

# Foreword

Welcome

أهلاً وسهلاً



Life in the Kingdom is never quiet. This summer has been no exception. Personally that is something I quite like. From trade to visas, regional issues to the price of a barrel of oil, Britain and Saudi Arabia have been working together more closely than ever before. Most countries receive a visit from either the Prime Minister or the Foreign Secretary every few years. We have had

visits from the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary in the last six months. Saudi Arabia matters to the UK. And the UK knows it.

The Prime Minister Gordon Brown came to Jeddah at the invitation of The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, His Majesty King Abdullah, to participate in the Jeddah Energy Meeting. The Prime Minister gave an important and wide ranging speech to the meeting calling for a sustained dialogue between oil producing countries and those that consume oil.

In many ways the fall in the price of oil has been one of the few positive economic stories in the last few months. But the price of oil is still too high. Saudi consumers paying more at the supermarket feel its effects, just as much as British people do. That is why the Prime Minister is maintaining this dialogue. We are working for the second meeting of this Jeddah process to be held in London before the end of the year.

The Foreign Secretary David Miliband visited in April. As well as important discussions with The Custodian and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, His Royal Highness Prince Saud al Faisal, Mr Miliband visited one of the impressive de-radicalisation centres outside of Riyadh. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia under the leadership of the Interior Minister, His Royal Highness Prince Naif, has tackled the cancer of terrorism head on. The Saudi approach is rooted in the true understanding that Islam is a religion of peace. Recent events in Yemen and Pakistan show that we must never become complacent. But the Foreign Secretary was impressed by what he saw.

And of course there have been other visitors. Tens of thousands of British Muslims have visited during the holy month of Ramadan to perform Umrah. And my staff in the Kingdom have issued 33,000 visas for the UK over the summer. 8,000 Saudi students have recently travelled to the UK to start their university courses. The relationship between our two Kingdoms is underpinned by the everyday contacts between Saudis and British people. Whether it is travelling for pilgrimage, business, education or tourism, links and friendships are being formed everyday.

**William Patey,  
British Ambassador**