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SAUDI ARABIA-US

Saudi ambassador continues listening tour of America

Saudi Ambassador Prince Turki Al-Faisal continued his listening tour of America in the Midwest this week with visits to Dearborn, Michigan and Chicago.

In remarks to the Detroit and Dearborn Chambers of Commerce in Dearborn April 19, Prince Turki reaffirmed the strength of Saudi-US business ties. "Our common business interests support our common values and our common goals," he said. The ambassador also outlined steps Saudi Arabia has taken to promote greater trade and business between the two countries, including joining the World Trade Organization, investing in its infrastructure, and lowering trade barriers for telecommunications services, pharmaceuticals, civilian aircraft and parts, chemicals and information technology.

Prince Turki also noted that there are currently investment opportunities worth over \$600 billion in Saudi Arabia in the next 15 years in various fields. "The Kingdom is making every effort to foster an environment friendly to business and to foreign participation," he said.

At the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations April 20, Prince Turki focused on the need to promote understanding among cultures, and addressed some of the misconceptions of Islam. He stressed that Muslims are not all radicals and extremists, and that the majority of Muslims around the world simply want the same things as everyone else: security, opportunity, good health and education.

"Those out there who use Islam to justify acts of violence and hatred are corrupting the healthy body that holds the world's Muslim community together. It is a wicked perversion of our faith," the ambassador said.

The ambassador also called for the world to promote understanding among cultures. He said that to do so, the Kingdom is working to educate Saudi society as a whole about the dangers of terrorism and extremism. It has revised its educational curriculums and eliminated objectionable material, monitored mosques and religious schools to ensure they don't promote intolerance, and supported an honest dialogue about the problems faced by the Muslim world.

In an address at the University of Chicago's Harris School of Public Policy April 21, Prince Turki discussed his first 100 days in office as Saudi Arabia's

ambassador to the US. He emphasized the warm welcome that he has received throughout the country, and noted that there is a great thirst for information about Saudi Arabia, its people, culture and history.

