

**U.S.-Bahrain
Free Trade Agreement
Coalition**



Co-Chairs

Lionel Johnson
Citigroup, Inc.

William Rice
Alcoa

Secretariat

**Business Council for
International
Understanding**
1133 15th Street, N.W.
Suite 900
Washington, D.C. 20005
Tel. 202-775-6074
www.bciiu.org

**National Foreign
Trade Council**
1625 K Street, N.W.,
Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20006
Tel. 202-887-0278
www.nftc.org

**National U.S.-Arab
Chamber of Commerce**
1023 15th Street, N.W.
4th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Tel. 202-289-5920
www.nusacc.org

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Contact: Elizabeth-Ann Chandler
Fratelli Group for NFTC
202-822-9491

**U.S.-Bahrain FTA Coalition Welcomes Crown Prince of
Bahrain to U.S., Praises Work on U.S.-Bahrain FTA**

Washington, DC – U.S.-Bahrain FTA Coalition officials today welcomed His Highness, Shaikh Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince of the Kingdom of Bahrain to Washington, DC, where he will help broaden support for the U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

“The Crown Prince’s commitment to stronger ties between Bahrain and the United States will have great impact on the U.S.-Bahrain FTA negotiations, which already show great progress,” said Lionel Johnson of Citigroup, Inc. and the U.S.-Bahrain FTA Coalition. “The Crown Prince can testify to his country’s high standards of financial regulations and procedures that complement our own high standards. The proposed FTA will solidify Bahrain’s commitment to liberalized trade, transparent rule-making and economic stability.”

In the United States until February 12, 2004, the Crown Prince will meet with officials in the Bush Administration, congressional leadership, and media to discuss the benefits of the U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement.

On May 21, 2003, the U.S. and Bahraini governments officially announced negotiations on the U.S.-Bahrain Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The U.S.-Bahrain FTA Coalition, organized through a secretariat comprised of the Business Council for International Understanding (BCIU), the National Foreign Trade Council (NFTC), and the National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce (NUSACC), consists of more than 40 companies, associations and firms that support the negotiation and passage of this agreement with our long standing ally in the Arabian Gulf, Bahrain.

Bahrain has been a steadfast ally to the United States historically, and recently on the war on terrorism, and has been designated by President Bush as a major non-NATO ally in October 2001. The U.S.-Bahrain FTA,

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and the broader Middle East Free Trade Area (MEFTA) initiative, builds upon these long standing ties by ensuring closer economic and commercial relations, as well as a brighter economic future for those that share a desire for peace and greater prosperity.

“We look forward to assisting the Crown Prince as he visits the U.S., reaffirming his support for the U.S.-Bahrain FTA,” said William Rice of ALCOA and the U.S.-Bahrain FTA Coalition. “This proposed high-standard FTA will improve the climate for U.S. companies doing business in Bahrain by pursuing commitments in regulatory transparency, legal practices and dispute resolution. While here, the Crown Prince no doubt will cement Bahrain’s strong desire to adhere to those standards put forth in the FTA. We welcome the Crown Prince and know that we will benefit from his partnership for years to come.”

The Business Council for International Understanding (BCIU), a U.S. business association founded in 1959 at White House initiative, is dedicated to promoting dialogue and action between the business and government communities for the purpose of expanding international commerce.

The National Foreign Trade Council (NFTC) is a leading business organization advocating an open, rules-based global trading system. Founded in 1914 by a broad-based group of American companies, the NFTC now serves 400 member companies through its offices in Washington and New York.

The National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce (NUSACC) is a leading business association dedicated to promoting, supporting and strengthening American and Arab commercial relations. For over 35 years NUSACC continues to represent the private sectors of the US and the Arab world through its network of affiliations with chambers of commerce and industry throughout the Middle East North Africa region and its offices in New York, Houston, Los Angeles and Washington, DC.

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