

SAUDI JOINS BC-SPONSORED DELEGATION AT G20 SUMMIT

As part of the British Council's pioneering Global Changemakers initiative, a group of 20 young activists represented the voice of their generation when they met the G20 leaders at their London summit on April 1 and 2.

Each of the G20 economies was represented in the group. Yazeed Abdulaziz Al-Mujali, a 22-year old teaching assistant at King Saud University (KSU), represented Saudi Arabia.

Their programme included meetings with Prime Minister Gordon Brown, Foreign Secretary David Miliband, Chancellor of the Exchequer Alistair Darling, President Calderon of Mexico, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia and other key decision-makers in the current global economic

crisis. The objective of the five-day event was to bring the voice and perspective of the youth to the London summit.



The Global Changemakers are a select group of youth, between the ages of 16 and 25, who have demonstrated a significant track record of achievements in their local communities through social entrepreneurship, community activism and voluntary work. The youth are part of a global network where they share knowledge, ideas and best practices, and where they work individually and together on projects that directly impact the lives of those in their local communities.

BC CONSULTANT VISITS SAUDI ARABIA, SEES SCOPE FOR MORE COOPERATION

Dr. Barrie Morgan, Consultant for Higher Education at the British Council, was on an interdisciplinary research tour of Saudi Arabia recently to explore the possibility of cooperation in scientific research between British universities and those in the region.

There are currently several agreements between the Saudi and British universities on exchanging books, periodicals, documents, computer software and information on specialized expertise. There is also a cooperation agreement on nanotechnology between the University of Leeds and the King Saud University in Riyadh.

Morgan said that there are many more scientific, research and cultural opportunities for partnerships between Saudi and British universities. There are also opportunities for the development of teaching skills for faculty members supported by the British Council. Morgan noted that the Global Conference on International Quality Assurance for Higher Education will take place by the end of May in Dubai for four days. Most Gulf universities were expected to participate in the event, he said.

He stressed on the importance of e-learning as a



complementary element to traditional education. "Both cannot be separated from each other, particularly in the area of supporting joint research and reducing costs," he said.

Morgan noted that British Prime Minister Gordon Brown is keen to develop education. A 'British Prime Minister Award' is being instituted among all universities of the world to encourage partnerships between the best of them. Twenty applications have already been received from Saudi universities which are being screened. Saudi universities, he said, face a big challenge in reaching up to the standards of European universities and will require time. The King Abdullah University of Science and Technology is a good example of scientific progress in Saudi Arabia and reflected the Kingdom's strategy to use the latest technology to reach its global goals. British universities also benefit from their cooperation with Saudi universities in the areas of scientific research and exchange of experiences.