Remarks by President Obama and His Majesty King Salman bin Abd alAziz of Saudi Arabia Before Bilateral Meeting

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PRESIDENT OBAMA: Well, it's a great pleasure to welcome His Majesty, King Salman, to the Oval Office. This is the latest of several meetings that I've had with His Majesty. And the fact that he has chosen to take this first visit to the United States is indicative of the longstanding friendship between the United States and Saudi Arabia.

This is obviously a challenging time in world affairs, particularly in the Middle East, and so we expect this to be a substantive conversation across a wide range of issues. We share a concern about Yemen and the need to restore a functioning government that is inclusive and that can relieve the humanitarian situation there.

We share concerns about the crisis in Syria, and we'll have the opportunity to discuss how we can arrive at a political transition process within Syria that can finally end the horrific conflict there.

We continue to cooperate extremely closely in countering terrorist activity in the region and around the world, including our battle against ISIL. And we'll discuss the importance of effectively implementing the deal to ensure that Iran does not have a nuclear weapon, while counteracting its destabilizing activities in the region.

We'll also have an opportunity to discuss the world economy and energy issues. And I look forward to continuing to deepen our cooperation on issues like education and clean energy and science and climate change because His Majesty is interested, obviously, ultimately in making sure that his people, particularly young people, have prosperity and opportunity into the future. And we share those hopes and those dreams for those young people, and I look forward to hearing his ideas on how we can be helpful.

So, Your Majesty, welcome, and let me once again reaffirm not only our personal friendship but the deep and abiding friendship between our two peoples.

HIS MAJESTY KING SALMAN: (As interpreted.) Thank you, Mr. President, and thank you for allowing us to enjoy your hospitality. I intended to make my first official visit to the United States as a symbol of the deep and strong relationship that we have with the United States that's indeed historical relations that go back to the day when King Abd alAziz met with President Roosevelt in 1945.

Our relationship is beneficial not only to our two countries, but to the entire world and to our region. And this is significant, and we must always affirm that and deepen such relations. We always emphasize that we want to deepen our relations and further our cooperation in all fields.

As you know, Mr. President, our economy is a free economy, and therefore we must allow opportunities for businesspeople to exchange opportunities, because if people see that there are common interests, they will further themselves the relations between them. And our relationship must be beneficial to both of us, not only on the economic field but on the political and military and defense field, as well.

Once again, Mr. President, I'm happy to come to a friendly country to meet a friend. And we want to work together for world peace. Our region must achieve stability, which is essential for the prosperity of its people. And in our country, thank God we are prosperous, but we want prosperity for the entire region. And we are willing to cooperate with you in order to achieve that.

Thank you, Mr. President, for your hospitality. And I look forward to seeing you in Riyadh and seeing American officials coming to see us in Riyadh, and also Saudi officials coming to the United States.

PRESIDENT OBAMA: Thank you very much, everybody.

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11:49 A.M. EDT