



MAY 20, 2008

SAUDI-U.S. RELATIONS

President Bush pays official visit to Saudi Arabia

President George W. Bush paid an official visit to the Kingdom May 16-17 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Saudi-US relations. It was the president's second visit to Saudi Arabia this year.

After a red-carpet welcome at the King Khalid International Airport, King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz hosted President Bush at the royal ranch in Jenadriyah, near Riyadh. At the ranch, King Abdullah and President Bush held two rounds of official talks on key issues, including the Middle East peace process, Lebanon and Iraq as well as boosting bilateral cooperation.

A number of Saudi-US agreements were signed during the visit, including an agreement for the development of human and infrastructure resources and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on civil nuclear energy cooperation.

King Abdullah hosted a luncheon and a dinner in honor of the president and his delegation, which included First Lady Laura Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

While in the Kingdom, Mrs. Bush visited with breast cancer patients at King Fahd Medical City as a follow-up to the Saudi-US Partnership for Breast Cancer Awareness, which she launched in October 2007.

Foreign Minister highlights Saudi-US cooperation

In a May 16 joint press conference with Oil Minister Ali Al-Naimi, Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal highlighted the close cooperation between the US and Saudi Arabia in oil matters, peace in the Middle East and counterterrorism, and encouraged US lawmakers to visit Saudi Arabia and see for themselves.

"The Kingdom's cooperation with America and the concerned official agencies is unmatched at the international level," he said. "Come to us and discuss these topics, and let us cooperate together and decide what should be done in this respect," Prince Saud said.

FOREIGN POLICY

Foreign Minister affirms Palestinians' legitimate rights

In the May 16 press conference, Foreign Minister Prince Saud stressed the importance of affirming the legitimate historical and political rights of the



Palestinian people. "We believe that stressing the right of a nation to exist should not strike out or revoke the legitimate rights of other nation," he said.

Saudi Arabia joins initiatives to combat nuclear terror, proliferation

On May 16, Saudi Arabia became the 71st member nation of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the 86th member nation of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI).

ENERGY

Cabinet: Kingdom's oil production sufficient to meet market needs

Saudi Arabia's current oil production is enough to meet market requirements and producing countries could increase capacity if there were actual additional energy needs, the Cabinet said May 19. It stressed that the Kingdom's oil policy takes into consideration the interests of both consumers and producers and achieves a balance between demand and supply.

Oil Minister: Kingdom to boost production in June

Saudi Arabia will boost its oil production by 300,000 barrels per day (bpd) in June for a total output of 9.46 million bpd, Oil Minister Ali Al-Naimi said May 16. The Kingdom made the decision to increase output in response to requests in May from some 50 customers around the world, including the US, he noted.

Saudi Aramco confirms new Jubail, Yanbu refinery projects

The Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco) this week announced joint venture agreements with Houston-based ConocoPhillips and France's Total for the construction of refineries in Yanbu and Jubail, respectively.

FOREIGN AID

Kingdom airlifts relief supplies, donates \$50 million to China

Saudi Arabia has begun airlifting relief supplies into China's Sichuan Province, which was struck by a deadly earthquake May 12. The airlift is in addition to \$50 million in urgent assistance provided by Saudi Arabia to China.

The first Saudi plane arrived in Chengu, the capital of Sichuan Province, on May 20 carrying 70 tons of relief supplies, including foodstuffs, blankets, tents and rugs. Two additional planes arrived May 21 with 123 tons of relief materials.

