



OCTOBER 14, 2008

SAUDI-US RELATIONS

Saudi Embassy hosts National Day reception

Saudi Ambassador to the US Adel A. Al-Jubeir hosted a reception in honor of the Kingdom's 78th National Day at the Embassy in Washington October 9.

The guests included US officials, members of Congress and the armed forces, Arab and Muslim ambassadors, as well as leaders of the Saudi community and their families.

National Day marks the anniversary of the founding of the modern Kingdom by King Abdulaziz Al-Saud in 1932. It is observed each year on September 23.

SAUDI ARABIA

SAMA: Kingdom not facing a liquidity problem

The Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA) said this week that the Kingdom is not facing a liquidity problem.

In a statement broadcast on Saudi TV October 7, Deputy Governor Dr. Mohammed Al-Jasser said that SAMA has the capacity and means to deal with any liquidity issues that might arise and stands ready to provide sufficient liquidity if needed.

Al-Jasser noted that the economy has continued to grow and that deposits have increased by 22 percent in the first eight months of 2008 compared to the previous year. He also stressed that deposits in Saudi banks are safe. The Saudi central bank continues to monitor the situation closely, he added.

Finance minister highlights strength of the Saudi economy at IMF

Minister of Finance Dr. Ibrahim Al-Assaf highlighted the overall strength of the Saudi economy in an address at the International Monetary Fund in Washington October 11.

He noted that the Kingdom's economy has continued to grow, with a budget surplus, a reduction of the national debt and an increase in non-petroleum exports.

He expressed optimism for the coming year due to Saudi Arabia's strong banking sector as well as ongoing efforts to attract investment and create jobs.

Dr. Al-Assaf also welcomed the World Bank's efforts to support an energy initiative to help impoverished countries cope with the burden of high oil prices. King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz proposed the initiative at the Jeddah Economic Forum in June of this year.

In an interview that aired on Saudi TV October 11, Dr. Al-Assaf said that the Kingdom's development plans will not be affected by the current global economic crisis because will be funded by reserves and oil receipts.

He noted that the current global financial crisis may have an indirect impact on Saudi Arabia, but that he expects any such impact to be temporary.

Al-Assaf reaffirmed that the Kingdom is not facing a liquidity problem and that the government stands ready to increase liquidity if needed. He also stressed that deposits in Saudi banks are safe.

FOREIGN POLICY

Saudi-Lebanese talks focus on bilateral cooperation

King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz held official talks with Lebanese President Michel Suleiman at the royal palace in Jeddah October 13. The talks focused on ways of boosting cooperation between the two countries. King Abdullah also reaffirmed Saudi Arabia's support for Lebanese unity, integrity and security.

After the talks, King Abdullah presented President Suleiman with the King Abdulaziz Medal, an honor that is awarded to world leaders and heads of state.

Also yesterday, President Suleiman attended a meeting with Minister of Commerce and Industry Abdullah Zainal Alireza and businessmen at the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Both President Suleiman and Zainal called for greater investment between the two countries and the promotion of trade.

