CONCLUSION
This thesis has endeavoured to establish that Islam plays an important role in the foreign policy of Saudi Arabia. The Saudi regime follows quite a vibrant Islam. Furthermore, Islam serves as Saudi Arabia's main link with the outside world. It plays host every year to the pilgrims who come from all over the world to perform Hajj, one of the pillars of Islam. The manifestation of this dimension and reflection on the foreign policy of the country has been discerned through various expressions. These are: a strong defence of Islam, Koranic traditions and teaching and Islamic places, a staunch opposition to communism, internationally and regionally, and unwavering support of the Palestinian people in their quest for a national identity in Palestine.

In Saudi Arabia, Islam has been the basis of life and government for the whole of the twentieth century. Under King Faisal (1964-75), however, the trend of Pan-Islam became more marked, due to the cold war among the Arab states, the verbal attacks by radical Arab governments on Faisal's regime, and the involvement of Saudi Arabia in the Yemen war (1962-67). Faisal suspected the intentions of radical Arab-nationalism and, in the war of ideals, he developed his own perception of pan-Islamic solidarity instead of immediate union. He called for a wholehearted return to Islam, based on co-operation and further emphasised that there was no contradiction between the Muslim solidarity and Arab unity. These moves were initiated to curb the emergence of radical ideas, regimes in the region and their attacks on Faisal's regime.

So far as the domestic complusion is concerned, the history of Saudi Arabia and its association with Islam is natural and important. The Wahabi Islam also bestowed on the people and the ruling family a sense of mission.
Since the monarchy and Islam are incompatible, Saudi rulers try to legitimize their rule by showing great interests in the affairs of Muslims in different countries of the world. The end of the institutions of Caliphate and Imamate from the Ottoman Empire provide Saudi rulers with an opportunity to proclaim themselves the leaders of Muslims and Saudi Arabia as the centre of Islamic world and its activities. The possession of two holy shrines of Islam within the territories of Saudi Arabia solidifies this claim.

Saudi foreign aid had largely been determined by the perception of the ruling elite. In the 1970s Saudi Arabia's influence grew with her large oil-wealth. Saudi Arabia has become one of the major sources of foreign aid for developing countries. By far the greater part of this has gone to Muslim countries, with a clear preference for governments that pursue what the Saudis consider authentically Islamic policies. This means, first and foremost, opposition to communism and Soviet influence and to other radical ideologies which might act as their opponents. The Saudis give support to Muslim government which share their aims and they naturally look with favours on groups within Muslim countries which seek to move them in that direction, such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

Of a less directly political nature is the aid given to promote the teaching of Arabic in non-Arab Muslim countries, for the construction of mosques, Islamic schools, institutions and universities, for the financing of radio programmes on Islam, and in the form of scholarships for foreign Muslims to study in Saudi Universities and Madrases. This type of aid aims to frustrate
rival radical ideologies and to spread Islamic ideology as it is understood in Saudi Arabia.

Despite all the aid that Saudi Arabia gives to other Islamic States, it is not economically well-integrated with them. There is only a small amount of Saudi trade with OIC members. In effect, only 6 percent of Saudi Arabia's exports and only 5 percent of its imports were with OIC states in 1970. The reasons why Islam has been important in Saudi foreign policy, then, must lie elsewhere. There are perhaps some factors which explain it.

Saudi Arabia is the birth place of Islam. It has influenced the day to day life of Saudis. The Saudi rulers by emphasizing international Islamic cooperation also satisfy the sentiments of the Saudis. By using Islam they also try to minimise the influence of anti-Islamic communist and radical ideology.

Explaining why Islam is important, however, does not answer when it is relevant to foreign policy. The only constraints that seem to emerge from Saudi diplomatic history is that Islam becomes relevant and pronounced factor when Saudi leaders think that it will enhance the Saudi position in Arab politics.

In general, the Saudi case leads us to question, first, whether there is such a thing as an Islamic foreign policy, and second, whether Islam plays as such a role in Saudi foreign policy as is customarily thought. If by an 'Islamic foreign policy' one means that a set of values uniformly determines what the policy will be, then there is no such thing. But there is another sense of the term-Islamic values have some importance in the foreign policy but the importance varies

according to the issues and the decision-makers. It is in this relative sense that Saudi Arabia may be said to have an Islamic policy. But it must be added that this does not mean that the Islamic dimension is as strong as the Saudis say it is. There are times when Islamic values enter into the formulation of policies because decision makers believe that they are important as in the case of Palestine, but even in these instances Islam is not the only factor that counts in the sense that Islam coincides with and does not contradict other pragmatic considerations. But by far Islam had been more important in the implementation of Saudi policies that is, in legitimizing them by expressing them in terms attractive to their own audience abroad. In this, it is clear that Islam does play a role in Saudi foreign policy, but in the final analysis the main purpose of that policy is to preserve the Saudi regime and Saudi independence.

Islam was effectively used by Faisal to keep Saudi society insulated from the influence of communism as well as that of its regional representative, Nasserism. This is clear from the country's uncompromising stand against communism. This opposition to communism has contributed to a foreign policy based on a refusal to maintain diplomatic relations or open any serious dialogue with communist countries, on the one hand, and on maintaining close cooperation with the non-communist western countries, particularly the United States on the other hand. Saudi Arabia has always believed that Islam and communism are mutually exclusive. This stand against communism spilled over to related ideologies, particularly leftist socialist movement in the Arab world. As a result, Saudi Arabia firmly opposed the infiltration of these movements in the Arab World in general and in the Arabian Peninsula and the Arabian Gulf in
particular. It is likely that in the time of King Faisal, personal conviction more than ideological dogma governed the anti-communist emphasis.

There is no doubt that he passionately loathed and consistently connected international communism and Zionism. At the same time it is likely that, given the Soviet Union's backing of his Arab competitors he saw no hard reason to be sympathetic towards it.

Saudi Arabia during King Faisal's reign was able to spread its influence considerably in the international arena through its clever use of Islam as an instrument of foreign policy. Saudi Arabia, the chief initiator of the Islamic Summit meetings was preoccupied mainly with two issues: First, to strengthen her position in the region by raising the issues most of states of the region were confronted with; the important among them is the Arab Israel conflict. Second, the attempts towards establishing various political, economic and social institutions in order to use them as planks in the foreign policy.

It should be noted at the outset that one of the Saudi Arabia's objective with regard to the Arab-Israel conflict was the transformation of this conflict from its Arab context to a wider Islamic context by extending it to be an Islamic-Israeli conflict. This objective was enhanced by the Israeli occupation of Jerusalem in 1967. This event and the deep spiritual and emotional significance which it represented for all the Muslims meant for Saudi Arabia in particular that liberating Jerusalem and restoring it to the pale of Islam would not be possible without recruiting the Muslim countries for the accomplishment of this goal. Thus, the Islamic conference provided an excellent opportunity to do just that.
The strong opposition to Zionism by Saudi Arabia may also be seen in the light of Israeli expansionist policy and the concept of 'Greater Israel'.

Faisal's Islamic foreign policy was essentially pragmatic than doctrinaire. He visited to several head of states of Muslim countries and successfully convened the summit conferences, and the meetings of the foreign ministers of Muslim states. He got most of resolutions passed in his favour. By his personal initiatives he tried to maintain friendly relations with all the neighbouring countries and he was very much successful. Particularly after Arab-Israel war of 1967, he called upon Muslims for Unity and strongly advocated pan Islam.

Faisal was also dead against the communism and he worked against its infiltration into West Asian countries. Saudi Arabia did not trust the intentions of the communist countries, particularly the Soviet Union, and their plans in West Asia. Despite the large military assistance offered by the Soviet Union and other communist countries to some Arab countries, Saudi Arabia was totally convinced that the real objective behind this assistance was to introduce communist ideology in the region, which is detrimental to monarchy. It was also convinced that the key to the solution of West Asian problem was in fact in the hands of the United States which was able to, if so desired, to put pressure on Israel and force it to change its expansionist policy. That is why Saudi Arabia in addition to its attempts to involve the Muslim world in the conflict, sought by all possible means, including imposing an embargo of oil shipment, to convince the USA to adopt a more neutral and evenhanded approach to the Arab-Israeli conflict.
On the issue of economic cooperation, Saudi Arabia's position within the Islamic conference was more of a loan and aid giver to pacify the verbal attacks of the radical Arab States and to gain support of the Islamic state. For example, the country played an important role in the movement toward the establishment of the Islamic Development Bank. This role necessitated that it employed all the means available to it in order to reconcile the conflicting attitudes on this issue.

As for the west Asian countries, they received very little from the Saudi billions, and what they did get was subject to fulfillment of a number of strict restrictions. Absolute priority was given to those governments which agreed not to introduce into their countries any progressive social and economic changes.

One of the main conditions which Saudi Arabia stipulated was that the countries wishing to receive loans must undertake not to cooperate with the Soviet Union or any other socialist country. Saudi Arabia further demanded that under no circumstances should the loans be used for building factories or carrying out other projects on contracts signed with the socialist countries, and, as a rule, she insisted that progressive organizations in such countries be dissolved and no members of left-wing parties be allowed to participate in their government.2 Saudi Arabia tried similar tactics of bringing financial and political pressure to bear on all countries of the Muslim and Arab world which needed economic help. Due to this policy it seemed that Saudi Arabia was more interested in the containment of communism than in granting loan and aid to the Arab-Muslim countries.

Saudi Arabia's foreign-aid programme in the 1970s permitted a more assertive and active foreign policy that was possible in the 1960s before the impact of oil on its economy. Islamic ideology not only served as an instrument of foreign policy but continually reinforced the authority of the House of Saud as the upholder of Islamic values.

Saudi foreign policy displayed the interrelationship of pragmatic state and Islamic ideological considerations also. Both these aspects of foreign policy could be seen in the Islamic conference which Saudi Arabia re-convened in the 1970s. Indeed, King Faisal saw the conference in terms of a *Jihad* against the forces of destruction which strive to destroy Muslim nations and the world that believes in God. While the rhetoric of the Islamic conference sometimes displayed a note of 'resurgent Islam' - seen in resolutions providing for cooperation and solidarity at many levels a defensive posture was a far more common theme throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Saudi policy in time of Faisal was neutralist and mediatory within the Arab and Islamic worlds, while maintaining a crucial channel to the United States and the West in international relations. Relations with Egypt improved after the death of President Nasser in September 1970. Saudi Arabia's economic and military aid to Egypt increased in volume after July 1972, as President Sadat moved out of the Soviet orbit. Riyadh cultivated Egypt as a centre of moderation in the Arab World and broadly supported Sadat's military and political objectives in the conflict with Israel. In the fourth Arab-Israel war in October 1973 Saudi Arabia, in concert with other Arab oil producers, invoked a series of selective oil embargoes - in particular against the USA, Israel's major
military supplier - in the hope that Washington would adopt a more balanced position in subsequent peace negotiations. And while Riyadh was at the forefront of the oil embargo to show the Arab-Islamic solidarity, pressure on the USA was kept within bounds.

It is worthwhile to raise the following questions with regard to Faisal's Islamic policy which was stronger and more visible in his times. First, to what extent Faisal's Islamic policy was successful? Does the Islamic trend initiated by King Faisal still continue to be the cornerstone of Saudi foreign policy, in view of the recent developments in the region after the death of King Faisal? The preceding discussions show that King Faisal's Islamic policy was successful. Faisal for the first time gave the Saudi foreign policy a decisive Islamic tilt. The credit of the success goes to Faisal's personality, his diplomatic skills and the economic prosperity of the country, which came from the barrels of oil. Quietly, behind the scene, King Faisal exploited symbolism of the Kingdom's stewardship over the holy places of Mecca and Madina. Saudi Arabia's Islamic policy had been successful, in the sense that Faisal had been able to strike a balance in the Arab World. At the moment, Saudi Arabia was the acknowledged leader of the conservative forces. Its relationship with Egypt, Jordan and with all the Gulf states and with most of the Muslim states had improved. It had succeeded in reducing disagreement among conservatives; and, most important, it had weakened the appeal of radical, socialist pan-Arabism.

Since Faisal's death, the Saudi press and media have not hesitated to Stress the Kingdom's role as caliph, as well as to emphasize its leadership in the Islamic world. After king Faisal, King Khalid and King Fahd consistently
argued that the first principle of Saudi foreign policy would be Islamic solidarity and the second was the Arab Unity. Toward that end the Saudis have expended large sum of money and even greater amounts of rhetoric to establish themselves as the natural leaders of Islam and Arabism.

The fall of the communist regimes in the erstwhile Soviet Union and the East European countries is also a happy news for Saudi regime to which it has been loath for long time. Such developments may be deemed to warrant the conjecture that Saudi Arabia in near future will totally sever itself from Faisal's Islamic legacy. But this is hardly likely in view of the fact that Islam now is a factor fully ingrained in the diplomatic tradition of the kingdom. Last but not least, Islam should remain as it has always remained in the past a vital ingredient of the Saudi foreign policy not merely because the kingdom is concerned with promoting interest of Islam as a religion but also because of the deep involvement of this creed in the question of Saudi national interest.