

SAUDI ARABIA IN FOCUS

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

JULY 12, 2005

TERRORISM

CONDEMNATION OF TERRORIST ATTACKS IN LONDON

Crown Prince Abdullah telephoned British Prime Minister Tony Blair on July 9 to strongly condemn the heinous crime that took place in London and express the Kingdom's full readiness to provide any assistance required. Such acts, he said, clearly point to the perpetrators' cowardliness and vileness, whatever their ideologies, tendencies and orientation might be. Interior Minister Prince Nayef also expressed Saudi Arabia's readiness to provide the United Kingdom with every cooperation and exchange of information.

Saudi Arabia had already issued a statement on July 7 strongly condemning that day's terrorist attacks in London, expressing deepest sympathies to the British government and to the families of the victims, and calling on the international community to exert greater efforts to combat the scourge of terrorism which threatens global security.

Ambassador to the United States Prince Bandar bin Sultan, in a press release on July 7, condemned the attacks as vicious crimes carried out by cowards, and extended, on behalf of the people of Saudi Arabia, sincere condolences to the families of the victims of the attacks, which, he said, are a sad reminder that no nation is immune from terrorism.

Ambassador to the United Kingdom and Ireland Prince Turki Al-Faisal also issued a statement on July 7, affirming that Saudi Arabia has always condemned and continues to condemn terrorism wherever it may be and whatever its cause.

On July 8, Saudi Arabia's Grand Mufti Shaikh Abdulaziz bin Abdullah Al-AsShaikh condemned the terrorist bombings in London as un-Islamic, declaring that the killing and terrorizing of innocent people and the destruction of property are not condoned by Islam and urging Muslims around the world to reject such vicious acts. The Consultative Council (*Majlis Al-Shura*) and the Council of Ministers both condemned the bombings at their meetings on July 10 and 11; and the Muslim World League (MWL) issued a statement declaring the blasts to be vicious acts that contradict the teachings of Islam.

CONDEMNATION OF MURDER OF EGYPTIAN ENVOY IN IRAQ

Saudi Arabia's Grand Mufti Shaikh Abdulaziz bin Abdullah Al-AsShaikh issued a statement on July 8 condemning the murder in Iraq of Egyptian envoy Dr Ihab Al-Sharif as a great sin. After quoting from the Holy Qur'an, he declared that such an act is clearly prohibited. Both the Muslim World League (MWL) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) also condemned the killing. At its July 11 meeting, the Council of Ministers expressed its condolences to the leadership and people of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and the family and relatives of Dr Al-Sharif, stressing that this ugly crime has nothing to do with religion and harms Islam.

THOSE ON MOST-WANTED LIST ARRESTED OR KILLED

Security authorities announced on July 9 that Yemeni national Zaid Hasan Mohammed Hameed has been in detention in Yemen under the name Zaid Hasan Omar Al-Ju'eidi'. He was #21 on the list of 36 most-wanted issued by Saudi Arabia on June 28. On July 1, Fayez Ibrahim Omer Ayyoub, #29 on that list, surrendered to Saudi authorities upon his return to Saudi Arabia. On July 3, security forces killed Younis Mohammed Ibrahim Alhayari, a Moroccan national who was #1. Of the 26 on the previous list issued on December 6, 2003, 23 are known to have been killed or are under arrest. Meanwhile, Yemen has extradited to the Kingdom twelve Saudi nationals as part of the ongoing security cooperation between the two countries.

ECONOMY

SHURA COUNCIL DISCUSSES EIGHTH DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2005-09)

At its regular session on July 11, the Shura Council discussed the Eighth Development Plan (2005-09), which reflects the Kingdom's pursuit of a policy of a free economy based on the principles of Islam. The guidelines for the current plan, which is in effect the first stage of an overall strategy for the national economy covering the next 20 years, have been followed not only in the public sector, but also in the private sector, where they are non-binding.

CONTRACTS SIGNED FOR TOURISM SERVICES

Secretary-General of the Supreme Commission for Tourism (SCT) Prince Sultan bin Salman bin Abdulaziz signed in Riyadh on July 12 a ten-month contract with a Spanish consultancy company to provide technical support concerning the management and maintenance of tourist areas in the Kingdom. He also signed an agreement with Transport Minister Dr. Jubarah Al-Suraiseri for the construction of roads in areas designated as tourist resorts and attractions; last year, 84 percent of tourists traveled by road.

* * *