



AUGUST 5, 2008

FOREIGN POLICY

Cabinet calls for unified Arab action to address regional challenges

Crown Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz chaired the weekly Cabinet meeting at Al-Salam Palace in Jeddah August 4.

The Cabinet reviewed developments in the Arab world and current challenges such as the situation in Palestine, whose front is disintegrating at a time when it needs unity, a coalition government and effective representation at the international level.

Other challenges discussed at the meeting include attempts to exploit cultural diversity as a justification for national division, regional disintegration and sectarian strife, and plans for hegemony and intervention. These issues require unified Arab action and active support for joint Arab institutions, the Cabinet noted.

On other issues, the Cabinet approved the Kingdom's accession to the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law. It also authorized a number of agreements, including accords on communications and information technology cooperation with Tunisia and maritime transport with Egypt.

Saudi leadership condemns deadly Istanbul bombings

King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz and Crown Prince Sultan have condemned the deadly bombings that struck Istanbul July 27.

In July 30 cables to Turkish President Abdullah Gul, King Abdullah and the Crown Prince extended their condolences to the families of the victims and the Turkish people. They also wished a speedy recovery to those injured in the bombings.

FOREIGN AID

Saudi relief convoy dispatched to Sudanese states stricken by floods

A Saudi relief convoy departed Khartoum August 3 with supplies for seven Sudanese states stricken by flooding.

The convoy carried foodstuffs, pesticides, ambulances, tanks, and water and electrical equipment for the states of Al-Jazeera, Sinnar, Kasala, South Kordofan, River Nile, Red Sea and East Equatoria. Emergency hospitals are expected to be dispatched soon.



In January of this year, Saudi Arabia handed over \$20 million to Sudan to ease the suffering caused by floods. The aid also comprised material support, environmental sanitation and foodstuffs.

Kingdom provides aid to Bangladesh, Palestinians

Saudi Arabia this week donated construction materials to Bangladesh as part of its ongoing aid to the South Asian nation. A team from the Ministry of Finance handed over the supplies to disaster management officials in southwest Bangladesh.

In November 2007, Saudi Arabia extended \$150 million in grants and humanitarian aid to Bangladesh after Cyclone Sidr devastated the country.

In related news, the Saudi Popular Campaign for the Relief of the Lebanese People has raised \$1 million in medicines and medical supplies for Palestinian families living in the Nahr Al-Barid and Beddawi refugee camps in Lebanon. The campaign is working with the Palestinian Embassy in Beirut to discuss distributing the aid.

HAJJ

Makkah Governor washes the Holy Ka'abah

Makkah Governor Prince Khalid Al-Faisal washed the Holy Ka'abah at the Grand Mosque in Makkah August 2 in preparation for the upcoming Hajj season.

Prince Khalid performed the washing ceremony on behalf of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz, with senior officials and accredited members of the Muslim diplomatic corps in attendance.

The Holy Ka'abah is washed twice a year. During the traditional ceremony, the Ka'abah is circumambulated in a ritual known as tawaf, and two short prayers (rakaat) of the tawaf are performed. The Ka'abah is then washed with Zamzam water mixed with rosewater.

Prince Khalid last washed the Holy Ka'abah in January 2008.

