Monday, October 5, 1998

Vol. 34, No. 40

Joint statement on United States-Saudi relations

William J Clinton

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz, First Deputy Prime Minister and Head of the Saudi Arabian National Guard, visited Washington, D.C. September 23-25, 1998 at the invitation of Vice President Al Gore.

The visit is in the framework of the close, strong and historic relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States of America stretching back more than a half century to President Roosevelt and King Abdul Aziz. It reflects the desire of both governments to have periodic high-level consultations to assure coordination of policies that affect mutual interests. Crown Prince Abdullah was received by President Clinton and Vice President Gore, as well as Secretary of State Albright. In addition, he received calls from Secretary of the Treasury Rubin, Secretary of Energy Richardson and Deputy Secretary of Defense Hamre.

The two sides discussed topics of mutual interest and concern. Both sides pledged to cooperate fully in the search for comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East based on Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the principle of land for peace. The United States updated the Crown Prince on America's efforts to put the peace process back on track. President Clinton explained the progress made in narrowing the gaps during Ambassador Dennis Ross's recent visit to the region. Secretary Albright is meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and Chairman Arafat in New York this week to continue this process in an effort to achieve agreement on the basis of President Clinton's ideas. In this context, the United States expressed concern about unilateral acts taken bv either side that undermine confidence in the negotiations.

Saudi Arabia expressed its full support for the peace efforts exerted by the United States and Saudi Arabia's willingness to support whatever the Palestinian side agrees to in the service of peace. Saudi Arabia expressed its deep concern about Israeli unilateral actions, including in Jerusalem, which could prejudge the outcome of the final status negotiations, and also called on Israel to fully implement the Oslo and Washington accords and to cooperate with the United States' initiative to reinvigorate the process. The United States and Saudi Arabia expect the hvo sides to strictly abide by their obligations. At the same time, the tvo sides underscored the importance of resuming negotiations on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks of the peace process as soon as possible in an effort to facilitate a comprehensive peace. Both countries expressed their support for the implementation of Resolutions 425 and 426.

During their discussion on Iraq, the tvo sides expressed their serious concern at the Iraqi government's decision to suspend cooperation with the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). They called upon the Iraqi government to comply with the recent UN Resolution which states that Iraq's action is totally unacceptable, and which demands that Iraq resume cooperation with UNSCOM and the IAEA. They agreed that the only way to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people lies in strict adherence to all Security Council Resolutions. They expressed their sympathy with the Iraqi people and satisfaction with UN resolution 1153 which addresses humanitarian needs.

Both countries welcome Iran's stated policy to improve relations with the states of the region and its renunciation of terrorism, and hope that these statements will translate into practice.

They discussed the situation in Afghanistan, and expressed support for the efforts of the United Nations and the Organization of Islam Conference aiming at a peaceful resolution and an end to the fighting. They called upon Iran and Afghanistan to resolve their differences by peaceful means. Also, both sides reaffirmed the danger and threat that terrorism constitutes for international security and stability. They called on all countries to prevent terrorists from operating from their soil and assist in bringing known terrorists to justice. They considered that concerted international action is an effective vav to combat terrorism.

Both sides were united in the view that the current situation in Kosovo is unacceptable and condemned the harsh measures taken by the Yugoslav government causing displacement of large segments of the population of Kosovo. They also noted with concern the recent nuclear testing in India and Pakistan and called on all states to sign and ratify the CTBT at the earliest possible date.

They reviewed the current state of the international economy. Both sides agreed on the need to continue to consult closely on these issues and to continue cooperation to enhance trade and investment between the two countries. The United States expressed its support for Saudi Arabia's accession to the World Trade Organization, and both sides look forward to the increasing trade opportunities and further integration into the global economy which will flow from Saudi Arabia's membership in that organization. Both sides agreed to continue their efforts to complete these important economic negotiations as soon as possible. The American side welcomed continued Saudi efforts to enforce measures for protecting intellectual property rights and looked forward to further progress. The two sides renewed their intentions to fully consult and cooperate on the issues related to global climate change and will continue to assure that measures taken in this regard are based on the state of scientific evidence and data. They stressed the need to encourage technical cooperation and scientific research in the fields of water; agricultural standards, regulations and policies; and specification and measurements.

The two sides stressed the importance of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the world oil market, and the United States reiterated its recognition of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a secure and reliable supplier of energy resources, especially to the United States. NOTE: An original was not available for verification of the content of this joint statement. This item Was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.