



SEPTEMBER 11, 2007

## SAUDI-US RELATIONS

### **Cabinet authorizes Foreign Minister to discuss visa issues with US**

During its weekly meeting September 10, the Cabinet authorized the Foreign Minister or his deputy to discuss an amendment to a Memorandum of Understanding on organizing visit visas with the United States. The amendment involves extending the visas from two years to five and increasing the visa fees.

### **Saudi Embassy hosts reception for National Day**

Saudi Ambassador to the US Adel A. Al-Jubeir hosted a reception at the embassy in Washington September 6 in honor of Saudi Arabia's 77th National Day. The guests included US officials, members of Congress, Arab and Muslim ambassadors, as well as leaders of the Saudi community and their families.

National Day, which marks the anniversary of the founding of the modern Kingdom by King Abdulaziz Al-Saud in 1932, is observed annually on September 23. This year's reception was held early because September 23 falls during the holy month of Ramadan.

### **Sixteen Guantanamo detainees repatriated to Saudi Arabia**

Sixteen Saudi detainees at the US military prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, were returned to Saudi Arabia September 6. Interior Minister Prince Nayef bin Abdulaziz welcomed the return of the detainees and said that efforts remain underway to bring all of the Saudi citizens currently being held at Guantanamo Bay back to the Kingdom. He also thanked US authorities for their cooperation in the matter.

## FOREIGN RELATIONS

### **Nawaz Sharif once again a guest of Saudi Arabia**

Former Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif arrived in Jeddah September 10 after being deported from Pakistan. This marks the second time that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has welcomed Sharif; it did so previously after Sharif's ouster as prime minister in 1999 as a humanitarian gesture with the goodwill of the Pakistani government.



On September 4, the Kingdom denied reports that it supported Sharif's return to Pakistan and called on Sharif to honor his promise not to return to Pakistan and to politics.

## **Saudi Arabia denies reports of a Saudi-Syrian meeting**

Saudi Ambassador to Syria Ahmed Al-Gahtani has denied recent reports in the Lebanese press that Chief of General Intelligence Prince Muqrin bin Abdulaziz visited Damascus to meet with senior Syrian officials.

In a statement September 7, the ambassador suggested that the media should be accurate in its reporting to help achieve rapprochement among Arab countries.

## **FOREIGN AID**

### **Saudi airlift delivers relief aid to Mauritania**

A Saudi airlift to provide relief supplies to flood-stricken Mauritania is currently underway. The third plane in the Saudi airlift arrived in Nouakchott on September 10 carrying 74 tons of foodstuffs and tents. The airlift, which began over the weekend, has already delivered 168.5 tons of relief aid to Mauritania.

The airlift will consist of five relief planes carrying a total of 350 tons of various relief aid. The Kingdom has also granted \$20 million in urgent aid to provide immediate relief to flood victims.

