

Saudi Arabia in Focus

The monthly update from the Saudi mission to the European Union



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From the ambassador

As August draws to a close, Parliamentarians, Commissioners and diplomats are beginning to return to Brussels after the Summer recess. The weeks off provided an opportunity to reflect on the tumultuous events of the first half of the year in Europe, in the Middle East and beyond. The recurring threat of terrorism, ongoing conflicts in our region and the uncertainty unleashed by the UK's decision to leave the EU are still at the forefront of our minds.

The weeks ahead, too, pose both challenges and opportunities. Most imminently the 11th G20 summit in Hangzhou, China promises to be an occasion to strengthen international ties and a chance for Saudi Arabia to showcase its Vision 2030 economic roadmap.



Abdulrahman S. Alahmed
Ambassador and Head of the Mission
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Yemen

Relaunching the Yemen Peace Process



On 25 August the city of Jeddah hosted a series of discussions about the situation in Yemen, including a meeting between Gulf Cooperation Council foreign ministers, US Secretary of State John Kerry, UK Minister for the Middle East Tobias Ellwood and the UN's Special Yemen Envoy Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed. The participants developed a framework for a peaceful solution in Yemen based on the GCC Initiative, the outcomes of the National Dialogue Conference and UN Resolution 2216. All parties offered full support for this roadmap, to end the conflict in Yemen and transition the country from war and destruction to reconstruction and stability.

The plan calls for the swift formation of a new national unity government with power shared among the parties; the withdrawal of forces from Sana'a and other key areas; the transfer of all heavy weapons, including ballistic missiles and launchers, from the Houthis and forces allied with them, to a third party, and for the new unity government to respect the security, the integrity and the sanctity of international borders,

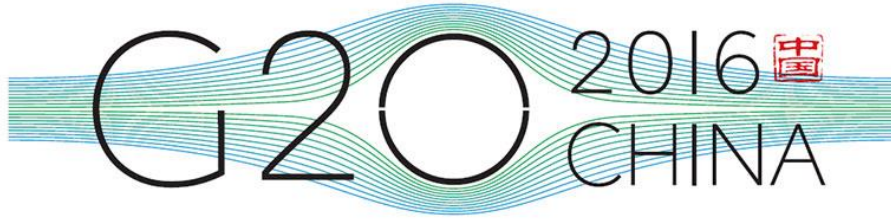
prohibiting the deployment of weapons from Yemeni territory that threatened international waterways or the security of Yemen's neighbours.

At a press conference following the meeting, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir explained the rationale behind the Saudi-led intervention in Yemen. "We have responded out of necessity. We responded to remove a threat. We responded to protect the legitimate government [...] in order to protect Yemen and in order to protect ourselves and our borders," underlining that Saudi Arabia has no claims on the country: "We want a stable, prosperous, secure, peaceful Yemen."

US Secretary of State John Kerry reaffirmed his country's commitment to the security of Saudi Arabia and reiterated Riyadh's right to defend against infractions of its border. Both Mr Al-Jubeir and Secretary Kerry aligned on the need to bring the war to an end while protecting the rights and sovereignty of Saudi Arabia and the surrounding region and without compromising on any country's security.



HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman to discuss reform drive at G20 summit in China



Saudi Arabia’s Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman will lead a senior Saudi delegation to China and Japan next week for a trip that is set to include the kingdom’s participation at the G20 summit in Hangzhou.

In April, Prince Mohammed launched radical economic reforms designed to develop non-oil industries in Saudi Arabia and attract billions of dollars of foreign investment. Chinese and Japanese banks and companies are also expected to play major roles.

The prince will visit China in early September for talks on economic ties as well as security issues, before visiting Japan and meeting Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. Prince Mohammed will then return to China to join the leaders of the world’s

twenty biggest economies in the eastern city of Hangzhou. The event embodies an international forum bringing together governments and central bank governors and aims at studying, reviewing, and promoting high-level discussion of policy issues pertaining to the promotion of international financial stability.

Prince Mohammed will present his economic reform plan to the G20, which envisages state spending of around 270 billion riyals (€65 billion) in the next five years on projects to diversify the economy. Saudi officials will discuss energy cooperation agreements with China and Japan, including a plan to cooperate with China in storing crude oil, the Saudi cabinet has said.

Prince Mohammed will present his Vision 2030 economic reform plan to the G20 in Hangzhou

The Deputy Crown Prince’s visit aims to expand strategic partnerships with both West and East

The royal visits are especially significant due to political and economic weight of China & Japan

Saudi-Chinese ties are growing, based on mutual respect and common interests in all fields



They said...

>> “...this war [in Yemen] needs to end, and it needs to end as quickly as possible. But it also ... [this war] needs to end in a way that protects the rights and the sovereignty of Saudi Arabia and of the region and does not require a compromise on any country’s security.”

John Kerry, US Secretary of State

In Brief

>> FM launches new strategy under Saudi Vision 2030

The Saudi Foreign Ministry has launched a new strategy to develop Saudi diplomacy as part of the National Transformation Program 2020. The new plan, inaugurated by Foreign Minister Adel Al-Jubeir, is based on non-interference in domestic affairs of other countries, permanent development of management, and creating a vision for international relations

>> Saudi Arabia participates in Rio Olympics

The Kingdom sent four female athletes to the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio De Janeiro, marking the second time that Saudi women have participated in the Olympics. These sportswomen include marathon runner Sarah Al-Attar, judoka Wujud Fahmi, fencer Lubna Al-Omar and 100m runner Cariman Abu Al-Jadail. Both Attar and Fahmi return to the Games after they became the country’s first female Olympians in London four years ago

>> Princess Reema Appointed To Oversee Women’s Sports

Saudi Arabia’s Cabinet this month appointed Princess Reema bin Bandar to head a new department for women under the Kingdom’s General Authority for Sports in a move signalling greater female access to sports. Following the announcement made after the weekly Cabinet session, Princess Reema bin Bandar said “I am honoured to serve my nation”.

