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THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK GOVERNING THE E-GAMING INDUSTRY IN THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

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ABSTRACT

As Saudi Arabia advances its video gaming industry, it could enhance a robust legal framework to protect the rights of creators and other stakeholders. The legal structure should enhance the relevant laws and regulations related to intellectual property, contractual terms and conditions, consumer protection, data protection, e-sport competition, and employment in the industry. This paper investigates the application of intellectual property rights in the video gaming industry while highlighting a case between Activision Blizzard, Call of Duty game creators, and AM General company. The research paper aims to enhance and address the ambiguities in the Saudi Arabian IP laws and regulations within the video gaming industry to promote fair use of copyrighted materials and protect against contractual breaches.

KEYWORDS: Gaming Industry, Copyrights, Trademarks, Esports, Video Games, Intellectual Property Law.

1. INTRODUCTION

The gaming industry has grown at warp speed to become a multi-billion-dollar worldwide industry and is on track to total \$211.2 billion in 2025 (Xsolla, 2023). In accordance with Vision 2030, the Kingdom has spent \$38 billion to become a major player in this market. Large buys – like the \$1.05 billion acquisition of FACEIT and ESL in order to form ESL FACEIT Group, and the \$4.9 billion acquisition of the mobile game publisher Scopely – represent the Kingdom's strategic investment in developing the strong gaming ecosystem (Simic, 2022). Mates to such investments are the Saudi Gaming and Esports Authority and the Saudi Esports Federation, both of which have been formed in order to develop talent in the region and brand the nation the global e-sports center of the world.

Despite these rapid developments, the legal framework governing the video-gaming industry remains fragmented. Globally, no single body of law addresses video-gaming issues comprehensively; instead, different areas of law – such as intellectual property, contracts, consumer protection, data privacy, competition, and employment – intersect to regulate various aspects of the industry. In Saudi Arabia, the application of intellectual property (IP) law is particularly significant, yet existing legislation offers limited specific guidance for video games. Although Article 2 of the Saudi Copyright Law extends protection to computer programs and Article 16 of its Implementing Regulations explicitly includes software and games as literary works, the law does not directly address the unique IP challenges in this sector (Almara, Farouk, 2025). Given Saudi Arabia's ambition to become a global video-gaming hub, the current framework appears inadequate to keep pace with technological and creative advancements.

Accordingly, this paper analyses the Saudi legal framework governing the video-gaming industry, with a particular focus on intellectual property law. It seeks to answer two central questions:

1. What are the main intellectual property rules governing the video-gaming industry in Saudi Arabia?
2. How effective are these rules in addressing the unique legal challenges posed by video games?

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research relies on a jurisprudential legal research methodology, which consists of a systematic study of legal rules, principles, and judicial interpretations related to the video game industry. This study focuses on Saudi legal rules regulating

intellectual property rights and their alignment with international standards.

Sources Used: The researcher used primary sources, such as Saudi legislation and policies. Judicial decisions and international agreements, such as the Berne Convention, the Paris Convention, and the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, were also studied.

Analytical Framework: The researcher used a comparative interpretive approach. The researcher provided a critical analysis of legal rules, such as Articles 2, 3, and 16 of the Saudi Copyright Law, and focused on interpreting the applicability of these rules to video games. This legal interpretation was combined with case analysis to assess the effectiveness of Saudi law in addressing issues such as game streaming, non-traditional trademarks, and derivative works. The comparative element draws on primary cases and frameworks, most notably *AM General LLC v. Activision Blizzard* ("Call of Duty"), to identify potential legal loopholes and best practices.

Finally, it can be said that this mixed approach of interpretation and comparison has enabled a critical study and evaluation of the extent to which current intellectual property laws in Saudi Arabia respond to the legal challenges in the video game industry, and how these legal frameworks can be developed.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Cory Ondrejka (2006), copyright law protects video games and their creative elements, such as narrative, code, and artwork. The uniqueness of video games as a medium lies in their combination of software (protected as a literary work) and artistic elements (protected as audio-visual works). Almarzoqi and Albakjaji (2022) mention that regulators often face emerging and contemporary issues in IT and cyberspace that limit the capacity of current legal frameworks to cope with the advanced technology in the gaming industry, leading to ambiguity and inconsistency in legal rulings. Albakjaji et al. (2020) also mention that the technological redundancy makes video gaming to be under governed, causing challenges to users as well.

The intricate nature of video games presents emerging challenges for intellectual property protection. Their interactive elements blur the boundaries between conventional artistic works and computer programs, leading to debates over their proper categorization under copyright law (Öztürk, 2023). Similarly, like any other artist, video game creators must also be extended protection under copyright law to safeguard their work and

intellectual properties. With the widespread issues of video game cloning in the gaming industry, copyright regulations inadequately address these issues (Albakjaji & Almazroqi, 2023). Competitors tend not to clone the primary elements of the game, which are copyright protected, such as code, sounds, and visuals. Instead, cloners typically replicate the gameplay as courts have already ruled out that it falls beyond the scope of the protection under copyright laws (Corbett, 2016).

Patents and Game Mechanics

Lemley and Burk (2010) analyze the role of patents in protecting innovative gameplay mechanics and software algorithms. They argue patents can incentivize innovation but risk stifling creativity and competition, mainly when overly broad patents are granted (Lemley & Burk, 2003).

Patents protect creative innovation as it can be defined as a “technical solution to a technical problem” (Kur, 2019). Patent protection is usually not extended to video games, except in cases where inventive and unique hardware creatives are involved. In this regard, Perzanowski and Schultz (2016) examine the tension between copyright protection and fair use in the video game industry. They discuss landmark cases, such as *Atari v. Nintendo* and *Sega v. Accolade*, which have shaped the boundaries of fair gaming use, particularly regarding reverse engineering and modding (Perzanowski & Schultz, 2016).

Litman (2001) argues that the “fair use” application in the context of video games remains underdeveloped, particularly concerning transformative uses by players and fan communities. Also, the use of the video game industry raises the issues of microtransactions and loot boxes in video games, highlighting the legal and ethical challenges these pose. They argue that current IP laws do not adequately address the ownership and use rights of digital goods, leading to calls for reform. Armağan Ebru Bozkurt-Yüksel discussed the emerging field of esports and the complex IP issues surrounding broadcasting rights. The study highlights the need for more explicit regulations to protect game developers’ rights and the interests of broadcasters and players (Bozkurt-Yüksel, 2021).

Cory Ondrejka renders essential information about the interaction of copyright and Web 2.0 in virtual worlds. In their current manifestation, as user-created user-created content for dynamic, interactive media such as video games and virtual worlds, Ondrejka continues that the traditional copyright framework was established for stagnant and not interactive media. He argues that while the

current copyright laws protect any work created in virtual environments, they may hinder the future development of innovations and creativity for new ideas; for this reason, they do not address the dynamic and collective nature of virtual environments. Specifically, Ondrejka’s work relates to the Saudi Arabian case as the Kingdom continues to attempt to brand itself as a destination for gaming. They imply that Saudi Arabia should reduce its stringency of and exceptions to the copyright in line with the specific features of user-generated content in gaming environments. This could be done by expanding or codifying the Fair Use doctrine or developing particular exceptions that permit using transformative works in games. Such adaptations could, therefore, promote a more sustainable and dynamic gaming market to support Saudi Arabia’s development of its vision of the country becoming a key gaming nation.

In their book, Aaron Perzanowski and Jason Schultz provide a critical analysis of the world of digital technologies, of which video games are part, in terms of ownership. Their research is relevant to present-day Saudi Arabia and its newly emerging gaming sector, where digital rights are still under development. According to Perzanowski and Schultz, consumers today often buy licenses for content rather than owning them. As explained above, this analysis holds enormous insights into Saudi Arabia’s gaming environment. The Kingdom has decided to bet on implementing next-generation gaming networks and content; inevitably, this process will raise issues of digital ownership and users’ rights. Perzanowski and Schultz’s work indicates that Saudi policymakers should establish clear consumer laws that protect gamers’ when buying digital content. This may require listing licensing terms, providing the consumer’s right to resell digital games, or putting laws that guard virtual financial properties gamers invest in.

4. GAMING AND ESPORTS IN KSA

Saudi Arabia’s electronic sports and gaming industries are undergoing significant change due to the country’s enthusiastic and engaged audience. This industry supports the objectives of Saudi Vision 2030, which include diversifying the economy, encouraging cross-market cooperation, and seizing new possibilities (Alrubaiq & Alharbi, 2021). Prominent video games comprise *Call of Duty* and *FIFA*, in addition to battle royale video games like *Fortnite* and *Player Unknown’s Battlegrounds*. The sector’s monetary picture mirrors this demand, with sales rising at a remarkable rate of 89.5% between

2.59 billion SAR at the end of 2020 to 5.12 billion SAR in 2023. Saudi players are remarkably spendthrift, generating an average income per player that is three times more than that of their nearest opponents in the MENA area (Alrubaiq & Alharbi, 2021).

In addition to reflecting the changing tastes and habits of its broad customer base, Saudi Arabia's thriving video game and electronic sports industry highlights the opportunity to spur regional economic expansion and innovation. Due to the online game's growing appeal, Saudi Arabian law could only partially tackle issues like participant liberties, agreements, or electronic gaming incidents. It could be necessary to pass specific legislation to support the growth of electronic sports while maintaining the honesty and equity associated with competitive online games.

In recent years, Saudi Arabia has witnessed significant developments in its gaming industry and institutional landscape, notably marked by the new Cabinet Decision No.436/1445 on establishing an authority named Saudi Gaming and Esports Authority dated 19th December 2023 (Issue No. 5013, 2023). With this step, the Kingdom is acknowledging that the gaming sector is no longer only a pastime but also a viable economic force. Besides, the market for this business is increasing rapidly; associations and federations like the Saudi Esports Federation and the Esports World Cup Foundation have emerged to provide a formal structure to the industry. The formation of these agencies demonstrates the Kingdom's commitment to supporting and nurturing the growth of the gaming sector. The Saudi Arabian gaming associations and federation focus on the growing industry, witnessed in the recently held Esports World Cup 2024 in Riyadh. It brought together fans, gaming professionals, and publishers worldwide. This eight-week gaming bonanza had a record-breaking prize pool of more than \$60 million (ESports World Cup, n.d.). It is an unprecedented time for the Saudi video game industry as the country is moving ahead with its progression and intends to grow rapidly.

Considering that video games have a very large overlap with intellectual property laws, it was necessary to conduct an analytical study of the most important intellectual property laws in Saudi Arabia that could be applied to video games.

Through this study, the authors will provide an in-depth understanding of the intellectual property legal framework governing the issue of video games. Also, a comprehensive view of the legal development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in this field will be presented. Moreover, the main challenges facing

Saudi Arabia in this field of regulating video games will be studied as well. Finally, some global cases related to video games will be used to back up the study. Such cases will be discussed in a way that shows how Saudi Arabia can benefit from the experiences of developed countries in this field.

5. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW IN VIDEO GAMES

A part of establishing Saudi Arabia as a video gaming hub is aligning with existing intellectual property laws. Various art forms at the center of video games compromise the elements protected by intellectual property law. Copyright and trademark laws protect original works, brand names, and logos for products and services. Video games contain specific original works, such as character designs that compromise innovation and creativity, the pillar upon which the entire e-gaming industry is founded.

Copyright laws are a vital part of protecting these intellectual properties. Similarly, trademark laws and the rights provided help preserve the identity and value of video games and their creators, such as symbols, logos, slogans, designs, and domain names. Nevertheless, despite intellectual property laws, challenges prevail, especially in the video gaming sector. Although the words "video games" do not appear in the law, the industry is still part of the creative sector; thus, industry players can expect some protection from the law. The Saudi Copyright Law, as established by Royal Decree No. M/41 of 2003, amended by Cabinet Resolution No. 536 of 2018, provides a robust foundation for protecting intellectual property in video games. Article 2 of this law protects computer programs, which includes video game software.

However, the unique nature of video games as interactive audiovisual works presents challenges in applying traditional copyright concepts. For instance, while a game's code and visual elements are protected under Saudi law, the protection of gameplay mechanics and user-generated content within games still needs to be more clearly defined. This could pose a problem, especially in the nascent Saudi gaming market, because developers may want assurance on how much they can build upon old ideas without violating copyrights. In addition, the recommendations affect or are related to the gaming industry, so the treatment given to the derivative works under the Saudi Copyright Law Article 3 must be emphasized. This section covers 'abridgment, modification, illustration, editing or any other forms of alteration' of the original works. This could encompass changes (mods), additions, and gameplay

streaming in video games and esports. However, the law must point out the activity that is becoming very popular: game streaming and content creation based on gameplay footage. Given the emerging ambitions of Saudi Arabia to become a regional hub for the gaming industry, the cohesion of the legal structure concerning such derivative works gains importance. The Kingdom could explore new legislation or provisions of the current law that focus on such peculiarities of video game content production and consider the new entities such as content creators and professionals within the esports environment.

5.1. Enhancing Saudi Arabia's Intellectual Property Landscape

In recent years, laudable progress has been witnessed in Saudi Arabia's Intellectual Property (IP) scaffold, as the administration has diligently worked to reform legal mechanisms and synchronize them with global norms. The critically complex nature of the video game industry is due to its rapidly evolving technological nature and international network connectivity (Scelsi, 2020). Saudi laws and regulations have also been stringent in combating rights infringement, which includes facilitating agreements such as IP licensing and technology transfer agreements to ensure beneficial and fair exchange to involved parties. Saudi laws recognize copyrights, patents, trademarks, and trade secrets. Such recognition is partly due to the ratification of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property and the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works. Furthermore, the country upholds the minimum required standards under the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS).

Concerning the laws and regulations in Saudi Arabia, Article 2 of the Copyright Law (Royal Decree No. M/41 of 2003 as amended by Cabinet Resolution No. 536 of 2018) protects several types of original works, including but not limited to computer programs. This article aims to protect digital creators against unauthorized usage of their intellectual property. This under-discussion article broadly describes copyright features and its application in different creative fields such as literature, science, and artistic works. Most importantly, it stipulates that it is protectable through copyright in written works, lectures, musical composition, audio, and visual content. This article implies that video game components have protectable intellectual properties, including video, software, narrative elements, and visual content.

On the other hand, Article 3 of the Copyright law

protects against any form of material alteration, including illustration, editing, or abridgement on derivative works" (Kerr, 2024). However, the Copyright Law does not explicitly mention video games or their characters or address the unique challenges associated with their protection. Additionally, Article 16 of the Implementing Regulations of Copyright Law Issued by The Minister of Culture and Information's decision no. (1688/1) dated (29 May 2004) and amended by the Board of Directors of the Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property No. (3/21/2022) states that computer programs, software, and games are protected as literary, and any infringement of the author's right, such as reproduction without the author's consent, shall be deemed as an infringement. This is indeed a welcomed and needed provision that supplements the Saudi Copyright Law and, for the first time, explicitly mentions video games in the regulations.

Article 19 sets the duration of protection for copyright laws for intellectual property owners. The protection period is 50 years since the work's publication date. The works include computer programs, films, audio-visual works, and collective works. Hence, the intellectual property laws in Saudi Arabia may not directly or adequately deal with video games, but they may extend the rights to intellectual property owners. However, traditional trademark laws may not adequately protect elements. Saudi Arabia should consider expanding its trademark protections to include these non-traditional elements, perhaps by adopting a system similar to the EU's "position marks" or "motion marks." This would provide game developers with more comprehensive protection for their brand assets and encourage innovation in game design. Moreover, given the global nature of the gaming industry, Saudi Arabia could take a leadership role in pushing for international harmonization of these expanded trademark protections, further cementing its position as a global gaming hub.

Moreover, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has attempted to address the challenges highlighted by the recent establishment of the Intellectual Property Prosecution wing that will examine and initiate criminal proceedings in case of an infringement, providing a dedicated legal avenue for rights holders to seek redress. The Saudi Prosecution Council has made a significant step by establishing the Intellectual Property Prosecution to reinforce intellectual property rights. As a result of this new establishment, trademark and copyright license holders in the video gaming industry can have a legal

channel to enforce their rights. Despite these efforts, some areas are still lacking, as illustrated in the famous case of Call of Duty.

This would provide clarity for game developers and publishers and position the Kingdom as a forward-thinking jurisdiction in the rapidly evolving world of digital entertainment law.

Establishing the Intellectual Property Prosecution marks a significant step forward in Saudi Arabia's IP enforcement capabilities. However, to truly address the unique challenges posed by the gaming industry, this wing should consider developing specialized expertise in digital forensics and online investigation techniques. Video game piracy and IP infringement often occur in complex online environments, requiring sophisticated technological approaches to detection and enforcement. By investing in cutting-edge forensic tools and training prosecutors in the intricacies of digital IP infringement, Saudi Arabia can create a robust enforcement mechanism that serves as a deterrent to potential infringers while fostering a sense of security among game developers and publishers operating in the Kingdom.

5.2. IP Rights Challenges in the Saudi Gaming Industry

The Saudi Authority for Intellectual Property (SAIP) was established in 2017 to regulate, promote and protect intellectual property within the Kingdom. The goal shall ensure Saudi's intellectual property laws align with global standards while encouraging local innovation and creativity. Saudi Arabia's Trademark Law issued by Royal Decree No. M/21 2002 offers a channel to register trademarks while also regulating their use. SAIP must ensure IP legislation is executed and implemented per the Trademark Law. Although SAIP had been assigned these mandates, specific challenges are presented by Saudi Arabia's intellectual property laws that may hinder the video gaming industry. The object of the Trademark Law is to regulate the Decree for the various goods and services such as naming, signs, and logos.

SAIP has also extended the protection related to video games by introducing the Regulations for the Optional Registration of Copyright Works issued by the Board of Directors of SAIP No. (3/7/2019) which covers applications and software, artistic works, and photographs, among other developments; it also aims to document the works and grant such registration a certificate. After registering the creative works, copyright holders can pursue several approaches to enforce their rights to infringing parties, including giving cease-and-desist notices or

pursuing litigations that may involve filing suits against entities that illegally reproduce, alter, or distribute the copyrighted content to seek damages and enforce protection. However, although SAIP had been assigned these mandates, certain challenges are presented by Saudi Arabia's intellectual property laws that may hinder the video gaming industry within the Kingdom.

Some challenges are that rights that can be licensed are not clearly outlined, the obstacles that the licensors may face with the maintenance of minimum standards necessary to maintain the integrity and quality of the licensed IP, and a lack of remedies for violating a license agreement for a licensed intellectual property, in addition to the potential conflicts that can arise between the creative vision of game developers and the constraints imposed by license agreements, or the impact of franchise-based games on the broader gaming market.

Another pressing IP challenge facing the Saudi gaming industry is the protection of non-traditional trademarks. Elements such as character designs, game logos, and even specific sound effects can become iconic and valuable assets in the gaming world. However, traditional trademark laws may not sufficiently safeguard such aspects. Non-traditional elements should be included in Saudi Arabian laws on the protection of trademarks; 'position marks' or 'motion marks,' as used in the EU, should probably be adopted to offer game developers better protection of their brand assets and promote innovation in game design. Furthermore, because the gaming industry is a global market, Saudi Arabia can also extend efforts to ensure that these new trademark law protections are implemented internationally to solidify its stance on the global market as a hub for gaming.

How To Benefit from The Experience of The Developed Countries: The Call of Case Prominent video games are FIFA, Call of Duty, and battle royal games like Fortnite. This case helps to understand the shortcomings within the gaming industry, specifically intellectual property, which could be remedied, especially if the Kingdom intends to become a global video gaming hub. The Call of Duty franchise experienced legal challenges when AM General Company, an American heavy vehicle and contract automotive manufacturer and producer of renowned Humvee military vehicles, claimed the gaming franchise had breached its trademark by using vehicles significantly similar to the Humvee (Am General L. L. C. Vs. Activision, 2020). However, in its defense, the Call of Duty franchise argued that

the cars used were not meant to confuse the consumers regarding the game's source or imply that AM General endorsed the game but only as a form of artistic expression that the country's First Amendment protects.

The basis upon which Activision Blizzard Inc. presented its defense was that using the vehicle was for artistic expression rather than a commercial product. Using a third-party trademark in an expressive work does not violate trademark law. Additionally, using a symbol, logo, slogan, or design of a registered trademark does not infringe trademark laws if the consumers are not likely to associate the trademark's owner as the source. In the Call of Duty case, the court held that using the Humvees did not mislead consumers to think that AM General was the source or endorsed the game. Additionally, using the Humvees did not give the game a competitive advantage in the video games market, which means that the vehicles were not incorporated into the video game for trade purposes but as an artistic expression (Mosharrof, 2020).

Notably, the case portrays how other countries, such as the United States, have advanced their intellectual property laws, particularly trademark laws, to ensure that they safeguard the unique configuration of thoughts rather than the fundamental thoughts. Specifically, a fictional character or stylized depictions or object used in the video game that resembles symbols or designs of the world that are protected by trademark laws does not infringe the mark's owner's license if the video game does not use it for trade purposes and only uses it as an artistic expression. According to Saudi Arabia's Trademark Laws, utilizing a registered trademark violates the laws of the Kingdom. However, specific guidelines to address such gaps are beneficial, as used in the case of AM General Company and Call of Duty, in its laws that can protect individuals within the video gaming industry when the fictional features they use are stylized depictions of real-world objects.

This matter tackles pressing queries about how video games can employ tangible elements, such as military hardware, without violating trademark owners' rights. And if a trademark is used for "artistic purposes" without implying that the trademark owner is somehow using the work, it cannot mean that any of the owner's rights have been infringed.

The lack of specific provisions in Trademark Law addressing the use of trademarks in video games creates uncertainty for developers and trademark owners alike. It may require courts to engage in a

case-by-case analysis of the factors relevant to infringement, such as the degree of similarity, the use purpose and character, and the potential impact on the market for the trademarked goods.

Considering the Call of Duty scenario, the game's creators maintained their utilization of vehicles similar in design to Humvees as a demonstration of artistic interpretation protection pointed out via the idea-expression divergence. This perception signifies that intellectual property law safeguards unique configurations of thoughts instead of the fundamental thoughts themselves. The Call of Duty case highlights the need for Saudi Arabia to develop more nuanced fair-use doctrines that specifically address the use of real-world elements in video games. While the Kingdom's current copyright laws provide some protections for artistic expression, they need more specificity to navigate the complex landscape of modern video game design. Saudi lawmakers could consider adopting a multi-factor test similar to the one used in the Call of Duty case, which examines elements of the transformative nature of the use, the amount and substantiality of the portion used, and the effect on the potential market for the copyrighted work. By codifying such a test, Saudi Arabia would provide greater clarity for game developers and IP holders, reducing legal uncertainties and encouraging more innovative game design within the Kingdom.

6. CONCLUSION

The modern video game environment is a dynamic meeting point between technology, entertainment, and legal frameworks, with digital IP laws being key elements defining this field. The most crucial role is played by intellectual property protection as extended by the copyright laws since creative elements and artistic expressions in video games need protection, too. There are significant challenges to copyright protection for games and creative work in the video game industry. Over the past few decades, courts of law have struggled to clearly define the criteria or classification of video game protection by applying copyright principles. The rapidly evolving nature of the video game industry, driven by technological advancements and changing consumer behaviors, further complicates these issues. As only protection is granted to original expressions, the protection of ideas in the gaming industry is strictly excluded. Video games are brought together by various works of art and creative expressions, but copyright analysis should still separate the idea of the game itself.

Continuing on its trajectory to become a

significant participant in the worldwide sphere of gaming, Saudi Arabia holds in critically high regard the need for potent intellectual property (IP) security measures. A properly functioning IP system for modern creations is a boon for creators and innovators today. It protects the rights of creators and inventors. Further, it is essential to look into the implementation and enforcement of copyright and trademark laws in Saudi Arabia and address the ambiguities to build a secure environment that protects the rights of people in the gaming and digital realm. As Saudi Arabia continues to invest in its gaming industry, it must recognize that a truly competitive IP regime goes beyond mere protection

and enforcement. The Kingdom should strive to create an IP ecosystem that actively encourages innovation and creativity in the gaming sector. This could involve implementing a system of tax incentives for companies that develop original IP in Saudi Arabia, establishing government-backed funds for indie game developers, or creating specialized IP zones with streamlined registration processes and enhanced protections. By taking such proactive measures, Saudi Arabia can protect existing IP and foster the creation of new, homegrown gaming franchises that could compete on the global stage, further solidifying the Kingdom's position as a

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