



JANUARY 30, 2007

FOREIGN POLICY

King Abdullah invites Palestinian leaders to meet in Makkah

On January 28, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz invited Palestinian leaders to the Grand Mosque in Makkah for urgent talks. King Abdullah called on the Palestinians to choose reason and dialogue over violence. The recent violence in Palestine is disgraceful and has tarnished the Palestinian national struggle for liberation, he said.

Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh welcomed King Abdullah's invitation, and thanked the King for his efforts to help Palestinians overcome their differences.

King Abdullah discusses Saudi policy in Al-Siyassah interview

King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz discussed various policy issues in a wide-ranging interview with the Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Siyassah, published January 27.

In the interview, King Abdullah condemned the deepening sectarian strife between Sunnis and Shiites, and expressed optimism that conferences would narrow the gap among the Islamic schools of thought. The King also said that attempts to convert Sunnis to Shiism would not succeed. "We have been following up on this issue, but we do believe that they will not succeed in realizing their goals, because the overwhelming majority of the Muslims are Sunnis, and they will never tolerate embracing another ideology," he said.

On Iran, King Abdullah dismissed reports that Saudi Arabia is forming an alliance with other countries against Iran. "I have told the Iranian envoy [Ali Larinjani] that you are indicating by a way or another through your media and your supporters that the Kingdom has been allying with others against Iran, but that is absolutely incorrect, because we never interfere in the affairs of others," the King said.

SAUDI-US RELATIONS

King Abdullah appoints Adel Al-Jubeir as ambassador to the US

On January 29, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz appointed Mr. Adel Al-Jubeir, Foreign Affairs Adviser at the Royal Court, as the new Saudi Ambassador to the United States following the resignation of HRH Prince Turki Al-Faisal for personal reasons.



Educated in the US, Germany, Lebanon and Yemen, Al-Jubeir received a B.A. *summa cum laude* in political science from the University of North Texas in 1982 and an M.A. in international relations from Georgetown University in 1984.

He joined the Saudi Diplomatic Service in 1987 and was posted to Washington as Special Assistant to the Ambassador. He also served as Director of the Saudi Information and Congressional Affairs Office in Washington. In 2000 Al-Jubeir was appointed as Foreign Affairs Advisor in the Crown Prince's Court. He has served in his current position as Advisor at the Royal Court since August 2005, and has accompanied King Abdullah on State visits and to international conferences.

Al-Jubeir served in the Joint Information Bureau in Dhahran during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm in 1990-91. He was a member of the GCC delegation to the Madrid Peace Conference in October 1991, and a member of the Saudi delegation to the Multilateral Arms Control Talks in Washington, DC in 1992. In December 1992 he was dispatched with the Saudi Armed Forces to Somalia as part of Operation Restore Hope. He participated in a number of the Kingdom's delegations to the UN General Assembly, 1991-2000.

FOREIGN AID

Saudi Arabia to provide Lebanon with over \$1 billion in aid

Saudi Arabia is providing \$1 billion in aid to Lebanon, in addition to a \$100 million grant to the Lebanese government. Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal made the announcement at a donors' conference for Lebanon in Paris January 25. On a bilateral level, Saudi Arabia has already provided the country with \$3.4 billion in grants and soft loans. The Kingdom has also financed Lebanon's development through regional and international financial institutions.

Kingdom to donate \$2 million in aid to Mauritania

Saudi Arabia will donate \$2 million to Mauritania in order to finance food, relief materials, and trucks to transport the aid. The Saudi Embassy in Nouakchott said that the Finance Ministry, in cooperation with the World Food Program, has set a plan to deliver the aid to those in need.

