



JULY 28, 2009

FOREIGN RELATIONS

King Abdullah visits Morocco

The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz traveled to Agadir, Morocco on July 23 to visit Crown Prince Sultan, who is recovering following successful surgery performed in New York earlier this year. Upon his arrival, King Abdullah attended a luncheon held in his honor. Later, King Abdullah traveled to Casablanca, where he met with Moroccan Prime Minister Abbas El Fassi and Greater Casablanca Governor Mohammed Halab. The King was accompanied on the trip by Chief of General Intelligence Prince Miqren bin Abdulaziz; Minister of Education Prince Faisal bin Mohammed Al Saud; Minister of Culture and Information Dr. Abdulaziz Khoja; and several other officials.

King Abdullah receives CENTCOM Commander David Petraeus

King Abdullah received Commander of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), General David H. Petraeus, and an accompanying delegation at his palace in Jeddah on July 22. During the meeting, General Petraeus conveyed the greetings of U.S. President Barack Obama. The Charge d'Affaires of the U.S. Embassy in Saudi Arabia, Richard Erdmann, also attended the event. General Petraeus and other U.S. military officials met with Assistant Minister of Defense and Aviation for Military Affairs Prince Khalid bin Sultan bin Abdulaziz in Riyadh. Bilateral military cooperation and other issues of common concern were reviewed.

HAJJ

Kingdom enacts swine flu preventative measures for Hajj season

Minister of Health Dr. Abdullah Abdulaziz Al-Rabeeah led the Saudi delegation to an extraordinary session of the Health Ministers of the Eastern Mediterranean region held in Cairo June 22. The meeting was convened to discuss measures aimed at preventing the spread of the H1N1-A virus (swine flu) during the upcoming Hajj and Umrah season. Dr. Al-Rabeeah stressed the Kingdom's commitment to enforcing the recommendations made during an experts' workshop held recently in Jeddah, which was attended by representatives of the World Health Organization (WHO) and anti-epidemic centers in the U.S., Australia, China and Europe. Dr. Al-Rabeeah said that the Kingdom is currently

enforcing a series of preventative measures at its land, sea and air ports of entry, citing the use of advanced technology to detect virus carriers at border.

Ka'abah washed by Governor of Makkah

On behalf of King Abdullah, Makkah Governor Prince Khalid Al-Faisal washed the Holy Ka'abah on July 23. In accordance with tradition, he cleansed the floor and walls of the Ka'abah with a mixture of Zamzam water and rosewater using white pieces of cloth. Then, he performed the ritual circling of the structure. Saudi government officials, as well as a number of Muslim diplomats, took part in the event. The Ka'abah is washed twice a year, once before the holy month of Ramadan and once during the Hajj pilgrimage. It takes the equivalent of about five gallons of rosewater mixed into about 47 gallons of Zamzam water to complete the cleansing process.

FOREIGN AID

Saudi Arabia provides over \$18 million for projects in Darfur

Deputy President of the Saudi Red Crescent Society Fayez Al-Ahmadi signed an agreement in Khartoum July 21 committing the Kingdom to providing \$18.67 million to Sudan for developmental and humanitarian projects in Darfur. During a press conference, Al-Ahmadi noted the money will be used to establish 21 water stations and 21 health units in Darfur, fund operations at nine other health centers, and provide emergency food support.

ISFD approves more than \$45 million in development loans

The Board of Directors of the Islamic Solidarity Fund for Development (ISFD), an affiliate of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), has approved financing for new development projects worth \$45.8 million. These concessional loans include \$10.2 million to finance Afghanistan's Doshi-Pol-Khumri Road Project; \$5 million to support micro-enterprises in the Kyrgyz Republic; and \$20 million and \$10 for the Kaliab-Kalaykhum Road Project and micro-enterprise financing, respectively, in Tajikistan.

