

SAUDI ARABIA IN FOCUS

WEEKLY PUBLICATION OF THE
INFORMATION OFFICE OF THE
ROYAL EMBASSY OF SAUDI ARABIA
IN WASHINGTON, DC

MARCH 29, 2004

REFORM

KINGDOM URGES NEW ARAB SUMMIT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

Prince Saud Al-Faisal, who met in Cairo on March 29 with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak following the collapse of the scheduled Arab Summit in Tunis, has affirmed that some of the reform proposals that were to be presented by Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria, had received approval from the Arab foreign ministers. In the current circumstances, he declared, it is essential to hold a Summit of the League of Arab States as soon as possible. Meanwhile, President Mubarak has said that Egypt is ready to host an Arab Summit within three weeks.

At the March 29 meeting of the Council of Ministers Crown Prince Abdullah stressed that the Arab countries desperately need to look forward and not backward; and urged all appropriate conditions to be facilitated and all necessary preparations made for a Summit to be convened at the earliest opportunity, to enable them to consult with each other.

HUMAN RIGHTS

HUMAN RIGHTS LINKED TO DEVELOPMENT

The Kingdom's Representative at the United Nations Commission for Human Rights in Geneva has stressed the link between development and respect for human rights, pointing out that if development is not based on a respect for human rights, it is doomed to failure; and noting that human rights are elusive if the economic and social dimensions of development are neglected.

ECONOMY

PRIVATIZATION OF THE MINERALS SECTOR

Oil Minister Ali Al-Naimi confirmed on March 27 the eventual privatization of the Kingdom's minerals sector, once new mining laws are approved by the cabinet, and urged investment in the sector. Saudi Arabia's mineral resources include phosphates, manganese, iron, nickel, titanium, silica and calcium carbonate.

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