

Saudi Arabia in Focus

The monthly update from the Saudi mission to the European Union



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From the ambassador

As one of the world's leading donors, Saudi Arabia can be proud of its record on humanitarian relief. In this edition you will see that, in the past month alone, the Kingdom has pledged even more funds to help make life easier for millions of Syrians fleeing the war in their country and for Afghans trying to rebuild their own.

In the coming days, a high-level delegation from the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KS Relief) will visit Brussels. The delegation presided by Dr Abdullah Al Rabeeah, Director General of KSRelief, will hold meetings with the European Commission's department of Humanitarian Aid and the Commissioner responsible for humanitarian aid and crisis management, Christos Stylianides. You can keep up to date with these developments by following the Mission's website and Twitter account at www.ksamission.eu



Abdulrahman S. Alahmed Ambassador and Head of the Mission to the European Union

Humanitarian Aid

Saudi Arabia pledges €67m to support Syrian refugees



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Naif, Deputy Premier and Minister of Interior of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, has announced that Saudi Arabia will provide an additional \$75 million (€67m) to support refugees, in coordination with international organizations. Prince Mohammad announced the new aid package during a speech at the Leaders' Summit on the Global Refugee Crises hosted by U.S. President Barack Obama on the margins of the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly last month.

During his speech, Prince Mohammad highlighted the Kingdom's efforts in relief work and humanitarian aid. "The total humanitarian assistance provided by the Kingdom over the past four decades amounted to about \$139 billion," he said. He singled out Saudi Arabia's assistance to the Syrian people, saying that Saudi Arabia was one of the largest providers of aid. "The Kingdom has received around 2.5 million Syrian citizens, and it is keen on not treating them simply as refugees or putting them in camps.

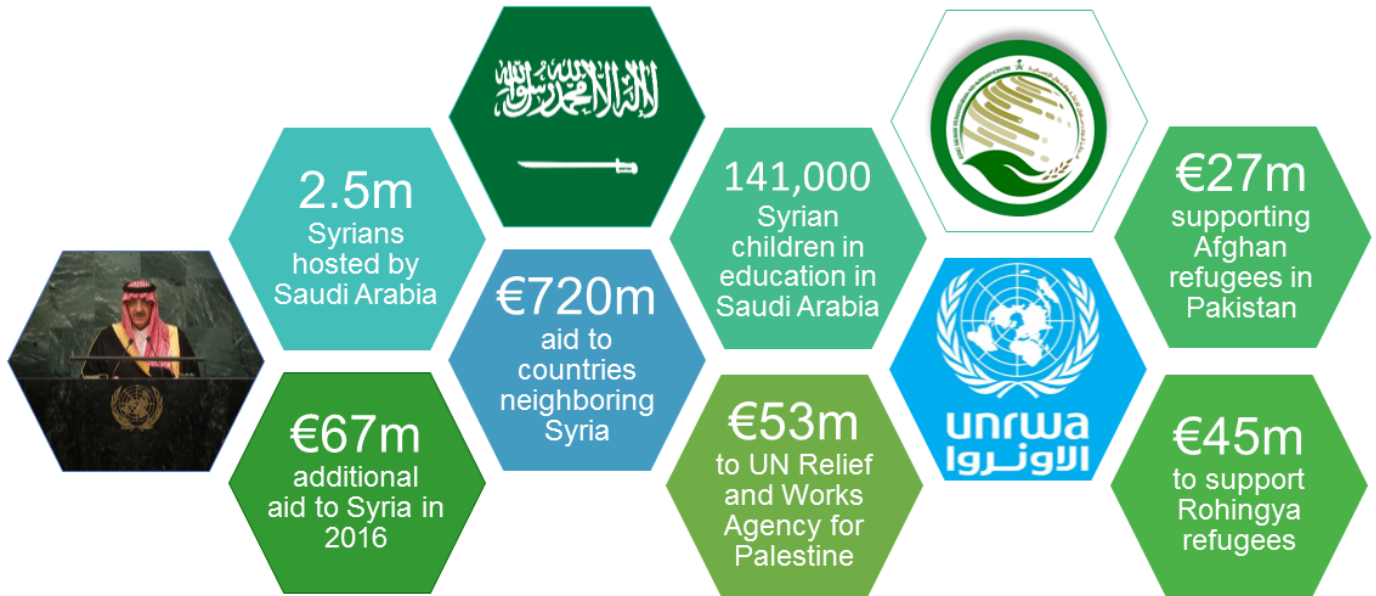
On the other hand, the Kingdom safeguarded their dignity and ensured their safety by granting full freedom of movement and issuing residence permits for hundreds of thousands of Syrians who wanted to remain in the Kingdom. The Kingdom has also given them access to the labour market and provided healthcare and education free of charge. There are more than 141,000 Syrian children pursuing their education free of cost," he said. Prince Mohammad also said that Saudi Arabia has supported millions of Syrian refugees living in neighbouring states, with aid reaching more than \$800 million.

In addition, the Crown Prince said that Saudi Arabia has also welcomed Yemeni refugees, considering them as visitors and exempting them from residence and work regulations. Saudi Arabia has been the single-largest donor of humanitarian aid to Yemen. Prince Mohammad also highlighted the contribution and establishment in 2015 of KSRelief. For more information on the organisation visit www.ksrelief.org



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Saudi Arabian aid over the last 40 years totals €125bn



Saudi Arabia commits €90m to Afghanistan in Brussels



Brussels Conference on AFGHANISTAN

4-5 October 2016

PARTNERSHIP FOR PROSPERITY AND PEACE



World powers pledged billions of dollars for war-ravaged Afghanistan until 2020 at talks in Brussels in October amid fresh calls for the Taliban to make peace 15 years after they were driven from power.

Dr. Nizar bin Obaid Madani, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, led the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's delegation to the Brussels conference on Afghanistan, where attendees included UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, US Secretary of State John Kerry, European

Council President Donald Tusk and the EU's top diplomat, Federica Mogherini, as well as NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg.

In total, the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan brought pledges of €13.6 billion for the next four years and long-term political support from the international community. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia alone pledged \$100 million (around €90 million) to the Afghan cause.

International community agrees: US Congress' JASTA bill threatens to topple a central pillar of the international legal order



The US Congress' Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act (JASTA) is of great concern to the whole community of nations that object to the erosion of the principle of sovereign immunity as well as the principle of sovereign equality between states enshrined in the UN Charter. The concept of sovereign immunity has governed international relations for hundreds of years. Removing or limiting these protections could have the unintended consequences of exposing countries to private lawsuits in foreign courts as a result of important military or intelligence activities.

Implementing JASTA would have a negative impact on the US, the European Union's Member States and all nations. It is for this reason that the EU and several of its Member States as well as the US President, Secretary of Defense and Director of the CIA have expressed their opposition to JASTA in its current form.

In a letter to the US Department of State, the EU delegation to Washington D.C. said the implementation of JASTA "would be in conflict with the fundamental principles of international law," adding that it could "put a burden on bilateral relations between states as well as on the international order as a whole."

The spokesperson for the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs has declared that along with all EU partners, they consider that the so-called JASTA bill runs contrary to international law. These sentiments have been echoed by French MEP and former French Justice Minister Rachida Dati, who, during a visit to Riyadh, reiterated France and Europe's rejection of the bill, describing it as a violation of international law and the principle of territorial sovereignty.

In the US, a 28-strong bipartisan group of US senators outlined their opposition to the bill in a letter addressed to the bill's sponsors, calling for the legislation to be narrowed in order to mitigate its unintended consequences. Equally, in Riyadh, Saudi Minister of Justice Dr. Walid bin Mohammed Al-Samaani said enacting JASTA would "trigger chaos in international relations, and would topple mutual trust between states and adversely affect all areas of international cooperation." The cabinet of HRH King Salman also publically expressed its concern about the JASTA bill, voicing the hope that wisdom will prevail and that Congress will take the necessary steps to correct this legislation in order to avoid the serious unintended consequences that may ensue.

When Riyadh came to the United Nations



Visitors to the United Nations from 27-30 September had the chance to see Riyadh come to life in an interactive exhibit that transported its international guests to Saudi Arabia. "A Day in Riyadh," hosted by the Arriyadh Development Authority (ADA), included a week-long series of workshops on the sustainable growth and human advancement of the Kingdom's capital city.

During the event, Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon visited the exhibition to be briefed on the conservation efforts that ADA has implemented to make Riyadh a liveable, people-friendly city where nature and modern development coexist. Senior officials from ADA and Abdullah bin Yahya Al-Moallimi, Ambassador of the Saudi Mission to the United Nations, received the Secretary-General at the interactive exhibition, where visitors were invited to watch recorded video testimonials by Riyadh's residents on topics such as education, employment, recreation, and culture.

As part of the exhibition, a number of international experts spoke on the position that Riyadh enjoys as a leader in environmental preservation and infrastructure development. As a representative of the Development Authority, Eng. Ibrahim Al Shaye

commented on the progress that Riyadh has made in the environmental protection field. Despite major successes in carving out green, sustainable areas in Riyadh, he noted, the city continues to address challenges in waste management, urban planning and pollution. As a city with distinct environmental conditions, Al Shaye continued, Riyadh is a model of urban resilience in the harsh desert climate that has tested engineers' ingenuity with water and land allocation.

Saudi diplomat Sarah Baashan, co-chair of the UN global climate talks, delivered remarks during the *Riyadh: A Sustainable & People-Friendly City* session, emphasizing the Kingdom's intention to use clean energy to advance the urban and agricultural development of Riyadh. According to Baashan, Saudi Vision 2030 is the plan through which Riyadh is expected to advance its international standing, as initiatives in tourism, heritage preservation, and environmental defence will attract investment and international partnership.

At the heart of Saudi and Islamic culture and home to countless nationalities, Riyadh is the incubator of developmental progress in Saudi Arabia, where minds come to meet in service of human advancement.

They said...

>> "State immunity is a central pillar of the international legal order. Any derogation from the principle of immunity bears the inherent danger of causing reciprocal action by other states and an erosion of the principle as such. The latter would put a burden on bilateral relations between states as well as on the international order."

EU Delegation to the US

In Brief

>> The fight against terrorism goes on

As part of his address at the UN this month, Crown Prince Mohammad bin Naif said that defeating terrorism is a priority for Saudi Arabia, which "has been among the primary victims of terrorism" going back many years. Prince Mohammad said that the Kingdom has been the target of more than 100 terrorist operations since 1992, "including 18 carried out by elements with links to 'a regional country.'" He added that the Kingdom has "exerted strenuous efforts...to bring about peace and lay the foundations for security and stability since joining the organisation, not just in our region, but also all over the world."

>> KSRelief in Yemen

The clinics of King Salman Centre for Relief and Humanitarian Aid continue at Yemeni refugee camp in Abekh province in the Republic of Djibouti providing medical services for 1950 Yemeni refugees. The clinics provide medication to patients free of charge and they are constantly evolving as a result of interest and close follow-up by the Centre.

