



FEBRUARY 6, 2007

TERRORISM

Kingdom arrests 10 in crackdown on terror financing

The Ministry of Interior announced in a February 3 statement that Saudi security forces have arrested 10 people suspected of raising and smuggling funds for militant groups.

As part of ongoing efforts to combat terror financing, Saudi authorities tracked a group that was illegally collecting donations and then smuggling the money to "suspected parties." These parties used the funds to recruit young Saudis to go to unstable regions.

The ten were taken into custody February 2, according to the Ministry. Seven Saudis and one resident were arrested while meeting at a safe house in Jeddah. Two other Saudis with links to the eight were arrested in Madinah and Jeddah.

FOREIGN POLICY

Saudi-German talks focus on Palestine, Iraq

On February 4, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz held talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who was in the Kingdom for a brief official visit. The Saudi-German meeting focused on regional issues, primarily Palestine and the situation in Iraq. Bilateral relations were also discussed.

FOREIGN AID

King Abdullah meets with UN High Commissioner for Refugees

King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz met with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres and his accompanying delegation in Riyadh February 4. King Abdullah presented the High Commissioner with the King Abdulaziz Medal, second class, in recognition of his humanitarian work. For his part, Guterres praised Saudi Arabia's support for his organization's programs.

Saudi Arabia provides loans to Sri Lanka for medical projects

Saudi Arabia on February 1 provided Sri Lanka with a \$19.9 million loan to finance health centers in Colombo, including a hospital specializing in epilepsy. The loan package includes \$2.9 million to develop medical services in Colombo. The aid is part of Saudi Arabia's ongoing humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka.

SAUDI-US RELATIONS

Prince Turki Al-Faisal attends farewell receptions, events

Saudi Ambassador to the US Prince Turki Al-Faisal concluded his term in office with a flurry of events and meetings this past week.

On January 30, he held a farewell meeting with President George W. Bush at the White House, where they discussed Saudi-US cooperation and regional issues. In a statement afterwards, Prince Turki expressed his appreciation to the American people for the warm welcome he received during his tours of the country. The response to the tours demonstrated the desire of the American people to move beyond stereotypes and increase understanding with Saudi Arabia, he noted.

Over the course of the week Prince Turki also met with Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Defense Secretary Robert Gates, Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Peter Pace.

On February 2, Prince Turki participated in a panel discussion on King Abdulaziz and the building of modern Saudi Arabia at Georgetown University's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies. The same day, he attended a farewell reception at the Saudi Embassy in Washington.

