



MAY 15, 2007

SAUDI ARABIA-US

King Abdullah holds talks with Vice President Cheney

King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz held talks with US Vice President Dick Cheney in Tabuk, Saudi Arabia May 12. The US-Saudi talks focused on regional issues, in particular Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon. Cheney arrived at Tabuk Airport earlier in the day for a brief official visit to Saudi Arabia.

Saudi officials in attendance at the talks included Crown Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz, Minister of Interior Prince Nayef bin Abdulaziz, Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Chief of General Intelligence Prince Miqren bin Abdulaziz, and Saudi Ambassador to the US Adel Al-Jubeir.

FOREIGN POLICY

Cabinet highlights Saudi policies on Iraq, Palestine

In its weekly meeting at Al-Yamamah Palace in Riyadh May 14, the Cabinet highlighted the Kingdom's policies on a number of regional issues.

On the Palestinian issue, it reaffirmed full support for the Palestinian unity government. Achieving peace requires Israeli commitment to international law and the Arab Peace Initiative in respect to a Palestinian state and the rights of refugees, it said.

On Iraq, the Cabinet stressed Saudi support for strengthening Iraq's security, ending the violence there, achieving national unity based on the political participation of all strata of Iraq's society, focusing on Iraq's construction and affirming its sovereignty.

ENERGY

Aramco, Dow agree to build chemicals complex in Saudi Arabia

On May 12 Saudi Aramco and US chemical giant Dow Chemical Co. signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish, own and operate a chemicals and plastics production complex in Saudi Arabia, Aramco reported on its website.

The world-scale complex is to be called the Ras Tanura Integrated Project. It will be operationally integrated with Aramco's Ras Tanura refinery complex and the Ju'aymah gas processing plant, both of which will supply feedstock to the joint venture and continue to owned and operated by Aramco.

When completed, the new complex will produce a diverse and extensive slate of plastics and chemicals to the Kingdom. It will be one of the largest grassroots plastics and chemicals production facilities in the world.

FOREIGN AID

Kingdom donates an additional \$9 million to Rafah housing project

The Saudi Fund for Development has contributed an additional \$9 million to a UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) project to house more than 3,500 Palestinian refugees in Rafah, UNRWA announced in a press release May 14.

The total Saudi contribution of \$39 million will fund 752 housing units for Palestinian refugees in Rafah whose homes were demolished. The donation is also funding the construction of four schools, a health clinic, a community center and a mosque, which are 80 percent completed.

The Saudi Fund for Development is also funding the construction of a school in Deir al-Balah through UNRWA.

