



BOEING TO STRENGTHEN COMPETENCIES IN SAUDI AVIATION SECTOR

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American aerospace giant Boeing has pledged to develop infrastructure and strengthen competencies in the aviation sector of the Kingdom.

“It is working closely with several government and private sector agencies in the Middle East, especially in the Kingdom at the moment,” said Charlie Miller, Boeing’s vice president for International Corporate Communications.

Miller, who visited the Kingdom for a few days recently, said that he was happy to learn that Boeing has teamed up with major organizations such as Royal Saudi Air Force, King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology and Alsalam Aircraft to build local infrastructure for the growing defense and commercial aviation operations.

Bader Al-Bedair, Boeing PR and communications manager for Saudi Arabia, was also present. Appreciating his meeting with Saudi officials and executives including Ahmed A. Jazzar, president

of Boeing Saudi Arabia, Miller said: "Boeing enjoys a long and important relationship with Saudi Arabia that dates back 71 years."

The partnership began in 1945 when US President Franklin D. Roosevelt presented a DC-3 Dakota airplane to late King Abdulaziz. Not only did this historic airplane delivery marked the beginning of the Boeing relationship with Saudi Arabia, but it represented the dawn of commercial air travel in the Kingdom, he said.

The aviation market in Saudi Arabia is unique after 70 years, said Miller.

He added that the Saudi Arabian Airlines was the first company in the Middle East to fly jets, purchasing a fleet of 707s in 1961.

Since then, Saudia has taken delivery of many Boeing airplanes all different sizes including 707s, 737s, 747s, 777s, MD-11 Freighters, DC-9s and MD-90s.

Also, it is worth mentioning, that our 737 airplanes served in Saudia's fleet for many years providing outstanding levels of performance and reliability, he noted.

Referring to the growing Saudi-Boeing partnership, Miller said that he was fully aware of the importance of local partnerships.

"Boeing supports work to develop infrastructure and strengthen competencies in the aviation sector," said the Boeing executive, adding that Boeing signed a joint venture agreement with Saudia Aerospace Engineering Industries (SAEI) and Alsalam Aircraft Company to create the Saudi Rotorcraft Support Center in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

He said that the Saudi Rotorcraft Support Center will have locations in Riyadh and Jeddah, providing in-country facilities for comprehensive maintenance support and upgrades of Saudi Arabia's diverse fleet of rotorcraft platforms.

In-country rotorcraft capabilities will help improve aircraft availability and reduce repair turnaround time. The joint venture will support the Kingdom's commercial and defense rotorcraft platforms, including the Boeing-built AH-64 Apache, H-47 Chinook and AH-6i.

Referring to the industrial and academic partnerships, Miller said that Boeing actively supports the Saudi industrial sectors.

The company's objectives are to support Saudi plans to develop technological capability, create jobs, promote Saudization and create and capture new markets. Additional support to communities are provided by investing in mathematics, science and literacy programs to prepare students to meet future challenges and allow them to realize their dreams.

He pointed out that Boeing has also been an active participant in the Janadriyah Cultural Heritage Festival for 4 consecutive years to celebrate Saudi culture and showcase Boeing products and services.

This year also, he said, Boeing took part in the festival.

On the other hand, he said that the global corporate citizenship remains one of Boeing's core values.

The communities where Boeing operates around the world are among its most important stakeholders.

"Corporate citizenship is as integral to the company as is its expertise in flight and technology," he added.

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