

# Saudi-U.S. Relations

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## Information Service

Item of Interest

June 30, 2003

### **Editorial: Everyone's Fight**

*By Arab News*

The arrest of one of the two men suspected of masterminding the triple suicide bombings in Riyadh in May is a significant victory in the fight against terrorism and a major blow to the Al-Qaeda network. Altogether, some 50 people suspected of involvement in terrorism, including four women, are now in custody following a series of raids by the security forces. Clearly the net is closing in around the terrorists. Ali Abdul Rahman Saeed Al-Faqaasi — suspected of being a leading figure in the terrorist network — decided to give himself up.

It would be gratifying to believe that Faqaasi's surrender was directly linked to last week's appeal by Interior Minister Prince Naif to the public to help root out terrorism — that he discovered he had nowhere to hide, that everywhere he went there were eyes watching, ready to turn him. The battle against terrorism has to involve everyone. We cannot be passive about this, thinking that it is the security forces' problem. It is our problem because it is ordinary people — people who read this newspaper, who shop in the supermarket, whom we see in the streets, in the mosques, in the cafes, at the beach — who are the victims of these murderous barbarians.

What his arrest and those of others last week certainly spell out is that intelligence work is paying dividends. When last Tuesday, the police stopped three men in a car on the Makkah-Jeddah Expressway carrying maps of government installations, it is impossible to believe that it was pure chance. The police knew who they were looking for.

The fact that on the same day two other suspects were arrested in Abha shows, however, how widespread this cancer is. But that is no reason to believe that it will not be eradicated. Hardly a day passes without another raid, another arrest, another success notched up against Al-Qaeda. Eighteen people thought to be linked to Al-Qaeda have just been extradited to Sudan and eight other militants are about to be extradited to Yemen.

Last week's assault by Yemeni forces on hideouts used by militants in the south of the country should also be seen in that same wider picture, all the more so because, if the authorities are correct in saying that the explosives for the Riyadh bombings were smuggled from Yemen, then terrorism in the two countries is particularly linked.

The fight against extremism is not just a Western fight, it is a Saudi fight, a Yemeni fight, a Pakistani fight, an Indonesian fight — everyone's fight.

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This past week has shown that Saudi Arabia is just one corner of a global battleground. It is a fight that will be fought to the finish — but it will be won.

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The SUSRIS is a public service of the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations as an element of its mission: *To educate Americans about Arab countries, the Middle East, and the Islamic world through leadership development, people-to-people programs, lectures, publications, and grassroots outreach.*

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