



# A biotechnology oasis



**T**he COVID-19 pandemic, which has brought much of the world to a standstill under lockdowns and caused hardship to millions around the globe, has been a wake-up call to the importance of biotechnology and the promise it holds.

Thanks to recent advances in the field, the world was able to produce vaccines in record time—thus saving millions of lives. Biotechnological breakthroughs have also brought hope to those suffering from diseases that, until less than a decade ago, were thought to be fatal. Today, we are able to bring hope to so many people and allow them to live healthy and prosperous lives.

The Riyadh Global Medical Biotechnology Summit comes at a critical time for the world, but also an important time for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Saudi National Vision 2030 has identified addressing health and economic challenges, increasing non-oil revenues, and supporting innovation and entrepreneurship as key pillars for the future of the country.

We are proud to have brought together the local, regional and international biotechnology community virtually this year. We are happy and humbled to have had leading researchers, academics and industrial experts from around the world join us and share their expertise, wisdom, and successes and failures.

It is critical that we re-examine our existing approaches and think of innovative models that bring together research in biotechnology, clinical

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trials and industry to push boundaries and come up with new models.

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Our ultimate goal is to contribute to the well-being of humans all around the world, and to contribute to global biomedical and health R&D and innovation. By learning from our colleagues in other countries, and by tapping into the unique strengths of the Kingdom, I am confident that Saudi Arabia will soon be a leading gateway for biotechnology.

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