



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

US Embassy, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, July 20, 2012 --

Statement by the President on the Occasion of Ramadan

On behalf of the American people, Michelle and I extend our warmest wishes to Muslim Americans and Muslims around the world at the start of Ramadan. For Muslims, Ramadan is a time of fasting, prayer, and reflection; a time of joy and celebration. It's a time to cherish family, friends, and neighbors, and to help those in need.

This year, Ramadan holds special meaning for those citizens in the Middle East and North Africa who are courageously achieving democracy and self-determination and for those who are still struggling to achieve their universal rights. The United States continues to stand with those who seek the chance to decide their own destiny, to live free from fear and violence, and to practice their faith freely. Here in the United States, Ramadan reminds us that Islam is part of the fabric of our Nation, and that – from public service to business, from healthcare and science to the arts – Muslim Americans help strengthen our country and enrich our lives.

Even as Ramadan holds profound meaning for the world's 1.5 billion Muslims, it is also a reminder to people of all faiths of our common humanity and the commitment to justice, equality, and compassion shared by all great faiths. In that spirit, I wish Muslims across America and around the world a blessed month, and I look forward to again hosting an iftar dinner here at the White House. Ramadan Kareem.

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For more information, please call U.S. Embassy Riyadh Press Attache Mofid Deak at 966-488-3800, ex. 4118, or email him at deakmh@state.gov.