

Readout of the President's Call with His Majesty King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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The White House

Office of the Press Secretary

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President Obama called His Majesty King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia today to discuss their shared concerns regarding the threat posed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, in advance of the President's comments to the American people later today. The President thanked King Abdullah for hosting Secretary John Kerry in Jeddah this week for a meeting with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Iraq, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, and Turkey, to advance efforts to build a regional and international coalition to counter ISIL in Iraq and Syria.

The President and the King agreed on the need for increased training and equipping of the moderate Syrian opposition, consistent with the proposal that President Obama has made to the United States Congress. President Obama welcomed Saudi Arabia's support for this program. Both leaders agreed that a stronger Syrian opposition is essential to confronting extremists like ISIL as well as the Assad regime, which has lost all legitimacy.

President Obama and King Abdullah also discussed developments in Yemen, and reiterated their shared commitment to support President Hadi and the Yemeni government in achieving a sustainable resolution to current tensions with the Houthi movement within the framework of the GCC Initiative transition process.

The President and King Abdullah pledged to continue their close consultations on these and a range of strategic regional issues, consistent with the longstanding U.S.-Saudi strategic partnership and the leadership role that Saudi Arabia plays in the region.