



JULY 8, 2008

## FOREIGN POLICY

### **King Abdullah to open Madrid interfaith conference**

King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz will open an international interfaith conference in Madrid, Spain on July 16, the Royal Court announced July 5.

In March 2008, King Abdullah called for a meeting of monotheistic religions in order to solve the pressing problems facing humanity. Last month, the King opened the International Islamic Conference for Dialogue in Makkah.

### **Saudi Arabia, Qatar to boost bilateral cooperation**

Saudi Arabia and Qatar have reached agreements to demarcate their border and set up a joint council to develop bilateral relations. The agreements were finalized in a meeting between Interior Minister Prince Nayef bin Abdulaziz and Qatari Foreign Minister Sheikh Hamad in Jeddah July 5.

The Saudi-Qatari Joint Coordination Council will formulate policy for cooperation between the two countries on all levels. Crown Prince Sultan and Qatari Crown Prince Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani will serve as co-chairs.

## ENERGY

### **King Abdullah: Saudi Arabia not responsible for high oil prices**

In a July 1 interview with the Kuwaiti daily *Al-Siyassah*, King Abdullah reiterated that Saudi Arabia is not responsible for the current high oil prices.

"The Kingdom's policy ever since the establishment of OPEC is based on the adoption of a fair price of oil which neither harms producers nor consumers," the King said.

He noted that there are several factors for high oil prices, including speculators, increasing consumption in developing economies and high petroleum taxes in consuming countries.

## SAUDI-US RELATIONS

### **Ambassador discusses US investment opportunities in the Kingdom**

Saudi Ambassador to the United States Adel Al-Jubeir discussed Saudi-US trade relations, investment opportunities for US companies, and regional security in an



address to the non-partisan Business Coalition for Capacity Building (BCCB) Ambassadors' Luncheon Series July 3. BCCB is a private a business coalition focused on trade and economic development.

Also this week, Ambassador Al-Jubeir met with Joe Kennedy at the Embassy in Washington. Kennedy is the founder of the nonprofit Citizens Energy Corp.

## TERRORISM

### **Minister of Islamic Affairs praises efforts to combat terrorism**

On July 4, Minister of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Call and Guidance Saleh Al-Asheikh praised the Ministry of Interior's arrest of hundreds of suspected militants over the past several months. The Ministry's actions protected lives, properties and quashed the militants' plans to create chaos, he said.

The minister also emphasized the need for families and religious establishments to combat terrorism and extremist ideology. He noted that some young Saudis have been misled into branding people and even some Muslim religious scholars as infidels. Imams and preachers should teach and guide the youths before they fall prey to the influence of extremists and become outlaws, he said.

## SAUDI ARABIA

### **Madain Saleh named 1st UNESCO World Heritage site in Saudi Arabia**

The ancient Nabatean city of Madain Saleh was inscribed as the first United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage site in Saudi Arabia last week.

Formerly known as Al-Hijr, Madain Saleh is the largest conserved Nabatean site south of Petra. It features well-preserved tombs dating from the first century BC, cave drawings and some 50 inscriptions from the pre-Nabatean period.

"With its 111 monumental tombs, 94 of which are decorated, and water wells, the site is an outstanding example of the Nabataeans' architectural accomplishment and hydraulic expertise," UNESCO said in the press release.

Through its World Heritage program, UNESCO seeks to preserve cultural and natural sites worldwide in cooperation with experts and governments.

