



BRIEFS



Newly Established Saudi “Communal Police” – REACTIONS

[1/14/2008]

In what seems to be an attempt to reign on the clerics and eliminate the infamous “Religious Police,”¹ considered an intrusive and abusive nuisance by many, the Saudi Interior Minister announced the establishment of a new civil force, named the “Communal Police” whose function is to control what was vaguely described as any immoral or behavioral crimes in society. [PI Online](#) monitored 167 postings on *Al-Arabiya* reacting to the news. While 76 were supportive of the measure, 54 opposed, with 37 non-committals. Among the arguments presented by those who opposed was their fear that the new police would be an extension of the intelligence service. Many also did not want to see the “Religious Police” abolished. Those in support cited abuses by the existing Religious Police and many argued in favor of a communal police force, provided it is educated, on the grounds that it would provide jobs and strengthen ties between the population and the authorities.

Source: 1/14/2008 – url: <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2008/01/14/44197.html>



Islamic Movements in Arab Parliaments: Fanfare without Results

[1/15/2008]

A conference in Cairo yesterday on “The Future of Islamic Movements in Arab Parliaments” came to the conclusion that the lack of success by Islamists groups was due to:

- Their unwillingness to expand their horizons and engage or build coalitions with other parties
- The dominance of the executive branch over the legislative one which minimized their impact despite the fact that they were considered an energizing force
- Their claim that their party is the only true representative of Islam
- Coercion by the authorities that has rendered them mere pawns in the process.

Source: 1/15/2008 – url: <http://www.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/83911025-09BD-42F1-A8FE-8F2EC5FEB591.htm>

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¹ The Religious police official name is : The organization for “The Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vices”