



FEBRUARY 16, 2010

SAUDI ARABIA-U.S.

King Abdullah, U.S. Secretary of State Clinton hold meeting

King Abdullah and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton met in Rawdhat Khuraim, near Riyadh, on February 15 for bilateral talks. During the meeting they discussed Saudi-U.S. relations and international efforts to revive the troubled peace process. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Chief of General Intelligence Prince Miqren bin Abdulaziz and Saudi Ambassador to the United States Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir. The American delegation included U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom James B. Smith, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Jeffrey Feltman, and Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs Philip J. Crowley.

Afterwards, the U.S. Secretary of State held a joint press conference with Prince Saud, who noted that this week marks the 65th anniversary of the historic meeting between King Abdulaziz, the founder of modern Saudi Arabia, and President Franklin Roosevelt on February 14, 1945. "The two leaders laid the foundation of Saudi-U.S. relations which are based on mutual respect, the promotion of joint interests, and joint efforts to serve the United Nations' pursuit for achieving international peace and security," he said. Among the most significant results of this cooperation, Prince Saud added, is the increase in the number of Saudi students studying in the U.S. from 3,000 to 25,000 over the last few years, and the significant increase in the volume of trade, investment and travel between the two countries.

Turning to regional and international issues, Prince Saud expressed the Kingdom's appreciation of the U.S. Administration's efforts "to resuscitate the peace process and to treat the major issue of conflict within the framework of the two-state solution," which aims at establishing an independent and viable Palestinian state. He reiterated the illegality of Israeli settlement building.

The bilateral talks, Prince Saud noted, addressed a number of other issues, including Iran's nuclear program, international support for the Yemeni government, the importance of civilian aid in Afghanistan and the upcoming elections in Iraq. The Foreign Minister also stressed the Kingdom's continued commitment to fighting terrorism. Saudi Arabia, Prince Saud declared, "is determined to continue the policy of combating terrorism in all its security, ideological, and financial aspects. It has actually achieved a considerable amount of success in thwarting several terrorist operations domestically and also in preventing other terrorist operations from being launched from its territory."

King Abdullah receives Gen. Petraeus

King Abdullah held a meeting on February 16 with the commander of U.S. Central Command, Gen. David Petraeus, at his ranch in Rawdhat Khuraim. The meeting, which focused on many issues of common interest, included Chief of General Intelligence Prince Miqren bin Abdulaziz, Assistant Minister of Defense and Aviation and Inspector General for Military Affairs Prince Khalid bin Sultan bin Abdulaziz, Saudi Ambassador to United States Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir and Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh Susan Ziadeh.

During his visit to the Kingdom, Gen. Petraeus also met separately with Deputy Chief of the National Guard for Executive Affairs Prince Miteb bin Abdullah bin Abdulaziz and Chief of the General Staff Gen. Saleh Al-Mohaya.

King Abdullah meets with U.S. Congresswoman Lowey

King Abdullah received visiting U.S. Congresswoman Nita Lowey and her delegation on February 14 in Rawdhat Khuraim. Rep. Lowey, who is chairwoman of the U.S. House of Representatives' State and Foreign Operations Subcommittee, arrived in Riyadh earlier in the day and was received at King Khaled International Airport by Osama Kurdi, head of the Shoura Council's Saudi-U.S. Parliamentary Friendship Committee, Saudi Ambassador to United States Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir and U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia James Smith. During the subsequent meeting, King Abdullah and the American delegation reviewed a number of bilateral issues.

SAUDI ARABIA

Saudi Arabia launches solar energy program

Saudi Arabia has begun building the first solar-powered water desalination plant, the first step in a three-part program to introduce solar energy into the Kingdom. The program, launched by the King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST), aims to help stabilize future power and water supplies inside Saudi Arabia through the creation of solar-powered desalination facilities. Prince Turki bin Saud bin Mohammad, KACST Vice President for Research Institutes, said, "The solar energy program will reduce the cost of producing desalinated water and of generating power for use in the Kingdom, an oil-dependent nation, which has launched a national energy efficiency program." Today, Saudi Arabia, which is a prime location to harness solar energy because of its year-round sunshine, produces 18 percent of the world's desalinated water.

