversification, local community empowerment, and heritage preservation priorities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 programme.

---

#### About Thales

Thales (Euronext Paris: HO) is a global leader in advanced technologies, investing in digital and "deep tech" innovations – connectivity, big data, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and quantum computing – to build a confident future crucial for the development of our societies. The Group provides its customers – businesses, organisations and governments – in the defense, aeronautics, space, transport, and digital identity and security domains with solutions, services and products that help them fulfil their critical role, consideration for the individual being the driving force behind all decisions.

Thales has 81,000 employees in 68 countries. In 2020 the Group generated sales of €17 billion.



THALES

**PRESS CONTACT**

**AFALULA**

**Director Communications, Marketing, Innovation & Public Relations**

**Mathias Curnier**

+33 (0)6 77 04 56 18

[mathias.curnier@afalula.com](mailto:mathias.curnier@afalula.com)

**Thales, Middle East and Africa**

**Head of Communications**

**Tarek Solimane**

[Tarek.solimane@thalesgroup.com](mailto:Tarek.solimane@thalesgroup.com)

**Thales, Media Relations**

**Security**

**Constance Arnoux**

+33 (0)6 44 12 16 35

[constance.arnoux@thalesgroup.com](mailto:constance.arnoux@thalesgroup.com)