

SAUDI ARABIA IN FOCUS

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TERRORISM

SAUDI LEADERS' EID MESSAGE CALLS TERRORISM UNISLAMIC

In their address to pilgrims on the 1425 Hajj, King Fahd and Crown Prince Abdullah commented on the fact that acts of terrorism that have been undermining security and intimidating innocent people are being perpetrated by people who claim they belong to Islam. "We would like to make it clear", they declared, "that these terrorist acts in fact run counter to the teachings of Islam, and have been carried out by individuals whose ideas are deviant." Saudi Arabia believes that all peace-loving countries must work together to combat the phenomenon of terrorism, and that no country should ever provide shelter to terrorists, or facilitate their subversive acts from its territory. The Kingdom has therefore called for an international conference on combating terrorism that is being convened in Riyadh on February 5, 2005.

Meanwhile, the Organization of the Islamic Conference has approved a proposal made by Crown Prince Abdullah at the annual Hajj reception, for an extraordinary summit of Islamic leaders to discuss the current situation.

FOREIGN AID

CONTINUED AID TO TSUNAMI VICTIMS

A Saudi relief team is currently visiting southern Asia to assess the situation in the tsunami-stricken countries there. So far, there have been 14 Saudi flights, airlifting over 1,000 tons of relief assistance. Meanwhile, Saudi donations are still pouring in subsequent to the recent telethon, which in one night generated over \$86 million. This is in addition to contributions in kind from Saudi companies and individuals. The Coordination Group of Arab National and Regional Development Institutions has pledged to raise over \$1 billion for the tsunami victims; and the Saudi-based Islamic Development Bank (IDB) is offering over \$500 million in relief aid operations.

ISLAM

HAJJ 1425 CONCLUDES WITHOUT INCIDENT

Over 2.56 million people took part in this year's Hajj without incident. The official figure for pilgrims coming from abroad is 1,534,759, an increase of 8 percent over last year. The Islamic Development Bank's sacrificial meat program dealt with over half a million head of sheep and about 5,000 head of camels and cattle. Some of this meat has already been distributed among those in need in the Holy City of Makkah, and the rest will be shipped overseas.

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