

*Administration of Barack H. Obama, 2009*

**Exchange With Reporters Prior to a Meeting With King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**

*June 3, 2009*

*President's Visit to Saudi Arabia*

Q. Mr. President, what's your message, sir, here?

*President Obama.* This is my first visit to Saudi Arabia, but I've had several conversations with His Majesty, and I've been struck by his wisdom and his graciousness. Obviously, the United States and Saudi Arabia have a long history of friendship; we have a strategic relationship. And as I take this trip, and we'll be visiting Cairo tomorrow, I thought it was very important to come to the place where Islam began and to seek His Majesty's counsel and to discuss with him many of the issues that we confront here in the Middle East.

So I just want to again thank him for his extraordinary generosity and hospitality. And I'm confident that working together the United States and Saudi Arabia can make progress on a whole host of issues and mutual interests.

*King Abdallah.* I thank you, Mr. President, for the kind words and the kind sentiments expressed within them. I am not surprised, given the historic and strategic ties between our two countries, I believe, that go back to the time of the meeting between the late Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the late King Abdul Aziz.

I also want to express my best wishes to the friendly American people who are represented by a distinguished man who deserves to be in this position.

*President Obama.* *Shukran.*

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:22 p.m. at the King's Royal Farm. King Abdallah spoke in Arabic, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

*Categories:* Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters :: Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

*Locations:* Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

*Names:* King Abdallah bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud.

*Subjects:* Egypt : President Obama's visit; Saudi Arabia : King; Saudi Arabia : President Obama's visit ; Saudi Arabia : Relations with U.S.

*DCPD Number:* DCPD200900433.