Nominee Statement: Abdulaziz Ibrahim Al Rajhi

# Position: IAPB Regional Chair: EMR

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| **Nominee Job Title** | | | | |
|  | | | Chief Executive Officer | |
| **Nominee Organisation** | | | | |
|  | | | King Khalid Eye Specialist Hospital | |
| **Nominating IAPB member organisation** | | | | |
|  | Nadi Al Bassar | | | |
| **Represented by:** | | | | |
|  | | | | Ahmed Trabelsi |
| **Seconded by:** | | | | |
|  | | | | Adel Abdulaziz Al Rushood |
| **Seconding IAPB member organisation:** | | | | |
|  | | Al Basar International Foundation | | |
| **Seconding Statement** | | | | |
|  | | We are honored to nominate Dr Abdulaziz Ibrahim AlRajhi for Chair of IAPB Eastern Mediterranean Region.   Dr AlRajhi is the Chief Executive Officer and Senior Consultant in Cornea and Refractive Surgery at the King Khaled Eye Specialist Hospital. He has had a distinguished career in the public, private and non-profit sectors, on a national, regional, and global scale. His extensive experience in ophthalmology, health management and social development programmes, combined with his passionate advocacy for equitable access to eye health have led to many achievements in eye health and VISION 2020.   In 2003, Dr AlRajhi served as the co-chair of IAPB and worked closely with the then Chair of Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR). His contribution to IAPB has been extensive and includes organizing the 7th General Assembly held in Dubai in 2004.  Between 2006 and 2009 he co-led a campaign by the EMR team to prioritise the prevention of blindness in WHO strategy plans. This resulted in the approval of two WHO resolutions: Prevention of avoidable blindness and visual impairment, and the Action Plan for Prevention of Blindness. These were instrumental in adding eye care to national and global health agendas.  In 2007 Dr AlRajhi was elected President of the Middle East Africa Council of Ophthalmology, was a board member of the International Council of Ophthalmology and served as Vice President. He is the recipient of numerous awards including the IAPB Global Achievement Award, SOS Gold Medal, AAO International Secretariat Award, AAO Achievement Award, GOH Naumann Award for Leadership in Global Eye Care and others from Kuwait, UAE, Tunis, Morocco, Lebanon and the Mediterranean Ophthalmic Society.  He is an exceptional leader, whose commitment to achieving results has led to positive change. His in-depth experience and understanding of the issues around eye health in the region make him perfectly suited to the role of Chair of EMR. He has an extensive network across many countries and organisations and the ability to work with and motivate others. His belief in the importance of universal eye health has informed his entire career.  We have no hesitation in nominating him as we believe that he will bring great drive and energy to the role and to supporting and furthering the strategic aims and vision of IAPB into the East Mediterranean region. | | |
| **Nominee Statement** | | | | |
|  | I am honored to have been nominated for the position of Chair of the Eastern Mediterranean Region as His Royal Highness is not running for another term.  This activity is not entirely new to me as I have been the Co-Chair for the EMR for more than ten (10) years until I left my position in 2014. During those years, we were very successful in the region with the support of our Co-Chairs and our national eye care representatives in putting the region in a leadership position in terms of implementing Vision 2020 initiatives, national plans and monitoring its execution. We did that by having two regional meetings per year and providing international expertise to the national representatives to help them overcome the obstacles they were facing.  I have also worked with our team and colleagues to spearhead the efforts to make prevention of blindness (PB) a priority in WHO activities and part of their strategic plans. We have successfully since 2006 managed to put PB on the agenda of WHA meetings for more than three (3) consecutive years.  I am currently the Chief Executive Officer of King Khaled Eye Specialist Hospital (KKESH) in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia which is the biggest and most advanced eye care center in the region with 250 beds dedicated to Ophthalmology. Since its establishment 37 years ago, KKESH has trained more than 83% of Saudi Ophthalmology Consultants. It currently provides more than 96% of sub-specialty training positions in the Kingdom. We have also trained more than 40 Ophthalmology Consultants in neighboring countries. KKESH is also the leading center in ophthalmic publications in the Arab World  My strategic priorities for the EMR for the coming four years will be:   1. Establishing an effective communication network between with the National PB Program Directors in the region 2. Strengthen areas of weaknesses in the current healthcare systems in the region 3. Re-establish regional meetings to improve knowledge transfer and support   Most importantly, I have secured the support of the KKESH Board to use KKESH expertise in support of EMR activities. The EMR office will be hosted by KKESH.  Those who know me know that I work with passion, total dedication and a belief that success comes with team work. I will do my best to prevent blindness and improve eye care services within the region and making them accessible and equitable. | | | |