

# *SAUDI ARABIA IN FOCUS*

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## **TERRORISM**

### **SECURITY FORCES INVESTIGATING MURDER OF U.S. CITIZENS**

Saudi security forces are currently investigating three recent acts of terrorism in Riyadh: the murders on June 8 and June 12 of two U.S. citizens, and the report on June 12 that a third is being held hostage. All three men worked for U.S. companies that have government contracts.

Ambassador to the United States Prince Bandar bin Sultan issued statements both days, condemning the acts and declaring: "The terrorists that are responsible for such inhuman acts are trying to undermine the Saudi state, destabilize our economy and terrorize our friends who have come to live, work and invest in the Kingdom."

### **SAUDI RELIGIOUS LEADERS AGAIN CONDEMN TERRORISM**

Islamic Affairs Minister Shaikh Salih bin Abdulaziz Al As-Shaikh stressed at an Embassy press conference in London, U.K. on June 12 that Saudi Arabia enjoys political, economic and social stability in spite of the evil incidents that have recently occurred. The day before, Makkah imam Shaikh Abdulrahman Al-Sudais led Friday prayers at the East London Mosque, and called for inter-faith peace and harmony, urging Muslims to dispel media misconceptions and declaring that the history of Islam "is the best testament to how different communities can live together in peace and harmony".

### **U.S. OFFICIALS PRAISE SAUDI EFFORTS IN WAR ON TERRORISM**

In TV interviews on June 13, Secretary of State Colin Powell and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice both praised the cooperation that exists between Saudi Arabia and the United States in the war on terrorism. Secretary Powell declared that the recent spate of killings of foreigners is a direct attack against the Saudi economy; and Ms. Rice cited the success of Saudi security authorities in eliminating a large number of terrorist cells.

## **REFORM**

### **SAUDI JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION ELECTS ITS BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

On June 7, the recently-formed Saudi Journalists Association (SJA) elected a nine-member board that includes two female journalists: Nawal Al-Rashid and Nahid Bashatah, both of Alriyadh newspaper. The Chairman is Turki Al-Sidairi, Editor-in-Chief of Alriyadh daily newspaper, and the Deputy Chairman is Khalid Al-Malik, Editor-in-Chief of Aljazeera daily.

The Saudi Journalists' Association was set up on February 24, 2003 to protect the rights of journalists in the Kingdom and coordinate their relations with the media establishment. This year, the Consultative Council urged the Ministry of Culture and Information to encourage greater freedom of expression in the Saudi media and to open up opportunities for investment in journalism to the Kingdom's private sector.

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