Mr. Chair and distinguished guests

On behalf of the Saudi Arabia government, the Saudi delegation would like to congratulate the Hungarian government for hosting and chairing this important meeting and for their kind invitation and hospitality. We also would like to thank Dr. Jacques Trouvilliez the Executive Secretary of AEWA and his team in the AEWA secretariat for their hard work in preparing for this important meeting and for the support they have given us over the last two decades even though we are an observer range state.

The Wildlife Authority in Saudi Arabia works closely with the secretariat on conservation of AEWA species, like Northern Bald Ibis & Sociable Lapwings and on other activities focused on capacity building for monitoring with support from neighbouring countries.

The government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia recognise the importance of the Agreement and therefore the royal approval is already in place for our imminent accession to the treaty.

Dear honourable guests, during the last five years the kingdom of Saudi Arabia has begun large change towards protecting the environment under our vision 2030, establishing, under the environment strategy five centres.

Under the wildlife canter hunting legislation is implemented with a standard so high that it protects all threatened, endemic and wetland species and all species listed under relevant signed agreements. A unique & novel hunting bag system is implemented which permits harvest of only 1% of the total biogeographical population of target species divided by the total number of range states for the species.   
In addition, in recognition of the importance of the flyway, the legislation has imposed a no hunting zone along the entire coast to 20 km inland. Large fines are applicable for breaking of this hunting law.

Protected areas are increased to 17% of our country’s area and are planned to protect 30% of the country, including more coverage by marine protected areas.

To strengthen the implementation of the legislation, environmental police have been established covering the existing protected and other important areas, with plans for them to increase to cover the whole country within the next five years.

Moreover, the country is involved regionally in work to mitigate the effect of electrocution through insulation of dangerous powerline under the Egyptian Vulture LIFE project, which may also be relevant to vulnerable AEWA species.