

Press release

Paris, June 7, 2023

The French Agency for AIUla Development (AFALULA) welcomes the signing of a major strategic partnership between the Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU) and the leading French engineering group Bouygues Construction for the construction management of the architectural masterpiece designed by Jean Nouvel in the Sharaan Nature Reserve in AIUla.

Saudi Arabia and France signed an intergovernmental agreement in April 2018 on the sustainable development of the AIUla region and its transformation into a world-class cultural and tourism destination.

As a result of this agreement, the French Agency for AIUla Development (AFALULA) was created to mobilize all French know-how (experts, operators, companies) and to support its Saudi partner, the Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU), in a spirit of collaborative development.

In developing AIUla, it is the joint desire of Saudi Arabia and France to implement a new model of economic and tourism development, focused on environmental conservation, respect for history and the land, and inclusion of the local population. This approach is at the heart of the bilateral agreement signed between the two governments.

The signing of the agreement between the Royal Commission for AIUla and the major French engineering group Bouygues Construction follows the conclusion of many partnerships between leading French companies and institutions and the RCU. The AIUla project has recently welcomed new contributors covering all areas of development in the region:

RATP Dev for the implementation of a 360 Mobility plan, the Centre Pompidou for the creation of a Museum of Contemporary Art in AIUla, Amane Advisors for waste management services, idverde for the sustainable landscaping of AIUla, and the FERRANDI Paris school for the creation of a training college in culinary arts, hotel management and tourism professions (ICTH). And let's not forget the SEA consortium (Setec, Egis, Assystem), Dassault Systèmes, Thales and Systra, who will be offering AIUla intelligent solutions for sustainable, innovative and inclusive development, for the benefit of the local population and international visitors.

“The signing of this ambitious partnership between France's leading sustainable construction group and the Royal Commission for AIUla bears witness to our shared ambition to develop in AIUla projects that are conceived in harmony with the site, with absolute respect for its history and landscapes, biodiversity and territories. This partnership is also a reminder of the excellence of our French companies when it comes to cutting-edge technologies designed to create responsible environments that guarantee a unique experience. We are proud of AFALULA's success in mobilizing an innovative ecosystem of French companies. In 5 years, 250 contracts have been signed between French companies and our



Saudi partners, representing a total budget of €1.6 billion.” **Gérard Mestrallet, Executive Chairman of AFALULA**

The partnership signed with Bouygues Construction covers the construction management of the Sharaan Resort and International Summit Centre designed by French architect Jean Nouvel in the AIUla Nature Reserve of the same name.

About AFALULA (French Agency for AIUla Development)

Born as a result of an intergovernmental agreement signed by France and Saudi Arabia in April 2018, the French Agency for AIUla Development (AFALULA) was founded in Paris in July 2018. In the spirit of collaborative development, AFALULA’s objective is to support its Saudi partner, the Royal Commission for AIUla (RCU), in the sustainable economic, tourism, and cultural development of AIUla, a region with an exceptional natural and cultural heritage located in the north-west of Saudi Arabia. The Agency’s mission is to mobilize all of France’s expertise and know-how and to bring together the best operators and companies in the fields of archaeology, museography, architecture, urban planning, tourism, hotel management, infrastructure, education, security, agriculture, botany, and sustainable natural resource management.

About the 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 Bouygues Construction

With 32,400 employees working in 60 countries, Bouygues Construction designs, builds and rehabilitates infrastructures and complex buildings all over the world. The Group’s teams support the development of low-carbon energy production, public transport infrastructures, green buildings and neighbourhoods in different sectors such as health, education, work, tourism, leisure, public services, defence, etc. The teams’ commitment is based on three top priorities: safety culture, respect for human rights and ethics. Bouygues Construction has pledged to cut its greenhouse gas emissions by 30% by 2030 and offers its customers a wide range of low-carbon solutions. In 2022, the company generated sales of €9.3 billion (excluding Energies & Services businesses, transferred to Equans in January 2023).

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