

SAUDI ARABIA IN FOCUS

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LEBANON

KINGDOM'S CONCERN FOR SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANON

Crown Prince Abdullah held talks with visiting Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad on March 3, and with head of Lebanon's Progressive Socialist Party and Member of the Lebanese House of Representatives Walid Jumblat on March 6.

On CNN's 'Late Edition' on March 6, Foreign Affairs Advisor Adel Al-Jubeir commented that UN Security Council Resolution 1559 demands Syria's full withdrawal from Lebanon, and declared: "I believe at the end of the day it is inevitable that Syria will comply with UN Security Council resolutions."

At its meeting on March 7, the Council of Ministers welcomed the announcement of Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon, looked forward to its complete implementation in the near future, and urged the Lebanese people to overcome the crisis, preserve the unity and stability of Lebanon, maintain dialogue among the various political powers, and avoid any division.

TERRORISM

KINGDOM'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST EXTREMISM

Crown Prince Abdullah's foreign affairs advisor Adel Al-Jubeir gave a press conference on March 7 at the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia in Washington DC. His opening remarks gave an overview of the Kingdom's fight against terrorism, including the campaign currently being carried out in the Kingdom to educate the Saudi people on the danger of extremism. This campaign, which includes public service announcements, special television programming and in-school education programs, began with the hosting of the Counter-Terrorism International Conference in Riyadh February 5-8.

Mr. Al-Jubeir explained the three aspects of the advertising campaign, and illustrated them by showing video clips that have been appearing on Arab networks as well as Saudi TV, up to 25 times daily.

The first humanizes the victims of terrorism: in the past two years, there have been over 500 of them, either killed or injured, including 35 security officers who gave their lives in the line of duty. The second demonstrates that terrorism and extremism are not part of the Saudi faith, culture or society. The third promotes values and feelings of national pride as the Saudi people are galvanized to oppose Al-Qaeda.

He also showed clips from documentaries that cover such topics as how extremism arises and how terrorism affects families. "The bottom line", he said, "is that no Saudi citizen will be able to escape the clear message that intolerance, violence and extremism are not part of our Islamic faith or Saudi culture or traditions."

ECONOMY

RIYADH SEMINAR ON INVESTMENT IN ARAB MINERAL RESOURCES

The Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, in cooperation with the Arab Organization for Industrial Development and Mining, held a seminar March 6-8 on investment in the mineral resources of the Arab countries. Various Saudi officials commented that mining is gearing up to be the third pillar of the economy after petroleum and petrochemicals, with the national mining company 'Maaden', a joint stock company with a capital of U.S. \$1 billion, coming after Saudi Aramco and the Saudi Arabian Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC). About 15 minerals have been discovered in the Kingdom in commercial quantities, including gold, copper and zinc; and phosphate reserves estimated at 3.1 billion tons make Saudi Arabia the largest source of this mineral.

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