

SAUDI ARABIA | IN FOCUS

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SAUDI ARABIA-U.S.

King Abdullah receives U.S. Secretary of Energy Steven Chu

King Abdullah received visiting U.S. Secretary of Energy Steven Chu and his accompanying delegation in Rawdhat Khuraim, near Riyadh, on February 22. The meeting was also attended by Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources Ali Al-Naimi, Saudi Ambassador to the U.S. Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir and U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom James B. Smith.

In a separate session, Secretary Chu and Minister Al-Naimi reviewed issues pertaining to energy, petroleum and the international oil market and related topics.

Chairman of U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff visits the Kingdom

Prince Khalid bin Sultan bin Abdulaziz, Assistant Minister of Defense and Aviation and Inspector General for Military Affairs, received Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, in Riyadh on February 19. During the meeting, they discussed a range of topics of mutual interest. Also participating in the session were Deputy Chief of the Saudi General Staff Lt. Gen. Hussein Al-Qabil; U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom James B. Smith; Chief of the U.S. Military Training Mission to Saudi Arabia Major Gen. Paul Van Sickle; and Saudi Military Attaché to the U.S. Brigadier Gen. Ameen Shaker. Admiral Mullen met on February 16 with Lt. Gen. Abdulrahman Al-Murshid, Commander of Saudi Land Forces, shortly after his arrival in the Kingdom.

COUNTERTERRORISM

International counterterrorism workshop held in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia hosted a three-day counterterrorism workshop in Riyadh, beginning on February 20, under the title "International Legal Framework for Combating Terrorism and its Financing Workshop." The conference, organized by the Saudi Bureau of Investigation and Prosecution (BIP) in association with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), was attended by more than 76 national, regional and international experts on terrorism, including the head of terrorist investigations at the U.S. Department of Justice, representatives from the FBI, envoys from the European Commission and Saudi Grand Mufti Sheikh Abdulaziz bin Abdullah Al-Asheikh.

Speaking on the eve of the conference, Grand Mufti Al-Asheikh said, "Terrorism is criminal and spills the blood of innocents. It attacks security, spreads terror among people and creates problems for society . . . Such acts are forbidden by Islamic law." The Grand Mufti spoke specifically about combating terror financing, calling it a serious global threat, and called for increased international cooperation in preventing money from reaching terrorist organizations.

