

SAUDI ARABIA IN FOCUS

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

NOVEMBER 1, 2005

FOREIGN AID

Saudi relief organization dispatches aid convoy to Pakistan

As part of the Kingdom's ongoing effort to provide relief to the victims of the October 8 earthquake in Pakistan, the first relief convoy of the Saudi Popular Campaign for Assisting the People left Saudi Arabia for Pakistan October 30. The initial convoy transported over 100 containers loaded with tents, blankets and foodstuffs, and will be followed by additional relief convoys also carrying foodstuffs and medical supplies. Chairman Dr. Said Al-Harithi added that the organization would open a regional office in Islamabad.

Saudi relief planes continue to arrive in Pakistan

More Saudi relief planes have arrived in Pakistan, in line with a directive by King Abdullah to provide aid to victims of the October 8 earthquake. The latest plane arrived in Pakistan October 30 carrying 12 tons of medical supplies.

TERRORISM

Saudi Arabia condemns bombings in New Delhi

Saudi Arabia has condemned the bombings that occurred in New Delhi, India on Saturday, an official source said October 31. The Kingdom reiterated the importance of international cooperation in fighting terrorism, and offered its condolences to the Indian government as well as to the families of the victims.

TRADE

WTO working team approves Saudi Arabia's accession

On October 28, an official working team of the World Trade Organization (WTO) approved the Kingdom's documentation and recommended that it be submitted to the WTO's General Council for approval on November 11. WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy welcomed the move and lauded the efforts of all parties to achieve Saudi Arabia's entry into the organization.

The Kingdom's accession to the WTO will be officially announced 30 days after the General Council approves of the documents, making it all but assured that Saudi Arabia will participate in the December 13-18 WTO ministerial meeting in Hong Kong as a full member.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Saudi Arabia establishes first center for domestic violence

Saudi Arabia inaugurated its first center for domestic violence in Makkah October 26 as part of a campaign to combat domestic abuse, reports Asharq Al-Awsat. Established in cooperation with UNICEF, the center will protect women, children, the elderly and runaway girls for a temporary period while their cases are being processed. Hospitals, police, and social and educational associations are expected to forward cases to the center, which can accept up to 151 people at a time.

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