



MARCH 11, 2008

## FOREIGN POLICY

### **Crown Prince Sultan visit to Qatar expected to boost relations**

Crown Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz arrived in Doha March 10 for a three-day state visit to Qatar. The visit is expected to boost relations between the two countries, which have been strained in recent years.

In a wide-ranging March 9 interview with the Qatari newspaper *Al-Sharq*, Crown Prince Sultan emphasized the deep-rooted relations between the two countries.

Commenting on the nuclear standoff between Iran and the US, the Crown Prince told *Al-Sharq* that all countries must adhere to international regulations preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. He expressed the hope that the crisis would be resolved peacefully and defended the right of GCC countries to acquire nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Turning to the situation in Palestine, Crown Prince Sultan called on Palestinian groups to stand united. He added that the Arab peace initiative remains the reference point for a peaceful resolution of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, but warned that Israeli aggressions undermine any chance for peace.

Asked if Saudi Arabia would respond to the Iraqi prime minister's call urging Arab countries to open their embassies in Baghdad, Crown Prince Sultan noted that Saudi Arabia has already expressed its desire to open an embassy in Baghdad and that a delegation was dispatched to study the logistics.

### **Kingdom invited to the upcoming Arab Summit in Damascus**

Syria has invited Saudi Arabia to attend the 20th Arab Summit, which is scheduled to be held in Damascus at the end of this month. Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal received the invitation during a meeting with Syrian Minister of State for Red Crescent Affairs Dr. Bashar Al-Shaar in Riyadh March 9.

### **Arab foreign ministers stress support for Lebanon initiative**

At a meeting in Cairo March 6, Arab foreign ministers reiterated their support for the Arab League initiative to resolve the political crisis in Lebanon. The ministers urged Lebanon to expedite efforts to hold presidential elections and form a national reconciliation government. They also called on Syria and Lebanon to improve bilateral relations.



## SAUDI-US RELATIONS

### **Saudi ambassador hosts luncheon for US diplomats**

Saudi Ambassador to the United States Adel A. Al-Jubeir hosted a luncheon at the Embassy in Washington March 5 for American diplomats assigned to the US Embassy in Saudi Arabia. In remarks, Ambassador Al-Jubeir welcomed the diplomats and highlighted their role in enhancing bilateral relations.

### **KAUST announces partnerships with Stanford, Berkeley**

On March 4, King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) announced Academic Excellence Alliance (AEA) partnerships with Stanford University and the University of California, Berkeley. The partnerships are with Stanford's Applied Mathematics and Computational Science Department and Berkeley's Mechanical Engineering Department.

Through the AEA program, KAUST is enlisting the help of world-class academic departments to establish academic curriculums, nominate founding faculty and establish collaborative research direction for the new university.

Located along the Red Sea in Thuwal, KAUST aims to be a world-class graduate research university that will support scientific discovery and human advancement. It is expected to open in September 2009.

## SAUDI ARABIA

### **Interior Ministry warns recipients of Al-Qaeda phone message**

The Interior Ministry has warned anyone who may have responded to Al-Qaeda leader Ayman Al-Zawahiri's calls for donations that they will be penalized if they do not contact the Ministry within a week to clarify their position.

In a March 8 statement, the Ministry said it had obtained information about individuals who received the voice message sent by Al-Zawahiri while questioning 28 militants arrested last week.

Saudi authorities found the message from Al-Zawahiri on the memory card of a mobile phone carried by one of the militants. In the message, Al-Zawahiri identified its bearer as a "trusted brother" and urged the militants to raise money under the pretext of assisting needy families in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

