



# Integrated Country Strategy

---

---

**OMAN**

**FOR PUBLIC RELEASE**

Approved: April 5, 2022

## Table of Contents

1. Chief of Mission Priorities	1
2. Mission Strategic Framework	3
3. Mission Goals and Objectives	4
4. Management Objectives	7

## 1. Chief of Mission Priorities

In a region that presents some of the most pressing challenges to U.S. national security, Oman plays a critical role in ensuring regional stability. We will seek to strengthen our long-standing and multi-faceted cooperation with Oman to advance U.S. strategic interests.

Sultan Haitham bin Tarik Al Said's focus on economic development and regional stability presents new opportunities for engagement and cooperation. Our Mission goals are consolidated around these key objectives: 1) strengthening economic partnership; 2) promoting regional stability and resolving regional conflicts; and 3) combating terrorism and expanding our security cooperation. We will continue to work with Omanis to advance the political process in Yemen to end the conflict there peacefully; manage threats from terrorist groups in the region; promote the United States as a trusted investment and technology partner; identify and eliminate trade barriers as Omani and U.S. companies take full advantage of the U.S.-Oman Free Trade Agreement (FTA); and counter Iran's destabilizing activities in the region. These priorities anchor the Mission's efforts across our interagency platform. The Mission also seeks to support these objectives through expanding exchanges and people-to-people ties, advancing the role of public health diplomacy in Oman and the region, and promoting U.S. government policy priorities on issues ranging from climate change to diversity and inclusion. We are committed to building public trust and confidence in the United States as a partner for the shared goals of prosperity and stability for Oman and the region.

Ensuring shared prosperity and supporting the Omani government's efforts to achieve sustainable economic growth are at the forefront of our Mission's priorities. Oman's economy remains dependent on oil and gas, and the country faces a balancing act between economic reforms and public expectations of government services and benefits. We will encourage sustainable economic development and diversification in line with the government's own climate change goals, relying on commercial advocacy using the FTA.

Bilateral U.S.-Oman trade exceeded \$3.2 billion in 2021, reflecting the FTA's advantages and Oman's business potential. The Mission will support Oman's efforts to foster innovation, entrepreneurship, and a business-friendly environment by promoting trade and investment under the FTA and encourage Omani companies to invest in the United States. We will support the Omani government's efforts to shift toward greener energy alternatives to tackle climate change and empower women and youth in line with shared U.S.-Oman goals. Establishing the United States as Oman's partner of choice for economic diversification will create U.S. jobs and counter malign influence from other countries such as the PRC.

The Omani government plays an important role in ensuring regional stability, enabling efforts to protect the U.S. homeland. Oman's location is important for U.S. national security interests, and we are committed to using military and basing access agreements and interoperability mechanisms to provide operational flexibility for the U.S. military in the region. The Mission will continue to support USG efforts to end the war in Yemen, tackle threats from terrorist

groups, and counter Iran's destabilizing activities. Oman has remained a steadfast partner in counterterrorism and regional stability efforts, and we will work to strengthen this close strategic relationship.

Under Sultan Haitham, the Omani government has reinforced longstanding bilateral security cooperation with the United States. The Mission will aim to deepen our collaboration on border protection, law enforcement, and crisis-response. We remain intent on building capacity for Omani law enforcement to address regional and transnational threats, including human trafficking, narcotics smuggling, the illicit proliferation of weapons, and nuclear detection and response. Drawing on the resources of the many U.S. agencies represented at Post – including the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Homeland Security – we will provide expertise to develop Oman's capacity to address such threats. We will also continue to build Oman's law enforcement capacity through training and security assistance.

The Mission will seek to expand exchanges and increase and facilitate legitimate U.S.-Oman travel. As Oman focuses on human capital development, exchanges and people-to-people ties will be an important mechanism to build capacity and mutual understanding. Current government constraints on public diplomacy programming limit the potential of such programs. We will work with our Omani partners to revive exchanges between U.S. and Omani academic and cultural institutions, encourage more Omanis to study in the United States, and promote Department programs such as Fulbright and IVLP to strengthen the appeal of the United States for Oman's current and future business and government leaders.

Public health is key to economic growth. U.S.-Oman collaboration during the COVID-19 pandemic underscored the importance of public health diplomacy. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) regional office based in Oman has helped build relationships with the Omani government and trust in U.S. expertise. The CDC office will serve as a regional platform to tackle regional health challenges and build Oman's public health capacity.

Oman is a diverse society with a multicultural heritage. We will build on these shared values by supporting efforts toward diversity, inclusion, and equity, including the integration of youth and women into the economy in line with the Omani government's priorities. We will support the government's initiatives on empowering women, addressing youth unemployment, and reaffirming its tradition of tolerance.

Our focus on diversity and inclusion includes developing a capable and diverse workforce. Mission goals can only be accomplished with adequate staffing, resources, and security for our personnel. As the Mission continues to grow, the recruitment, retention, and development of a talented and diverse workforce is key to achieving our policy goals.

## 2. Mission Strategic Framework

**Mission Goal 1:** Expand economic partnership to support sustainable green growth, increase bilateral trade and investment, and create American jobs.

- **Mission Objective 1.1:** U.S. presence in the Omani market increased through commercial advocacy, Free Trade Agreement (FTA) awareness campaigns, and engagement with the Omani government and business community.
- **Mission Objective 1.2:** U.S.-Omani engagement contributed to the Omani economy's growth and diversification beyond oil and gas in line with the government's climate change goals.

**Mission Goal 2:** Use the strong U.S.-Oman strategic partnership to promote regional stability and protect the U.S. homeland.

- **Mission Objective 2.1:** Expanded U.S.-Omani engagement and security cooperation helped improve Oman's counterterrorism, border protection, law enforcement, and crisis-response capabilities.
- **Mission Objective 2.2:** Improve Mission services to American citizens in Oman and strengthen the U.S.-Oman relationship through people-to-people ties, including increased travel and educational/cultural exchanges.
- **Mission Objective 2.3:** Expanded basing, access, and interoperability with the Omani military provided operational flexibility in the region for the U.S. military.

**Management Objective 1:** Recruit and develop an inclusive and diverse workforce to provide the greatest possible range of experience, ideas, and abilities to the Mission.

**Management Objective 2:** Identify and execute infrastructure and technology improvements to support long-term Mission growth, promote efficiency, and enhance existing systems.

### 3. Mission Goals and Objectives

**Mission Goal 1** | Expand economic partnership to support sustainable green growth, increase bilateral trade and investment, and create American jobs.

**Description** | Recognizing the link between economic prosperity and political stability, the mission will seek to bolster trade institutions, cooperate to enhance Oman's health, education, environmental, and scientific sectors, and advocate for conditions supportive of American investment and business opportunities.

**Objective 1.1** | U.S. presence in the Omani market increased through commercial advocacy, Free Trade Agreement (FTA) awareness campaigns, and engagement with the Omani government and business community.

- **Justification** | The 2009 U.S.-Oman FTA cemented the bilateral trade relationship. Since then, trade delegations in the United States and Oman and growing commercial exchange have helped build relationships important to increasing market awareness on both sides. Significant investments of money and time prove that both countries are committed to prosperity and sustainable growth. Building on these relationships and deepening ties will help U.S. business penetrate the Omani market with new products and services. Addressing lingering trade concerns with Oman's Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Investment Promotion (MOCIIP) and the Royal Oman Police Customs Department will continue to be a Mission priority to remove outstanding barriers to fuller use of the FTA. Additionally, the Mission will work in concert with MOCIIP, the Oman-American Business Center (OABC), and the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) to conduct outreach to the Omani business community on the FTA's benefits and opportunities. The Mission will also continue its close cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Environment to conduct trade-related environmental cooperation to implement the Environment Chapter of the FTA. The Mission will continue to partner with the U.S. and Omani business community to promote equitable access to jobs, including by addressing gender discrimination and systemic barriers to full workforce participation.
- **Linkages** | State-USAID 2022-2026 Joint Strategic Plan Objectives 2.1 and 2.3; Middle East and North Africa Joint Regional Strategy – 2022-2026 Objective 3.1.
- **Risks** | Continued U.S. engagement on business climate concerns will help create a more level playing field for U.S. firms against bad actors and support Oman's deployment of safer technologies, advancing U.S. strategic priorities and mitigating adverse outcomes. If, by contrast, the U.S. does not remain engaged on these issues, Oman's economic trajectory could diminish opportunity for U.S. firms and create a wider opening for malign actors to exploit.

**Objective 1.2** | U.S.-Omani engagement contributed to the Omani economy's growth and diversification beyond oil and gas in line with the government's climate change goals.

- **Justification** | Oman's economy relies on oil and gas, which constituted 39 percent of GDP in 2017 and 63 percent of government revenue in the 2021 budget. Oman's public debt is vulnerable to oil market developments, per the IMF's July 2021 Article IV report. Oman was the twelfth-largest CO2 emitter worldwide on a per-capita basis per 2018 World Bank data. Oman aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by seven percent below projected levels by 2030 and increase the non-hydrocarbon share of GDP to 92 percent by 2040. Diversifying Oman's economy away from oil and gas will provide new export opportunities for U.S. companies, support Oman's stability as a U.S. partner, and help achieve shared climate goals. U.S. technical assistance, public messaging, and diplomatic and commercial engagement will support Oman's efforts to achieve these shared goals.
- **Linkages** | State-USAID 2022-2026 Middle East and North Africa Joint Regional Strategy Goal 3 and Goal 5; State-USAID 2022-2026 Joint Strategic Plan Objective 1.2, Goal 2, and Objective 3.2; E.O. 14008; and E.O. 14020.
- **Risks** | If U.S. engagement does not support Oman's economic growth and diversification, Oman may seek investment from exploitative actors, creating security risks for Oman and the United States. U.S. messaging regarding the need to screen sensitive investments will help mitigate this risk.

**Mission Goal 2** | Use the strong U.S.-Oman strategic partnership to promote regional stability and protect the U.S. homeland.

**Description** | The mission will seek to improve and enhance relationships and interoperability with Omani armed forces, police, and other security services, who are key partners in maintaining a secure and stable region. We will also improve services to American citizens and strengthen the bilateral relationship through increased people-to-people ties.

**Objective 2.1** | Expanded U.S.-Omani engagement and security cooperation helped improve Oman's counterterrorism, border protection, law enforcement, and crisis-response capabilities.

- **Justification** | Oman is a critical and strategic partner for the advancement of U.S. national security goals in the region, including countering terrorism and violent extremism, neutralizing the full range of Iranian threats, and promoting regional stability. Utilizing an interagency approach, the Mission will engage the Omani security forces and armed forces at the strategic and tactical levels with exercises and training opportunities to build capacity and increase interoperability. Likewise, we will engage Omani justice system professionals to develop advanced skills and increase cooperation on counterterrorism and counter proliferation efforts, ensuring such programs emphasize the importance of human rights protections. Finally, we will

continue to engage civilian policymakers on legal and regulatory frameworks and policies to tighten Oman's counter proliferation regime, enhance U.S. defense cooperation and access, and secure Oman's support for U.S. regional security objectives.

- **Linkages** | State-USAID 2022-2026 Joint Strategic Plan, Goal 1; Near Eastern Affairs Joint Regional Strategy, Goal 1; Executive Order 14020.
- **Risks** | The risk of not achieving this objective is decreased regional stability.

**Objective 2.2** | Improve Mission services to American citizens in Oman and strengthen the U.S.-Oman relationship through people-to-people ties, including increased travel and educational/cultural exchanges.

- **Justification** | Providing services to American citizens either resident in Oman or transiting through the country remains one of the Embassy's primary responsibilities. At the same time, engagement with local audiences through the media, cultural programming, and educational exchanges are the best way to promote shared values in support of U.S. policy. The Consular Section and Public Affairs Section will continue to engage key contacts in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Higher Education, Royal Oman Police, and other ministries to provide better services and increased responsiveness to U.S. citizens. The Consular Section will also increase outreach efforts to the resident American community in Oman to ensure U.S. citizens understand the services, information, and resources available to them and how they can access information relevant to their security via Post's web page and social media. The Public Affairs Section will increase outreach efforts to key audiences – including alumni of USG programs, key Omani government interlocutors, and prominent Omani female leaders in the public and private sectors – to increase support of key U.S. policy objectives.
- **Linkages** | State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan Goals 1 and 2; NEA-ME Joint Regional Strategy Objectives 1.3, 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3.
- **Risks** | Inadequate engagement with relevant Omani government bodies or lack of outreach to the Omani public could diminish the Mission's ability to protect U.S. citizens and achieve U.S. policy objectives.

**Objective 2.3** | Expanded basing, access, and interoperability with the Omani military provided operational flexibility in the region for the U.S. military.

- **Justification** | Oman is geographically situated to support U.S. military contingency planning and offers attractive logistic options for regionally based forces. With Indian Ocean ports along the major trade routes and the development of robust maritime infrastructure and air bases, Oman plays a critical role in regional contingency operations. The Mission will make full use of opportunities presented Mission will make full use of opportunities to improve bureaucratic relationship between the U.S. Military and the Sultan's Armed Forces, to increase familiarity between forces, and promote



education of Omani military personnel so that Oman remains a reliable and willing partner in both times of peace and conflict.

- **Linkages** | In the Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, the United States is seeking to work alongside partners to deter aggression, disrupt international terrorist networks, and protect vital U.S. interests. The United States Central Command Posture Statement (22 April 2021) aligns with the President's Interim National Security Strategic Guidance (INSSG) to work with like-minded allies and partners to advance our shared interests and maintaining an effective posture to meet challenges, whatever they may be.
- **Risks** | A weakened U.S.-Omani military relationship risks increased friction during times of U.S. involvement in regional security activities and may reduce options for U.S. leaders in times of crisis.

#### 4. Management Objectives

**Management Objective 1** | Recruit and develop an inclusive and diverse workforce to provide the greatest possible range of experience, ideas, and abilities to the Mission.

- **Justification** | Staffing the Embassy with the most diverse, well-qualified workforce is critical to the success of the Mission. A more diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible Embassy leads to a stronger, smarter, and more creative workforce capable of advancing U.S.-Oman relations. The Mission seeks to fill all positions transparently and fairly across all sections by implementing Department-wide best practices, which includes diversity and inclusion. The Mission not only aims to recruit a broad range of bidders for U.S. Direct Hire (USDH) positions but also to expand employment opportunities to Eligible Family Members (EFM) and Locally Employed (LE) Staff.
- **Linkages** | E.O. 14035. The Department has prioritized diversity and inclusion at the highest levels. Embassy Muscat's initiative to expand employment opportunities and improve transparency directly support the Department's diversity and inclusion goals.
- **Risks** | Omanization requires private organizations to hire only Omani nationals for specific positions. Currently, the Ministry of Labor's Omanization policies do not apply to diplomatic missions directly. However, if the policy were to be applied to diplomatic missions, then diversity within the applicant pool for LE Staff positions could be impacted.

**Management Objective 2 |** Identify and execute infrastructure and technology improvements to support long-term Mission growth, promote efficiency, and enhance existing systems.

- **Justification |** Information Technology (IT) modernization continues to play a vital role in delivering the best possible services to our customers and Mission Muscat has greatly improved IT services available to Embassy personnel. Post continues to acquire new platforms and develop policies allowing all personnel to access mobile applications and platforms that enhance knowledge, reach new audiences, and advance Mission priorities. Enhancing the classified network infrastructure is a top priority for the Information Resource Management (IRM) section. IRM is collaborating with the Department to migrate Mission Muscat to a ClassNet Regionalization (CNR) post. CNR consolidates IT resources and services for the ClassNet into a regional hub. CNR will provide for better disaster recovery, improve security, and reduce the cost of providing classified IT services for the Mission. IRM will upgrade all ClassNet switches in the first phase of this process. Another key component of our IT modernization efforts is the Information Technology Infrastructure Remediation (ITIR) project. We will engage Department entities to facilitate the completion of an ITIR in Embassy Muscat which will modernize our cabling infrastructure and improve OpenNet and internet connectivity for Embassy personnel. To address the ageing of the Embassy compound and the growth of our Mission personnel, Post is working with OBO to implement a rehabilitation project for our security, electrical, HVAC, and Fire prevention infrastructures and a space utilization project to expand our classified area (CAA) space. The major rehabilitation project will address the various Overseas Security Policy Board standards the Embassy compound does not meet presently. The Chancery is 30 years-old, and no major renovation has been done during this period. The space utilization project will address the future expected growth of the different agencies. At the same time, Embassy Muscat will start the process for a New Embassy Compound.
- **Linkages |** Post is meeting IRM and Overseas Security policy board standards to upgrade our facility and information technology infrastructures.
- **Risks |** The lack of funding for our OBO and space utilization projects.