

The National Reform Document

February 17, 2003

(Washington) The following is the National Reform Document which was mailed to Crown Prince Abdullah in January 2003. Later 34 signatories met with Prince Abdullah at his palace in Riyadh January 20th for 3 hours.

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Beneficent

His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Bin Abdalaziz,

Crown Prince, Deputy of Prime Minister and Chief on the
National Guards,

May God's peace and blessing be upon you;

We convey to you the admiration of intellectuals in this kind country, from your brothers and sons from different visions and regions, and their appreciation for your call for public participation.

They send you their utmost regards for this initiative, and they consider it as a step in the right direction the country was waiting for, and they see that it is the greatest evidence for the deep relationship between the society and their leadership. They address their standing with the leadership in facing all the dangers and conspiracies against our country.

Since September 2002, your brothers and sons started to form a strategic view for the present and the future of our country. They hope it will help you, along with other efforts, in reaching the desired goals, the unity, stability and strength for this country.

They have tried to deliver this document directly to your Highness' hand in different ways but they failed, so mail was the only way left to deliver it, wishing it will help you in reaching the noble goals. Please accept our best regards.

View for the Present and Future of Our Homeland:

His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah Bin Abdalaziz,

Crown Prince, Deputy of Prime Minister and Chief on the
National Guards;

Citizens were pleased with the transparent way you took in dealing with our country's problems and solving them, through your open meetings with different sections of the society and the intellectuals, and your public declaration of your wish to hear the people's voice. It is a commendable course that generated support among a score of your brothers and sons among the citizens, who are worried about the dangers facing their country since September 11, 2001. For instance, international and regional conditions, which its heart our country occupies, are threatened with the military action, intervention in internal affairs and redrawing the whole regional map.

The signatories of this document, although they have different aspects and views, they all believe in the unity of their country “The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia” and its leadership, and they announce their standing with their leaders in facing all dangers which threaten our country’s present and future. And they see that facing those dangers require serious reforms to strengthen relations between the leadership and community.

Standing from the prophet ‘May God’s prayers be upon him “saying (The religion is to advice.. for the Muslim leaders and the community), signers of this document are vying to participate in a comprehensive national dialogue. They hope their document will help through its first primary axis and the other four axes, with the governmental and public efforts in pinpointing the problems and solutions.

The First /Primary Axis: More Steps in Building a Country of Constitutional Institutions,

The legality of government in Quran and Sunna, which are the base of the nation’s constitution come from two matters. Firstly, doing what Islam has ordered in matter of rituals and conduct with people. Secondly, citizen’s satisfaction with the way their leaders are ruling them, because leaders represent the community to insure their rights and doing their duties. Since justice is the base of ruling, God ordered social justice and considered it one the foundations of the faith. And since justice cannot be achieved without obligatory shoura, God obliged his prophet Mohammed to use shoura in political matters. He said in His holly book “and consult them in affairs “.

At the same time, shoura cannot materialize unless serious steps are made toward: institutional and constitutional system. And this reasserts the importance of developing the basic law system to strengthen the constitutional concepts; which rely on Quraan and Sunna, depend on the separation of the executive, judicial and legislative authorities, and ensuring of the citizen’s basic rights in justice, equality, and equal opportunity.

Also, applying the parliamentary shoura which reflects the public’s participation; invoking the social contract between the leaders and community; and to build the national unity on a relationship of acceptance, choice and cooperation, that will be the base stability and progress.

Elected Parliament (elected shoura council):

The signatories form their strategic view in this primary axis in the following:

1. The formation of shoura council by direct elections, from all citizens, to reflect the power of the legislators, to whom affairs are referred, after God’s book and His Prophet’s way, because they represent the agreement and the trust of the nation in their decisions, to enable the council to carry on its legislative and monitoring duties toward other branches of the government.
2. Forming regional legislators by direct elections, to manage its

regional affairs, and ensure the citizen's supervision over executive authority

3. Insisting on the concept of independent of judicial authority, which is set theoretically, but cannot materialize unless all the safeguards are made to apply the concept, such as expanding its authorities in directing all kinds of exceptional judiciary like that exist in several ministries, investigations and prisoner conditions, putting General Persecuting Authority under the High Council of Justice or its supervision. And removing all previsions and interference, which limit the independence and effectiveness of the judiciary, or reduce judge's immunity. Establishing a mechanism to enforce the judicial rulings by the executive branch in a manner to ensure the judiciary's respect and status. Recording judicial rulings and unifying them to develop a written national judicial code to ensure consistency in judicial sentences. Expanding the authority of the high court and developing judges training systems, to give them the ability to reach better solutions to growing and complicated problems.

4. Royal announcement that ensures citizen's rights, especially in the area of freedom of expression, assembly, election's rights and all human rights which Islam has approved before it became international resolutions our country as others has ratified.

5. Announcing the right of establishing civil institutions such as clubs, committees, and educational, economical, social and labor unions to play its rule in encouraging experts and opinion leaders to incite public participation in making decisions. And allowing civil society and human rights activists to function, because these activities will spread the culture of dialog and peaceful debates instead of the culture of elimination and exclusion, in addition to violent struggle which threatens our future.

Economic File:

Second axis, in a Way to Solve the Economical Problem,

The signatories' view in curing what the economy suffers from and what threatens it is the following:

- 1.. Insisting on the concept of fairness in economical plans and distribution the wealth between different regions.
- 2.. Putting the required restrictions to control public spending, and the deciding spending priorities. At the same time, fighting corruption and preventing the spreading of bribery and expropriation of public land.
- 3.. Strengthening and empowering oversight and accountability institutions, such as Public Supervision Directorate and connect it with the shoura council.
- 4.. Considering the national debt a national concern and a major responsibility that requires an effective solution to pay it off following a strict time table. Also, allocating part of the country's income to the next generations who are threatened with the development of alternative sources of energy other than oil.

5.. Decreasing the mono nature of the economy, by developing other sources for income and encouraging national and international investments, and developing legal provisions to control its activities and protect its rights.

Dangers and National Unity:

Third Axis: Encouraging Interaction between the Society and Leadership.

To strengthen our internal front in face of external threats and to ensure its unity, they see the following:

- 1.. Insisting on the role of the government and the society in spreading the culture of human rights, which our religion has ordered such as tolerance, fairness, justice, respecting the right of different views. And encouraging national unity and removing all elements of discrimination, be it sectarian, ethnic, regional or social.
- 2.. Reforming the public services system, to satisfy the minimum needs of each citizen, in employment, housing, education, healthcare and fair trial.
- 3.. Forming programs to solve the increasing unemployment problems. And setting a minimum wage for workers and retirement pensions to allow them a decent life and establishing assistance program for the unemployed.

A Greater Role for Women:

- 4.. The woman is half the society and a primary element in its structure, so she should be given all the rights which Islam has approved, to do her duties and activate her role in public affairs, according to the rules of Islam.

Fourth Axis, Reforming Initiatives:

For the government to ensure to the society of her intentions to make serious reforms to avoid future threats, the signatories see that the government should take some steps that send positive indications, strengthen patriotism, infuse public trust, and indicate the well of curing the internal problems, by doing the following steps:

- 1.. Announcing a general amnesty for political prisoners or give them a fair and open trial.
- 2.. Restoring the civil rights to reformers who are concerned with the country's situation such as university professors and judges, and reinstating them to their jobs which they were expelled from.
- 3.. Providing the legal freedoms for all social elements, specially scholars and intellectuals, to discuss the public affairs in various structures. And lifting all restrictions on expression in matter of public affairs such as: travel bans, threats with prison, expulsion from work, forced statement to stop writing or expression of opinion.

Fifth Axis: Invitation to a National Dialogue Convention

The signatories see that the best crowning to these initiatives is that the government calls for a national dialogue convention, to discuss the main issues, attended by representatives of all regions, and cultural and social parties, of with its different colors and views. In addition to a group of intellectuals interested in public affairs to discuss challenges and the problems and lay a constitutional foundation for the contractual form of a nation of institutions.

Finally, while we repeat our solidarity with the leadership in facing the impending dangers surrounding our country, we trust it realizes that addressing the faced challenges can't be without serious reforms, which reflect the public's participation.

God is behind the effort, he is the Guide to the right path,

May God's peace and blessing be upon you.

103 SINGTOROES

** The full list of signatories and their titles is available upon request.

[Prev msg](#) | [Date Index](#) | [Next msg](#)
[Prev msg](#) | [Threaded Index](#) | [Next msg](#)