



SAUDI-U.S. RELATIONS

King Salman Appoints New Ambassador to Washington

On April 22, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz appointed Prince Khalid bin Salman bin Abdulaziz as the Kingdom’s new ambassador to the United States.

After graduating from the King Faisal Air Academy in Riyadh, Prince Khalid received pilot training in the United States at Columbus Air Force Base in Mississippi. He went on to receive training on advanced electronic warfare in France.

Prince Khalid flew F15-S combat missions against Daesh (ISIS) as part of the Global Coalition Against Daesh and over Yemen as part of Operations Decisive Storm and Renewal of Hope while on active duty in the Royal Saudi Air Force.



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NOTABLE QUOTE

“I’m pleased [to be here today] to reaffirm the very strong partnership that exists between the United State and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We have a long relationship with Saudi Arabia that extends over 80 years, and our support for a strong and steady partner on economic cooperation remains as firm as ever.”

– Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, April 19, Remarks at the U.S.-Saudi Arabia CEO Summit

SAUDI-U.S. RELATIONS

Secretary of State Speaks at U.S.-Saudi CEO Summit

On April 19, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson offered remarks at the U.S.-Saudi Arabia CEO Summit hosted by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Washington, D.C.

Speaking on U.S.-Saudi trade relations and Vision 2030 reforms pursued by the Kingdom, Tillerson praised Saudi Arabia for its engaged and active role in the international community.

“As we work together with Saudi Arabia on some of the most vexing problems confronting Middle East security and stability, we are very encouraged to find in the Saudi

leadership a strong and steady partner on these issues as well as on economic cooperation,” Sec. Tillerson stated.

Sec. Tillerson also pointed to the friendly business environment of Saudi Arabia, which he said will likely produce an increase in business collaboration.

“When U.S. companies invest in the Saudi economy, everyone wins. The U.S. creates jobs at home, and businesses in the Gulf region get the best business partners that the global marketplace has to offer,” he asserted.

Op-ed: Saudi Ambassador Praises Saudi-U.S. Partnership

Ambassador Abdullah Al-Saud praised the Saudi-U.S. partnership and President Trump’s decision to order missile strikes in Syria in an April column in the Wall Street Journal.

“The U.S. has been working closely with us for a long time to combat terror groups and to deter Iran and Hezbollah, often in ways the public doesn’t see. Our support has been critical, but there are certain definitive actions that only the U.S. can take, certain voids that only the U.S. can fill,” wrote Amb. Al-Saud.

The Ambassador outlined the value of decisive American action in the region.

“We value our alliance with the U.S., and we believe that American power – and the demonstrated willingness to use it judiciously – can change the dynamics in the Middle East for the better. In the end, it is American power, reinforcing and complementing the work of America’s allies in the region, that will bring stability and lasting peace,” he concluded.

YEMEN

White Paper: Saudi Arabia and the Yemen Conflict

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a white paper titled “Saudi Arabia and the Yemen Conflict,” providing an in-depth look into the historical and geopolitical aspects of the conflict.

The paper outlines the major achievements of the Saudi-led Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen

and discusses the major strategic interests at stake in the country. It also gives an overview of Iran’s destabilizing influence, Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula’s presence, Houthi violations and Saudi humanitarian aid to the people of Yemen.

The paper is available on the Saudi Embassy’s website.

Saudi Provides \$8.2 Billion in Humanitarian Aid to Yemen

Saudi Arabia pledged a \$150 million donation to support the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSRelief) in Yemen during the Geneva aid conference on April 25.

Dr. Abdullah Al-Rabeeah, supervisor general for KSRelief, explained that the new donation comes as part of the \$8.2 billion committed by the Kingdom within its humanitarian and developmental assistance to Yemen since April 2015.

Established in May 2015, KSRelief has provided health, nutrition, and sanitation aid and relief to 17 million people impacted by the conflict in Yemen. KSRelief, in partnership with a number of international humanitarian organizations, has established more than 100 health facilities, provided emergency food aid and supplied more than 350,000 gallons of fuel to medical facilities.

Saudi Arabia remains the single-largest donor of humanitarian assistance to Yemen.

VISION 2030

Deputy Crown Prince Discusses Vision 2030 Transformation

A piece by David Ignatius titled “A young prince is reimagining Saudi Arabia. Can he make his vision come true” was published on April 20 in The Washington Post. The article profiled Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who outlined the progress that the Kingdom has made on the Vision 2030 plan, one year after its public launch.

Prince Mohammed highlighted that the budget deficit has been cut and non-oil revenue is projected to grow another 12 percent this year. He also detailed plans to privatize Saudi Aramco, which is set to take place next

year and is a major component of the push to diversify the economy away from reliance on energy.

Another priority, he said, is mining – further exploration by the industry is expected to tap into an estimated \$1.5 trillion in potential mineral wealth.

“We want, as the Saudi people, to enjoy the coming days, and concentrate on developing our society and developing ourselves as individuals and families, while retaining our religion and customs. We will not continue to be in the post-’79 era,” he said.

Saudi Minister of Commerce Discusses Vision 2030 in Washington

The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) recently welcomed H.E. Dr. Majed Al-Qasabi, Saudi Minister of Commerce and Investment, to review the progress of implementing Vision 2030 reforms since the national strategy’s release in April 2016.

Highlighting the successes of Vision 2030, Al-Qasabi declared that the Kingdom is experiencing record transformation and openness to international exchange. Additionally, Al-Qasabi commended Saudi women and youth for their significant contributions to economic development and national reform.

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The success of Vision 2030, he indicated, relies on society's commitment to embrace the kind of wide-ranging change that will produce greater governmental transparency and a widening of strategic economic and educational opportunities for Saudi citizens.

Announcing the upcoming award of 15 new trade licenses to American companies, Al-Qasabi emphasized

that the Trump administration is seeking to engage the Kingdom in "win-win" deals for the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. Al-Qasabi also underlined the importance of Secretary Tillerson's recent remarks at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, noting that international investments will rise dramatically as a result of the historic 85-year bilateral partnership.

COUNTERTERRORISM

White Paper: Saudi Arabia and Counterterrorism

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a white paper titled "Saudi Arabia and Counterterrorism," outlining Saudi Arabia's efforts to combat the men, money and the mindset that terrorist organizations create and rely on.

Saudi Arabia has undertaken comprehensive efforts to combat terrorism. The new paper describes the

Kingdom's close cooperation with the international community to fight Daesh (ISIS), Al-Qaeda and their affiliates. It also gives an in-depth look into its initiatives to counter terror financing and undermine the mindset that leads vulnerable individuals to support terrorism.

The paper is available on the Saudi Embassy's website.

Secretary of Defense Travels to Saudi Arabia, Reaffirms Bilateral Security Ties

Secretary of Defense James Mattis traveled to Saudi Arabia for discussions on strengthening the Saudi-U.S. security partnership.

Secretary Mattis told reporters that Saudi Arabia remains a "pillar of [the U.S.] security framework for the region and for American interests."

King Salman met with Secretary Mattis to discuss ways in which the Saudi-U.S. strategic relationship could be strengthened and broadened. "It's very clear that Saudi Arabia is stepping up to its regional role...at a key time

in terms of trying to restore stability in this key region in the world," he added.

Secretary Mattis condemned the subversive role of Iran in the region, asserting that "Everywhere you look, if there's trouble in the region, you find Iran."

On Yemen, the Secretary aligned with Saudi Arabia's view that a political solution is the only viable outcome to the conflict to ensure that it ends as expediently as possible.



ROYAL EMBASSY OF SAUDI ARABIA

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