



SEPTEMBER 8, 2009

## SAUDI ARABIA-U.S.

### **White House praises Saudi security cooperation**

The White House condemned the “cowardly” attack perpetrated on August 27 by a suicide bomber against Saudi Assistant Minister of Interior for Security Affairs Prince Muhammad bin Nayef bin Abdulaziz. The assailant has been identified as Abdullah bin Hassan bin Talea’ Asiri, a man wanted by authorities who had offered to help coordinate the return of Saudi fugitives in Yemen. While meeting with Prince Muhammad to discuss the efforts, Asiri set off an explosive device strapped to his body.

In a September 2 statement, White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs declared, “Prince Muhammad has been a courageous leader of Saudi Arabia’s fight against Al-Qaeda, and we are very thankful that Prince Muhammad escaped this attack with only minor injuries. The President has extended his best wishes for a full recovery to Prince Muhammad.”

The incident, Gibbs continued, “underscores the continued threat posed by Al-Qaeda and the importance of strong counterterrorism cooperation between the United States and our regional partners. The President has discussed security cooperation in all of his interactions with King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, as they both share a firm commitment to dismantle the Al-Qaeda organization and to prevent it from carrying out its murderous agenda.”

In the wake of the attack, the Saudi Ministry of Interior once again denounced terrorism and insisted that the open-door policy of Saudi Arabia’s rulers would not change. Furthermore, authorities continue to urge Saudis involved in extremist activities abroad to return home and surrender themselves.

### **Prince Nayef thanks departing U.S. Charge d’Affaires**

Second Deputy Prime Minister Prince Nayef bin Abdulaziz met with outgoing U.S. Chargé d’Affaires to the Kingdom Richard Erdman and a number of U.S. diplomatic staffers in Jeddah on September 6. During the meeting, Prince Nayef congratulated Erdman on his tenure and thanked him for his efforts to enhance Saudi-U.S. relations.

## ARAB WORLD

### **King Abdullah holds talks with Palestinian President Abbas**

King Abdullah received Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas at his residence in Jeddah on September 6. During their meeting, the leaders discussed the Palestinian cause and the latest developments in the Mideast peace process. The session was attended by the King's Advisors, Prince Mansour bin Abdulaziz and Prince Bandar bin Mohammed; Chief of the Cabinet Court Prince Abdulaziz bin Abdulaziz; and Member of the Cabinet for Shoura Affairs Dr. Saud al-Mat'hami. Several senior Palestinian officials were also present.

King Abdullah met the same day with Bahraini Crown Prince Sheikh Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa and his accompanying delegation at the Royal Court in Jeddah. During the meeting, bilateral relations were discussed along with other issues of common interest. Makkah Governor Prince Khalid Al-Faisal and a number of senior Saudi and Bahraini officials also attended..

