



JANUARY 31, 2012

## FOREIGN RELATIONS

### **Saudi U.N. Ambassador calls for action on Syria**

Saudi Arabia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Abdullah Al-Mouallimi, said during a Security Council debate on Jan. 24 that Syria should stop persecuting its own people and urged the Council to lend its support to the Arab League plan. Ambassador Al-Mouallimi said the Kingdom feels deeply pained by the suffering of the Syrian people, stating, "We call on the Syrian authorities to stop rebuffing the legitimate aspirations of its citizens by violence and bullets." The Ambassador explained why the Kingdom decided to withdraw its observers from Syria, saying, "We did not feel the Syrian authorities were serious about the Arab initiative. We rise above being witnesses and supporters of the practices of assassination and persecution imposed on the great Syrian people." He added, "It is high time for the international community to shoulder its responsibilities. The Security Council should hasten to take necessary decisions and resolutions on Syria." On Jan. 28, the Arab League announced the suspension of its entire monitoring mission in Syria, citing escalating violence.

### **GCC-Turkish Ministerial Meeting held in Istanbul**

The fourth Joint Ministerial Meeting for Strategic Dialogue between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states and Turkey concluded in Istanbul on Jan. 28. The GCC delegation was led by Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al-Faisal, the Chairman of the current session of the GCC Ministerial Council, and the Turkish delegation was headed by Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu. After concluding their deliberations, the delegates released a statement stressing the strength of GCC-Turkish relations and the common desire to enhance cooperation in all fields through strategic dialogue.

## ENERGY

### **Al-Naimi: Saudi Arabia will be a reliable supplier of oil for decades**

"Saudi Arabia will continue to be a stable supplier of crude oil to world markets for many decades," Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources Ali Al-Naimi told the Middle East and North Africa Energy 2012 conference at Chatham House in London on Jan. 29. In his speech, "Investing for the Future in Turbulent Times," Al-Naimi described the continuous investment the Kingdom is making in its oil industry. He denied that increased domestic energy consumption will affect

crude exports, citing measures to raise energy efficiency inside Saudi Arabia, as well as the expansion of the natural gas industry and the use of renewable energy sources.

## ECONOMY

### **Saudi Arabia recorded \$144.23 billion trade surplus in 2010**

Saudi Arabia's trade budget recorded a surplus of \$144.23 billion in 2010, an increase of 19.1 percent since 2005. This reflects the huge development in commercial exchange between the Kingdom and the world during that period. According to an economic report issued by the Sharqiya Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), Saudi exports in 2010 equaled \$314.63 billion, while imports were valued at \$115.13 billion. The top countries to which the Kingdom exported its products were Japan, the United States, China, South Korea, India, Singapore, Taiwan, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Thailand.

## SAUDI ARABIA

### **Saudi Arabia's Hajj Terminal ranked "Best in the World"**

The 120-acre Hajj Terminal at Jeddah's King Abdulaziz International Airport (KAIA) is the best terminal in the world, according to new ratings released by the popular travel guide publisher Frommers. The ratings, which were published on Frommers in January, were compiled based on cleanliness, on-time departures, navigation and the ease of getting to and from a city's center. The glowing review of the Hajj terminal noted its "stunning" fiberglass tents, which have a cooling effect during hot weather. In 2009, the terminal received an American Institute of Architects award for its architectural design "that has stood the test of time for 25 years." The Hajj Terminal is only open six weeks per year to cater to the millions of pilgrims traveling to Makkah. During that period, it is one of the busiest airport terminals in the world.

