

# ***SAUDI ARABIA IN FOCUS***

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## **IRAQ**

### **CROWN PRINCE, U.S. ENVOY AGREE ON DEBT REDUCTION FOR IRAQ**

On January 21, Crown Prince Abdullah received in Riyadh U.S. Special Presidential Envoy James Baker, with whom he discussed the reconstruction of Iraq. Both sides agreed on substantial debt reduction as soon as possible after the emergence and international recognition of the Iraqi government. The Crown Prince affirmed the Kingdom's readiness to enter into negotiations with the other principal Iraqi creditors.

## **TERRORISM**

### **CROWN PRINCE ABDULLAH PRAISES SECURITY FORCES**

Crown Prince Abdullah has expressed his appreciation to the security forces. Their sincere efforts and great sacrifices, he said, have had a major effect in achieving security and peace and protecting the country against aggressors, wrongdoers, and deviants who have been intimidating innocent people.

### **AL-HARAMAIN BRANCHES DESIGNATED TERRORIST FINANCIERS**

Saudi Arabia and the United States on January 22 jointly designated as financial supporters of terrorism four branch offices of the Al-Haramain Islamic Foundation. The offices designated are in Kenya, Tanzania, Pakistan and Indonesia, and are subject to the laws and regulations of those countries.

## **ECONOMY**

### **PLAN FOR MIDEAST RAIL SYSTEM LINKED TO EUROPE AND ASIA**

The Directors General of the Mideast Railways Organizations have been discussing a far-reaching plan for the construction of a multi-billion-dollar Middle East rail system that would connect the region with both Europe and Asia. Feasibility studies have been completed, with long-term plans to link a future Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) railway with Saudi Arabia's proposed Red Sea extension that will go to Amman, Jordan, Damascus, Syria, Ankara, Turkey, and on to Europe and to the rest of Asia. This will take years to accomplish, but is entirely feasible, provided funding is found. The Kingdom expects to need more than \$2.5 billion for its own expansion to connect the Arabian Gulf with the Red Sea, construction of which is scheduled to start in 2005.

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