

Saudi Arabia

Country/Organization Profile:

Economic Conditions:

- GDP – US \$191.2 billion
- Foreign Debts – US\$168 billion

The principle source of income in Saudi Arabia is oil. Saudi Arabia is the largest exporter in the world. Although only 1% of Saudi Arabian land is fertile, agriculture is a major source of their income. They produce wheat, barley, tomatoes, dates, and watermelons. They also export large amounts of livestock and fish.

Political Conditions:

- King and Prime Minister – King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud
- Saudi Arabian laws are based on the sharia, which is considered the law of god. They have created some new laws to regulate the more modern society.

Social Conditions:

Over 90% of Saudi Arabian citizens are Muslim. 3.5% are Christian, 0.6% are Hindu, and 4% are other religions. The majority of the Muslims in Saudi Arabia are Sunni. The divisions between Saudi Arabians are based more on culture than religion. They tend to separate themselves into the traditional Sunnis and the more modernized Sunnis.

Saudi Arabia is ready to recognize Israel as an independent country in the Middle East. It is choosing not to pick sides in this conflict and is supporting both Israel and Palestine. Saudi Arabia believes that Israel and Palestine should put aside their differences, break down the wall, and begin compromising with each other. The Saudi Arabian king believes that the blame for this conflict lies solely on the political leaders and that they are responsible for finding a solution.

Role Profile:

King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud is also known as the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques. He succeeded to the throne on August 1, 2005 after his half-brother King Fahd passed away. Abdullah is also the Prime Minister and Commander of the Saudi National Guard.

He was born in 1924, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. His father's name was King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud. He is the fifth son of 37 sons.

King Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud is a dedicated Muslim and follows a strict interpretation of the religion based directly on the first three generations of

Muslims. He has weekly meetings with religious leaders in Saudi Arabia to obtain advice and guidance.

He is very much invested in solving the Israel-Palestine conflict. He believes that the political leaders of the middle eastern countries need to resolve the conflict and that the majority of the blame lies directly on them. He is known as a liberal and progressive leader and is viewed in a positive light by the majority of the Saudi Arabian community.

Saudi Arabia has strong ties with the U.S., the U.S. occupies some of their land with their military. Saudi Arabia exports the most oil to America. Saudi Arabia is on good terms with almost all Middle Eastern countries and tries to be helpful whenever possible.

Timeline:

1938 – Oil discovered and production begins under the Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco) which is controlled by the U.S.

1953 – King Abd-al-Aziz dies and the Crown Prince Saud Bin-Abd-al-Aziz Al Saud takes his place.

1960 – Saudi Arabia is founding member of OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.)

1964 – King Saud Bin-Abd-al-Aziz Al Saud is replaced with his brother Faysal Bin-Abd-al-Aziz Al Saud

1972 – Saudi Arabia gains control of 20% of Aramco.

1973 – Saudi Arabia leads an oil boycott against all Western Countries that supported Israel in the war against Egypt and Syria.

1975 – King Faysal is assassinated by his nephew. He is succeeded by his brother Khalid Bin-Abd-al-Aziz Al Saud

1979 – Saudi Arabia severs ties with Egypt when they make peace with Israel.

1980 – Saudi Arabia takes full control of Aramco from the U.S.

1982 – King Khalid Bin-Abd-al-Aziz Al Saud dies of a heart attack and is replaced with his brother Fahd Bin-Abd-al-Aziz Al Saud

1987 – Saudi Arabia resumes relations with Egypt.

1990 – Saudi Arabia disapprove of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and allow U.S. troops, as well as the Kuwaiti government and its citizens to stay in Saudi Arabia.

1993 – King Fahd Bin-Abd-al-Aziz Al Saud divides Saudi Arabia into thirteen administrative sections.

1994 – Osama Bin Laden is stripped of his Saudi Arabian nationality.

2001 – 15 of the 19 hijackers involved in the 9/11 attack are Saudi Arabian.

2001 – King Fahd publicly denounces terrorism proclaiming it unislamic.

2003 – U.S. says it will pull out almost all troops from Saudi Arabia.

2005 – King Fahd passes away and is succeeded by the crown prince Abdullah.

2007 – Religious police are banned from detaining suspects.

In depth report:

During the Gulf war America invaded Kuwait and places military forces inside Saudi Arabia. Even before than America has always played a big part in Saudi Arabian politics. In 2003 the U.S. agrees to pull out almost all troops from Saudi Arabia but both countries emphasize that they will remain allies.

This has had a major effect on Saudi Arabia's position in current international relations. Even though America pulled out some troops Saudi Arabia is still heavily occupied by the U.S. This means that any major decisions that America makes affect Saudi Arabia and vice versa. Basically, Saudi Arabia is more or less partially controlled by the U.S.

Maps:



Location of Saudi Arabia in World Map

