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# Find: Saudi-US joint mil exer

## AT: Forces Peace Talks

#### [DL] Sharp 18 of CRS: The Saudis and Houthis both want only a military victory.

Sharp 18 of CRS [Jeremy M. Sharp, 8-24-2018, CRS, “Yemen: Civil War and Regional Intervention”, (), accessed 1-30-2019, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R43960.pdf

Although both the Obama and Trump Administrations have called for a political solution to the conflict, the war’s’ combatants still appear determined to pursue military victory. The two sides also appear to fundamentally disagree over the framework for a potential political solution. The Saudi-led coalition demands that the Houthi militia disarm, relinquish its heavy weaponry (ballistic missiles and rockets), and return control of the capital Sanaa to the internationally recognized government of President Abdu Rabbu Mansour Hadi, who is in exile in Saudi Arabia. The coalition cites international consensus for these demands, insisting that the conditions laid out in United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2216 (April 2015) should form the basis for a solution to the conflict. The Houthis reject UNSCR 2216 and seem determined to outlast their opponents while consolidating their control over northern Yemen. Since the December 2017 Houthi killing of former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, a former Houthi ally, there is no apparent single Yemeni rival to challenge Houthi rule in northern Yemen.

#### [DL] Sharp 18 of CRS: Saudi Arabia wants the Houthis to completely disarm and return the capital of Yemen, whereas the Houthis reject this offer and want to keep controlling Yemen.

Sharp 18 of CRS [Jeremy M. Sharp, 8-24-2018, CRS, “Yemen: Civil War and Regional Intervention”, (), accessed 1-30-2019, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R43960.pdf

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#### [DL] Knights 18 of The Washington Institute: Saudi Arabia has stockpiles of weapons to keep the war going for several years.

Knights 18 of Washington Institute [Michael Knights, 11-5-2018, The Washington Institute, "U.S.-Saudi Security Cooperation (Part 1): Conditioning Arms Sales to Build Leverage", (), accessed 2-6-2019, https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/u.s.-saudi-security-cooperation-part-1-conditioning-arms-sales-to-build-lev] //AT

According to Washington Institute data collected in Saudi Arabia and Yemen, the kingdom’s forces have used around 14,500 munitions since March 2015, almost all PGMs, with the average rate gradually declining from 333 PGMs per month in 2015 to 270 per month this year. The U.S. munitions currently arriving in Saudi Arabia were ordered in November 2015, when Riyadh recognized it might need new PGMs by 2019, but the intervening years have seen few signs of a PGM shortfall. Based on a rough sense of prewar stocks and a constant dribble of replacements, Riyadh could probably keep bombing at its current rate for several years even if all new U.S. PGM deals were rejected. Thus, while cutting off such sales may be a good way to signal U.S. displeasure or publicly distance Washington from the war, the data indicates that it would not meaningfully slow the air campaign anytime soon.

### AT: Talks Always Fail

#### [DL] Reuters 19: Yemen’s warring parties have reached a preliminary compromise on a truce implementation and troop withdrawal accord, with both sides committed to observe and enhance the ceasefire.

Reuters Editorial 19 of U.S. [Reuters Editorial, 2-7-2019, U.S., "U.N.: Yemen warring parties agree preliminary compromise on Hodeidah", (), accessed 2-14-2019, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-un/u-n-yemen-warring-parties-agree-preliminary-compromise-on-hodeidah-idUSKCN1PW281] //AT

DOHA (Reuters) - Yemen’s warring parties have reached a preliminary compromise on how to implement a truce and troop withdrawal accord in the port of Hodeidah, although the deal has not yet been finally agreed, the United Nations said on Thursday. The United Nations is trying to implement an accord in Hodeidah, the main entry point for most of Yemen’s imports, as part of efforts to end a war that has killed tens of thousands and left millions on the brink of starvation. “A preliminary compromise was agreed, pending further consultation by the parties with their respective leaders,” the United Nations said in a statement following three days of talks this week aboard a U.N. vessel moored in Hodeidah. The statement did not give further details of the agreement. A truce in Hodeidah has largely been respected since coming into force a month ago, but skirmishes continue between the Houthi movement and their foes in a Saudi-led coalition fighting to restore the internationally recognized government. The UN said that both parties gave a “firm commitment to observe and enhance the ceasefire” as an agreement is worked out. During the latest talks the two sides “worked together constructively to resolve outstanding issues related to the mutual redeployment of forces and the opening of humanitarian corridors” but “challenges remain”, the statement said. The talks are expected to reconvene next week to finalize details concerning redeployments, it said.

### AT: Houthis

#### [DL] Gordon 18 of Washington Post: The Houthis are too pressured by Iran, who would never want to engage in talks as they think they would never gain anything.

Philip Gordon 18 of Washington Post [Philip Gordon, 5-18-2018, Washington Post, “Saudi Arabia’s war in Yemen has failed", (), accessed 2-1-2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/global-opinions/wp/2018/11/12/saudi-arabias-war-in-yemen-has-failed/] //AT

Top U.S. officials are [now calling on Riyadh to agree to a ceasefire](https://www.cnn.com/2018/10/30/politics/jim-mattis-yemen-ceasefire/index.html) and participate in U.N.-sponsored talks, and the Pentagon announced last Friday [it would no longer provide in-air refueling for Saudi bombing runs.](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/trump-administration-to-end-refueling-for-saudi-coalition-aircraft-in-yemen/2018/11/09/d08ff6c3-babd-4958-bcca-cdb1caa9d5b4_story.html?utm_term=.2bc71d38a2c7) Meanwhile, Congress, led by the new Democratic majority in the House, is credibly [threatening to suspend arms sales](https://www.defensenews.com/congress/2018/10/24/us-house-bill-would-close-door-on-saudi-arms-sales/) to Saudi Arabia, which [countries such as Germany have already done](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2018/10/22/germany-its-allies-well-halt-future-arms-sales-saudi-arabia-until-we-have-clarity-khashoggi-so-should-you/?utm_term=.70c34fe106db). The growing pressure, a marked departure from the almost-unconditional support the Trump administration has been providing to the Saudis, has led to renewed hopes that the war might finally be brought to a negotiated end. We should all hope that U.N. talks, led by the able British mediator [Martin Griffiths](https://www.thenational.ae/world/who-is-martin-griffiths-the-british-mediator-bringing-formidable-experience-to-yemen-envoy-role-1.704675), succeed — but we should also be realistic. Even if the Saudis and their Emirati partners show up ready for compromise, the Iran-backed Houthis, who control much of Yemen today, are sadly unlikely to reciprocate. Having survived years of economic isolation and relentless Saudi bombing, the Houthis know all the pressure is now on the other side. Their Iranian backers, in turn, likely assume they have nothing to gain from compromise either given the Trump administration’s hostility to the Tehran regime. Houthi rejectionism would give the Saudis and Emiratis a pretext to resume the war, possibly [including a bloody assault on the port of Hodeidah](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security/air-strikes-kill-10-civilians-in-yemens-hodeidah-province-medics-idUSKCN1MN0K3), which U.N. officials assess could considerably worsen the humanitarian situation even while failing to force the Houthis to give in.

#### [LT] Phillips 18 of Heritage: Ending arms sales would only worsen the conflict, as the Houthis would only continue fighting and become even more powerful.

Phillips and Posey 18 James Phillips [Senior Research Fellow, The Heritage Foundation] and Madyson Hutchinson Posey [Research assistant], "Ending US Military Support to Saudi Arabia in Yemen Would Trigger Dangerous Consequences.” The Heritage Foundation Blog. December 6, 2018. [Premier].

In a new resolution, a bipartisan group of senators is calling for the United States to end its involvement—specifically its support of Saudi Arabia—in the Yemen conflict. On Wednesday, the Senate voted 63-37 to pass a procedural measure that will clear the way for a floor debate on the issue next week. The push comes largely in response to the recent murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi. The Trump administration has banned 21 Saudi suspects in that murder from entering the U.S., imposed sanctions on 17 Saudi officials, and expressed its willingness to take further action if warranted by ongoing investigations. Many senators seek to do more to punish the Saudis, even if it means sacrificing the interests of the Yemeni government and making a negotiated settlement of the conflict more difficult. The killing of Khashoggi was certainly abhorrent, but ending U.S. support for the multinational coalition in Yemen is not the proper solution. It risks dangerously conflating two separate issues and would inevitably trigger unintended consequences that would undermine U.S. national security interests in the region. Senators must remember that Saudi Arabia is not the only belligerent in Yemen. A cutoff of U.S. support would also hurt the elected and internationally recognized government of Yemen, which was ousted by Iran-backed Houthi rebels in 2015 in a bloody coup that violated a [U.N.-brokered ceasefire](https://www.cnn.com/2014/09/21/world/meast/yemen-prime-minister-resigns/index.html). Withdrawing U.S. support would also harm the interests of other U.S. allies fighting in Yemen, including the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. The war in Yemen is complex. Those who rush to blame Saudi Arabia entirely for the suffering of the Yemeni people ignore the war crimes and heavy-handed treatment meted out by the Houthis to their opponents and the ruthless role that Iran plays in supporting the Houthi Ansar Allah (“Supporters of Allah”) movement, a Shia Islamist extremist group. The Saudis are rightly criticized for not doing more to prevent civilian casualties as they target Ansar Allah positions. But the Houthis should not be given a free pass for deliberately targeting civilian targets in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates with increasingly sophisticated Iranian ballistic missiles. Ansar Allah also deserves criticism for its violent role in destabilizing Yemen and creating the conditions that led to the current humanitarian disaster. Ansar Allah regularly attacks the Saudi border, launches missiles strikes into Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, and diverts international medical and food aid to favor its own supporters and sell on the black market. Ansar Allah also has targeted U.S. Navy vessels, those of allied nations, and civilian shipping in the [Red Sea](https://www.heritage.org/middle-east/commentary/bab-el-mandeb-the-us-ignores-the-most-dangerous-strait-the-world-its-peril) with Iranian-supplied missiles, gunboat attacks, and boat bombs. Undermining the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen risks exacerbating this threat to international shipping and giving Iran the opportunity to threaten oil shipments through the Bab al-Mandab Strait, just as it has threatened to do in the Strait of Hormuz. Those who advocate withdrawing support for Saudi Arabia apparently believe that they can somehow end the current conflict in Yemen through a one-sided strategy that penalizes allies and boosts Ansar Allah, a group that chants “Death to America” and looks more like Hezbollah, Iran’s Lebanese proxy group, every day. Never mind that Saudi Arabia is supporting the internationally recognized government of Yemen in this effort. Never mind that leaving Ansar Allah to run amuck will not bring an end to the humanitarian suffering, but only prolong it. The U.S. currently extends only limited support to Saudi Arabia in Yemen centered on intelligence and information sharing. There are no U.S. troops involved in combat operations, except for occasional commando raids and air strikes against Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, a Sunni terrorist group that continues to target the U.S. homeland, as well as Saudi Arabia, France, and other countries. The Trump administration already has stopped the aerial refueling of Saudi warplanes involved in the Yemen conflict and called for a negotiated settlement. But the United States cannot afford to abandon its allies and hope for the best. Undermining the Yemeni government and the Saudi-led coalition would make an acceptable political settlement impossible. The Yemeni government and Saudi Arabia will continue to fight this war with or without U.S. support. Those who would connect two unrelated issues, condemn Saudi involvement, and ignore Iran’s hostile role inside Yemen will only do more harm to innocent Yemeni civilians and empower Iran and its Yemeni proxies.

### AT: Saudis

#### [DL] Haaretz 18: The UAE does most of the work in the Yemeni civil war.

Alexander Griffing Sendsend Me Email Alerts 19 of haaretz [Alexander Griffing Sendsend Me Email Alerts, 2-8-2019, haaretz, "Why Saudi Arabia and ‘Little Sparta’ still can’t defeat Iran in Yemen", (), accessed 2-8-2019, https://www.haaretz.com/middle-east-news/saudi-arabia-vs-iran-why-the-arab-coalition-can-t-win-the-war-in-yemen-1.6273832] //AT

Heavy lifting Guzansky notes that in Yemen it is actually the UAE, and not the Saudis, doing the heavy lifting. The Saudis are primarily providing aerial support, he says, while the UAE has actual troops on the ground – albeit many of them mercenaries from countries like Sudan – constituting a fighting force to be reckoned with. The UAE has even “earned itself the nickname ‘Little Sparta,’” in the U.S. military, says Guzansky, [citing current U.S. Defense Secretary](http://www.inss.org.il/publication/sparta-gulf-growing-regional-clout-united-arab-emirates/) and former U.S. Marines Gen. James Mattis as having “an admiration for what they’ve done – and what they can do.”

#### [DL] Salisbury 18 of SJ: Mohammad Bin Salman, the new crown prince of Saudi Arabia, will always want to continue the war because he wants to consolidate Saudi Arabia’s power in the Middle East and also doesn’t want to give Iran more power.

Salisbury 18 of SJ [Peter Salisbury, 6-13-2018, “WHY YEMEN’S CIVIL WAR IS PERSONAL FOR MOHAMMED BIN SALMAN – SAUDI ARABIA’S INVOLVEMENT IN YEMEN EXPLAINED”, (), <https://www.slow-journalism.com/delayed-gratification-magazine/why-yemens-civil-war-is-personal-for-mohammed-bin-salman-saudi-arabias-involvement-in-yemen-explained>] //AT

Bin Salman’s main aim is to consolidate himself as the centre of power in Saudi Arabia, and Saudi as the central power in the region; Yemen is just a subplot” International-relations academics talk about how so-called “mutually hurting stalemates” are often a precursor to a peace deal. “Any theory of conflict resolution will say that the parties need to get to a point where they recognise there is more to be gained from peace than war. In the first weeks of a war, it’s unlikely that you are going to agree to that,” says Alex de Waal, executive director of the World Peace Foundation and an expert on peace processes. Ordinarily, the longer a conflict lasts, the more likely it is that it will be “ripe” for peace. On paper Yemen’s war – which has lasted years, eviscerated the Yemeni economy, killed tens of thousands, led to mass outbreaks of cholera and has seen the Houthis launch dozens of missile strikes on Saudi Arabia, which in turn has suffered reputational damage for its role in a humanitarian disaster – would to be ripe for peace. But that assumes a relatively simplistic calculus on the part of men like Mohammed and Abdullah,  the respective powers behind the thrones of Saudi Arabia and the Houthis. “For Mohammed bin Salman, this is not his primary game, it’s his secondary game,” says de Waal. That is to say, bin Salman’s main aim is to consolidate himself as the centre of power in Saudi Arabia, and Saudi as the central power in the region; Yemen is just a subplot. And a man who wants to lead his country for the next two generations might not want to blot his reputation by fighting the first war he entered to a draw, particularly given that he sees the hand of Iran behind the Houthis’ rise. What, after all, would the Houthis’ warrior chief be without war?” According to a person who knows the crown prince: “In terms of what would be acceptable to MbS, my feeling – and this he won’t say – is that there are enough Yemenis willing to fight the Houthis as mercenaries and proxies that the war can continue forever, until the Houthis are weakened or the population is willing to rise up against them.” For Abdullah, says de Waal, any deal will also be assessed within the context of his own personal goals. What, after all, would the Houthis’ warrior chief be without war – particularly if one of the conditions for a peace deal is giving up heavy weapons after 14 years of no-holds-barred battle for survival and then domination? In September 2018 the UN’s envoy Martin Griffiths tried to bring together representatives of the Houthis and the Hadi government in Geneva, in the hope of kickstarting a peace process that has been largely moribund since talks in Kuwait collapsed in 2016. Neither Mohammed nor Abdullah was present. Without the say-so of a prince and a former primary-school teacher who share a resolute determination to keep fighting, there is little prospect that the war will soon be brought to an end.

#### [DL] Macias 18 of CNBC: After Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait, and Bahrain are the next top importers of U.S. arms, who are all part of the coalition against Yemen by both fighting and supplying weapons. In fact, Farivar 18 of VOA reports that Saudi Arabia has strong lobbying groups that has previously lobbied senators to prevent arms sales, and Freeman 18 of Washington Post explains that Saudi lobbying even got Obama to offer them arms sales.

Amanda Macias 18 of CNBC [Amanda Macias, 12-12-2018, CNBC, "Led by Saudi Arabia, Middle Eastern countries are the biggest buyers of US military equipment", (), accessed 2-6-2019, https://www.cnbc.com/2018/12/12/middle-eastern-countries-are-biggest-buyers-of-us-military-equipment.html] //AT

After Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates are the next largest buyer of U.S. arms in the Middle East. The UAE is responsible for 7.4 percent, or about $4 billion, of sales. According to the State Department, the Emirates' $1.9 billion for [Boeing](https://www.cnbc.com/quotes/?symbol=BA) AH-64 Apache helicopters, Kuwait's $5.1 billion for Boeing's F/A-18 fighter jets, and Bahrain's $2.1 billion for Lockheed Martin's F-16 fighter make up some of the top sales to the Middle East. All told, the U.S. State Department announced that the U.S. sold more than $55 billion in military equipment to foreign governments this fiscal year, which is a 33 percent increase from 2017.

Jon Gambrell, Associated Press Mar. 30, 2015, 3 15 of Business Insider [Jon Gambrell, Associated Press Mar. 30, 2015, 3, 3-30-2015, Business Insider, "Here are the members of the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen and what they're contributing", (), accessed 2-6-2019, https://www.businessinsider.com/members-of-saudi-led-coalition-in-yemen-their-contributions-2015-3] //AT

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: The seven-emirate nation has dispatched its fighter jets in strikes targeting Scud missiles in Yemen, as well as Houthi camps, air defense systems and other military targets, the state-run WAM news agency has reported. The news agency has said 30 jets from the UAE were taking part in the strikes. WHO HAS CONTRIBUTED AIRCRAFT TO THE COALITION? KUWAIT: The kingdom has offered 15 fighter jets for the operation, the state-run Kuwait News Agency has reported. It's unclear if they've carried out any strikes. BAHRAIN: The tiny island kingdom sent 12 fighter jets from the Royal Bahraini Air Force to take part in the operation, the state-run Bahrain News Agency has reported. It's unclear whether they've carried out any strike.

Masood Farivar 18 of VOA [Masood Farivar, 10-27-2018, VOA, "Campaign Contributions Coincide With Pro-Saudi Lobbying in Washington", (), accessed 2-7-2019, https://www.voanews.com/a/campaign-contributions-coincide-with-pro-saudi-lobbying-in-washington/4631656.html] //AT

WASHINGTON — In May 2017, as it was stepping up its two-year military campaign in Yemen, Saudi Arabia faced the prospect of a cutoff in badly needed American bombs. A bipartisan resolution introduced by three senators threatened to block the sale to Saudi Arabia of precision-guided munitions and other weapons, part of a $110 billion arms package that President Donald Trump had negotiated with Saudi leaders just days before. To overcome the opposition, Saudi Arabia turned to a platoon of Washington firms that it employs to lobby members of Congress. Among them was Marc Lampkin, a Republican lobbyist and managing partner at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, one of more than two dozen firms that represent Saudi interests in the United States. Over the course of several weeks, Lampkin, an ex-adviser to former House Speaker John Boehner, called or emailed the offices of several Republican senators more than 20 times to discuss the ”motion to disapprove the sale of precision-guided munitions,” according to filings made with the Justice Department. One of Lampkin’s frequent targets was the office of Tim Scott, a Republican senator from South Carolina. On May 16, one of three times he called Scott’s office, Lampkin discussed the resolution with Charles Cogar, Scott’s legislative director, according to Brownstein’s federal lobbying records. Lampkin later reported donating $2,000 to Scott’s political action committee on the same day, May 16. Less than a month later, Scott joined 52 other senators in voting to defeat the resolution, though he has voted against Saudi interests on at least one other occasion.

Ben Freeman 18 of Washington Post [Ben Freeman, 10-22-2018, Washington Post, "Opinion", (), accessed 2-14-2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/global-opinions/wp/2018/10/22/its-time-to-silence-the-saudi-lobbying-machine-in-washington/?utm\_term=.e2b40b401e0f] //AT

The story of the rise of Saudi influence in Washington begins after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, when it was revealed that [15 of the 19 hijackers](https://www.cnn.com/2013/07/27/us/september-11th-hijackers-fast-facts/index.html) were from Saudi Arabia. In the next 10 years, the Saudis spent more than [$100 million](https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2010/12/fact-checking-stephen-walt/67648/) to reshape their image in Washington. They were so successful that the Obama administration — while negotiating the Iran deal that the Saudis [opposed](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/04/saudi-arabia-israel-oppose-iran-nuclear-deal-150401061906177.html) — offered Saudi Arabia [$115 billion](https://www.ciponline.org/images/uploads/actions/2016-12_Hartung_Report.pdf) in arms sales, far more than any administration in U.S. history. These are the same arms deals that President Trump keeps [falsely](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2018/10/11/trumps-billion-arms-sales-saudi-arabia-still-fake/?utm_term=.3deeb3209431) claiming credit for and is using as a completely misguided justification for not punishing the Saudis for Khashoggi’s death.

#### [DL] Thornberry 18 of RCD: The UAE has a different agenda than Saudi Arabia in Yemen, as it wants to combat the Muslim Brotherhood and has its own interests besides the Houthis, which is why Thornberry concludes that the UAE will never allow a unified Yemen.

Thornberry 18 of RCD [Thornberry, 4-24-2018, RealClearDefense, "The UAE’s Divisive Strategy in Yemen", (), accessed 2-16-2019, https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2018/04/24/the\_uaes\_divisive\_strategy\_in\_yemen\_113364.html] //AT

Yemen has become a major battleground for the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The UAE provides the second largest force in the Saudi-led military coalition fighting in the country. While the coalition came about to halt the advances of the Iran-backed Houthi rebels, however, the UAE has since focused on its own agenda. By backing certain warring parties, the UAE hopes to confront both the Shia Houthi rebels, backed by Iran, and tackle the Sunni Muslim Brotherhood. Further, the UAE’s strategy not only aims to address the perceived threat of the Muslim Brotherhood across the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA), but it also reflects Abu Dhabi’s aspirations for greater geopolitical influence in the region. Shia Iran, which has a long-standing territorial dispute with the UAE, remains a rival regional power that represents a threat to the Sunni Arab monarchies, especially Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Meanwhile, the UAE is also dedicating more resources to its confrontation with the Muslim Brotherhood and its political outfit in Yemen—the al-Islah party. Aden Clashes For the UAE, Yemen is increasingly a space where it is extending its power, working with local partners—notably southern secessionists and remnants of the regime of the late president Ali Abdullah Saleh—at the expense of the internationally recognized government. The UAE’s strategy to raise its geopolitical standing includes a very significant naval dimension, and Abu Dhabi has moved to seize more control of strategically important shipping routes. The main justification for the coalition’s intervention was to shore up Yemen’s internationally recognized government in the face of the Houthi rebels. Nevertheless, recent developments indicate that the UAE favors supporting alternative partners, most significantly the southern secessionists of the Southern Transitional Council (STC), and the remnants of Saleh’s General People’s Congress (GPC). The government, albeit weak and dysfunctional, has been an important partner for the Saudi-led coalition. However, on January 28, UAE-backed STC forces launched an operation to capture and control the city of Aden. The port city is the seat of Yemen’s beleaguered government—while President Abd-Rabbuh Mansour Hadi lives in Saudi Arabia, the cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Ahmed Obeid Bin Daghr, still resides there. Neither Hadi nor Bin Daghr are members of the Muslim Brotherhood’s al-Islah party, but government institutions and the military are dominated by al-Islah’s members and allies. In the eyes of the UAE, that represents a threat at least equal to, and probably now greater than, the Shia Houthis. As a consequence, the STC attacked government positions in the city and demanded Bin Daghar’s removal. The uprising was brought to an end by Saudi-UAE mediation in February. Though Bin Daghr kept his position, the STC, led by general Aidarus al-Zoubaidi, gained significant areas of control in the city ([al-Arabiya](https://www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/yemen/2018/01/30/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D8%A7%D8%AE%D9%84%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%85%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%86-%D9%88%D9%82%D9%81-%D8%A5%D8%B7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%82-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D8%A7%D8%B1-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%B9%D8%AF%D9%86.html) January 30; [sabq.org](https://sabq.org/YGdgWk), February 1). The UAE’s Priorities The UAE has always considered the Muslim Brotherhood to be a national security threat. In the 1990s and early 2000s, tensions existed between the government and the Brotherhood, and crackdowns on Emirati members of the movement resulted in hundreds of arrests. After the wave of Arab Spring protests across the MENA region in 2011, the UAE grew even more concerned about the group. Despite the UAE’s population enjoying one of the world’s highest living standards and generous government subsidies and welfare payments, members of the Emirati branch of the Muslim Brotherhood called for more reform and more rights. The government’s response was to arrest five Brotherhood members and charge them with offending the ruler ([al-Khaleej al-Jadeed](https://medium.com/thenewkhalij/%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%AE%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B3%D9%84%D9%85%D9%88%D9%86-%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A9-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D9%82%D8%B5%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%82%D8%A9-%D9%88%D8%AC%D8%B0%D9%88%D8%B1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B5%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%B9-ced22555e17f), November 25, 2016). Faced with what appeared to be the growing appeal of the Muslim Brotherhood throughout the MENA region—manifested in the group winning elections in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya—the UAE set in motion an anti-Brotherhood strategy opting to support any viable force that confronted the group. This intensified after Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt and Bahrain cut diplomatic ties and imposed sanctions on Qatar, accusing their Gulf neighbor of supporting the Muslim Brotherhood. Qatar denies supporting the group, but unlike its accusers does not ban the organization and believes it should be included in political processes around the region. It has supported Brotherhood-led governments elected in Egypt and Tunisia, as well as backing Brotherhood-linked factions in Libya and Syria. With Qatar under pressure, the UAE aims to weaken the Muslim Brotherhood across the region. Both Saudi Arabia and the UAE support the military government of General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in Egypt, which removed the Brotherhood’s Mohammed Morsi from power and cracked down on the Egyptian branch of the group, the oldest and strongest in the MENA region. The situation in Yemen, however, is more complicated. The UAE could not exclude the Brotherhood’s al-Islah party as it was a powerful component in the opposition, and had been central to the protest movement that in 2012 brought an end to then-President Saleh’s 32-year reign. However, the UAE supported politicians who occupied senior positions in post-Saleh Yemen, the most prominent among them being former prime minister Khalid Bahah who had been minister of oil under Saleh between 2006 and 2008 and had a reputation as a reformer ([arabi21.com](http://arabi21.com/), April 29, 2017). [1] Allies Divided Saudi Arabia, by contrast, is committed to supporting the Hadi government as part of the deal that led to Saleh’s removal and exempts al-Islah from its classification of the Muslim Brotherhood as a terrorist organization. In the wake of the Aden clashes, the difference between the strategies of Saudi Arabia and the UAE has become clearer. While Saudi Arabia leads the coalition and commands the largest force within it, the UAE has moved more quickly to influence internal Yemeni dynamics for its own interests. The division between Saudi Arabia and the UAE over Yemen can be traced to Hadi’s decision last year, made from his base in Saudi Arabia, to replace the UAE-backed Prime Minister Bahah with rival Bin Dhagar. Hadi also elevated General Ali Muhsin al-Ahmar, an ally of al-Islah and once Saleh’s lieutenant, and appoint him vice president, another position that Bahah had previously held. While Saudi Arabia did not necessarily support Hadi’s decisions, neither did it oppose them. The UAE, however, condemned the move and embarked on a strategy that aimed to break the alliance between the Houthis and Saleh, deciding the latter would be the best hope of defeating the Houthis in northern Yemen. Meanwhile, in the south, the UAE also supported the formation of the STC ([Sky News Arabia](https://www.skynewsarabia.com/middle-east/950643-%D8%AA%D8%B8%D8%A7%D9%87%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA-%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%AF%D9%86-%D8%AA%D8%A3%D9%8A%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A7-%D9%84%D9%84%D9%85%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D9%82%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%8A-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AC%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A8%D9%8A), May 21, 2017). Saleh made his move in December and turned against the Houthis. However, his uprising in Sana’a failed, and his former Houthi allies killed him ([al-Jazeera](http://www.aljazeera.net/news/arabic/2017/12/4/%D9%85%D9%82%D8%AA%D9%84-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%8A-%D8%B9%D8%A8%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%84%D9%87-%D8%B5%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD-%D8%A8%D8%B1%D8%B5%D8%A7%D8%B5-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D9%88%D8%AB%D9%8A%D9%8A%D9%86), December 4, 2017). The UAE quickly embraced his nephew, Brigadier General Tariq Saleh, the head of Saleh’s protection force, and offered him a refuge in the south. With the support of the UAE, Tariq Saleh is now building a fighting force with the intention of taking on the Houthis in the north (see [Militant Leadership Monitor](https://jamestown.org/program/raising-salehs-flag-southern-yemen-brigadier-general-tariq-saleh-attempts-finish-uncles-work/), February 7; [al-Jazeera](http://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/icons/2018/2/5/%D8%B7%D8%A7%D8%B1%D9%82-%D8%B5%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD-%D8%B9%D8%B3%D9%83%D8%B1%D9%8A-%D9%8A%D9%85%D9%86%D9%8A-%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%87%D9%86-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%87-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA), February 8). The STC’s Aden operation occurred a few weeks after the failed Sana’a uprising. The southern secessionists and Saleh’s supporters, enemies for 25 years, are now signaling they are open to cooperation and building a strategic alliance. [2] This remarkable shift, and the alliance of these two actors, demonstrates just how complex the conflict in Yemen has become. The southern secessionists of the STC and Saleh’s supporters had both received support from Shia Iran, but have come to also enjoy the support of Sunni Arab countries opposed to Tehran. The leaders of both groups now spout anti-Iranian rhetoric and claim their strategies are part of a pan-Arab effort led by Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Hidden Agendas Outside of Yemen, the UAE has also moved to extend its presence and influence around the Bab al-Mandab strait. In addition to its naval bases in Asab, Eritrea, and Barbara, in the de facto state of Somaliland, the UAE also controls the Yemeni island of Socotra. Yemeni critics of the UAE now openly accuse it of being a colonial force pursuing an agenda to dominate the Bab al-Mandab area ([noonpost.org](https://www.noonpost.org/content/17830), May 3, 2017). At the same time, the UAE is accused of wanting to prevent Aden from returning to its “golden age”—in the 1950s, it was one of the busiest harbors in the world, second only to New York—and becoming a rival to Dubai. [3] The UAE denies the claims, but its influence in Yemen, especially in the south, and its naval deployments has put it in a strong strategic position [(Yemen Monitor](http://www.yemenmonitor.com/Details/ArtMID/908/ArticleID/23819), March 26). Yemen is a difficult country when it comes to political and military alliances. Its modern history is a litany of civil wars and shifting alliances. From Hadhramaut to Aden, the UAE is supporting local militias and has secured a network of alliances and local partners in various southern Yemeni provinces. While the tribes have been historically influential in the politics of northern Yemen, the political allegiances in the south are typically formed along provincial lines. Aware of these dynamics, the UAE supported General al-Zubaidi to assume the leadership of the STC. Al-Zubaidi comes from the province of al-Dhala. He and many military officers and local leaders from his home province and neighboring Lahij have deep-rooted feuds with their peers in President Hadi’s home province of Abyan. Another important STC faction is led by the preacher Hani Bin Buraik, who was fired from his cabinet post by President Hadi in April 2017 in a move aimed at curtailing the UAE’s influence in Yemen. He has attracted Salafists away from al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), but his Islamist credentials have also been important in the confrontation with al-Islah ([Sasa Post](mailto:https://www.sasapost.com/yemen-united-arab-emirates-hani-ben-brik-assassinations/), November 2, 2017.) Divide and Conquer Abu Dhabi has used its proxies to great effect, succeeding in driving AQAP out of the city of al-Mukalla, the provincial capital of Hadhramaut, in 2016 ([ME Online](http://www.middle-east-online.com/?id=223228), April 24, 2016). Yet the militias are accused of human rights violations and have significantly weakened the power of President Hadi’s government, on whose side the Saudi-led coalition is supposedly intervening ([al-Jazeera](http://www.aljazeera.net/encyclopedia/military/2017/7/5/%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B0%D8%A7-%D8%AA%D8%B9%D8%B1%D9%81-%D8%B9%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D8%AE%D8%A8%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AD%D8%B6%D8%B1%D9%85%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AA%D9%8A-%D8%AA%D8%B4%D8%B1%D9%81-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%87%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D9%85%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%AA), July 5, 2017). Meanwhile, the STC secessionist movement, which once received support from Iran and was on friendly terms with the Houthis when Saleh, their common enemy, was in power, is now an ally of the UAE and the coalition. However, while it has encouraged the STC to turn its back Iran, the UAE is unlikely to support a full secession and a return of the old South Yemen state. That would be too costly and would bring new geopolitical challenges. Instead, the UAE benefits from keeping Yemen weak and divided. The UAE’s naval capabilities have led to some successes when attacking the Houthis in coastal towns, most evident in the retaking of the port of al-Mukha ([al-Ittihad](http://www.alittihad.ae/details.php?id=8919&y=2017), February 12, 2017). That strength has not been matched by any significant advances elsewhere, however, and in northern Yemen, the UAE’s strategy is facing difficulties. Three years since the war started, the coalition, with all its military superiority, is clearly struggling to counter the Houthis. Tariq Saleh, the UAE’s new point man in Yemen, does not seem to be moving fast enough in his attempts to build a force capable of attacking the Houthis and re-capturing Sana’a. The southerners, meanwhile, have proven themselves to be a powerful fighting force against the Houthi-Saleh alliance in their areas, but are unlikely to have the same impact in the north. Before they make a move on Sana’a, the UAE and its allies may need to address the fronts of Taiz and Marib, where most of the forces loyal to the government and sympathetic to al-Islah are concentrated. Further, any fundamental progress for the UAE’s efforts in Yemen will require Saudi approval.

### AT: Blockade

#### [DL] CrisisGroup 18: The UAE will always strive to capture the port no matter what.

Crisis Group 18 of [Crisis Group, 11-23-2018, Crisis Group, "Yemen: Giving Peace a Chance?", (), accessed 2-8-2019, https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/yemen/yemen-giving-peace-chance] //AT

The UAE-led campaign for the Red Sea coast, which has been ongoing for almost two years, is an attempt to cut off the Huthis’ access to the sea and to customs revenues from the port. The UAE and Saudi Arabia believe that the loss of territory and a valuable revenue stream will force the rebels to make significant concessions. They may also hope to shift the moral burden for the humanitarian catastrophe to the Huthis: once the Saudi-led coalition controls the port, they say, any hindrance on humanitarian access will be due to the Huthis’ actions, not their own. The UAE says its campaign is meant to force the Huthis to adopt a more realistic position at the negotiating table. But there are indications that it is intent on capturing Hodeida’s port regardless of the outcome of talks, and possibly the city as well, viewing such a seizure as a key, indispensable step in changing the Huthi’s outlook and the overall balance of power. UAE policymakers openly state that they expect the talks – which they claim are the Huthis’ “last chance” before they push toward Hodeida port – to fail. The Huthis’ fourteen-year history of armed insurgency suggests that the coalition’s logic is flawed. If they lose Hodeida, the Huthis are unlikely to surrender. Nor would they be entirely dispossessed of revenue streams: they could levy taxes on trucks passing from Hodeida into the north west of Yemen. Finally, they will blame the coalition for the humanitarian catastrophe that would ensue, given that it will be their decision to take the port (notwithstanding the Huthis’ agreement in principle to hand the port over to the UN) that would have caused it. They are confident that much of international public opinion will agree.

## AT: Lebanon

#### [DL] Meredith 19 of CNBC: Saudi Arabia wants to help Lebanon and its failing economy; it recently offered them a $500 million aid package.

Natasha Turak, Sam Meredith 19 of CNBC [Natasha Turak, Sam Meredith, 1-22-2019, CNBC, "Saudi Arabia promises full support for Lebanon after Qatar offers aid package", (), accessed 2-7-2019, https://www.cnbc.com/2019/01/22/saudi-arabia-prepared-to-go-all-the-way-to-help-lebanon-finance-minister-says.html] //AT

[Saudi Arabia](https://www.cnbc.com/saudi-arabia/) is prepared to do all it can to prop up Lebanon's ailing economy, the country's finance minister told CNBC, but stopped short of providing any specific details. His comments come less than 24 hours after Qatar said it planned to buy [$500 million worth of sovereign bonds](https://www.cnbc.com/2019/01/21/reuters-america-update-3-qatar-to-put-500-mln-in-lebanon-bonds-to-support-economy.html) to shore up Beirut's battered bond market. "We are interested to see stability in Lebanon and we will support Lebanon all the way," Mohammed Al-Jadaan said at the World Economic Forum ([WEF](https://www.cnbc.com/davos-world-economic-forum/)) in Davos on Tuesday. "We are also determined to making sure that we play our role as a catalyst of stability in the region," he added. Qatar's move appeared to be part of a push to extend diplomatic and business ties in the region as the blockade imposed by Saudi Arabia and its allies on the gas-rich sheikhdom in 2017 continues. Saudi's bid to provide its own aid to Lebanon may be seen by some as an effort to push back on Qatar in the country, as it has attempted to do vis-a-vis Iranian-linked influence in the past, though with [mixed results.](https://www.cnbc.com/2017/11/23/saudi-arabia-has-become-an-irrational-actor-in-the-middle-east-says-analyst.html) The lack of detail in al-Jadaan's offer begged the question of what "strings attached" any financial support might entail, as is often the case with economic diplomacy. Regional observers have applied the same question to the Qatari aid, though so far no apparent demands have made their way to the public.

#### [DL] Ma 18 of Business Insider: Lebanon’s own prime minister explicitly stated that relationships couldn’t be better with Saudi Arabia.

Alexandra Ma 18 of Business Insider [Alexandra Ma, 12-13-2018, Business Insider, "Lebanese prime minister, who got kidnapped in Saudi Arabia, says his relationship with the Saudis 'couldn't be better'", (), accessed 2-7-2019, https://www.businessinsider.com/lebanon-pm-saad-al-hariri-touts-saudi-relationship-after-kidnapped-2018-12] //AT

LONDON — Saad al-Hariri, the Lebanese prime minister who mysteriously disappeared and resigned during a trip to Saudi Arabia last year, said his relationship with the kingdom "couldn't be better." Speaking at an event in London on Thursday, which Business Insider attended, he also exonerated the Saudi government over the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who died at the hands of Saudi agents in the kingdom's consulate in Istanbul in October. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is [widely believed to have orchestrated Khashoggi's death](https://www.businessinsider.com/who-is-jamal-khashoggi-turkey-accuses-saudi-arabia-of-murdering-reporter-2018-10), despite Riyadh's attempts to declare him innocent. The kingdom's prosecutors last month [indicted 11 suspects](https://www.businessinsider.com/saudi-arabia-seeks-death-penalty-for-5-suspects-in-khashoggi-killing-2018-11) over the death and said the crown prince had no knowledge of the killing. The CIA has reportedly assessed that the crown prince [directly ordered the hit](https://www.businessinsider.com/cia-mohammed-bin-salman-ordered-jamal-khashoggi-killed-report-says-2018-11), according to the Washington Post. Hariri, who [appeared alongside](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-investment-hariri/saudi-crown-prince-jokes-about-lebanese-pm-hariri-at-investment-conference-idUSKCN1MY2AT) the crown prince at the kingdom's major investment conference in October, told Chatham House on Thursday: "I was in Saudi Arabia ... for the conference in the midst of what happened with the issue of Khashoggi, which I condemn, and the Saudi government condemns, and the whole world condemns." "The Saudi government has also arrested those people and they have done what they should have done," he added. "I think this whole matter was maybe handled poorly but now it is taking its course to justice." Hariri also mentioned Lebanon's lucrative trade deals with Saudi Arabia, saying that his relationship with them "couldn't be better." "My relationship with Saudi Arabia is a good relationship and I believe that the Saudi market is a good market for Lebanon, and we prepared many agreements that we will be signing with Saudi Arabia as soon as we form a government," he said. He was referring to Lebanon's [current efforts to form a new government](https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/world/lebanese-leaders-show-new-optimism-on-ending-government-deadlock-11025300) after general elections this May, in which Hariri's Future Movement party took a hit and Hezbollah-aligned politicians gained seats. The country is currently in a political deadlock, heavily in debt, and in need of foreign economic aid. "As soon as we form a government, we will see Saudi Arabia taking some serious steps with Lebanon, helping Lebanon economically," Hariri said. "So I think the relationship couldn't be better."

#### [DL] Osseiran 19 of WSJ: Lebanon doesn’t care anymore about the 2017 kidnapping because they need Saudi Arabian help.

Nazih Osseiran 19 of WSJ [Nazih Osseiran, 2-7-2019, WSJ, "Lebanese Leader Looks Past ‘Abduction’ to Seek Saudi Support", (), accessed 2-7-2019, https://www.wsj.com/articles/lebanese-leader-looks-past-abduction-to-seek-saudi-support-1540834393] //AT

BEIRUT—Almost a year after Saudi Arabia pressured him into a now-rescinded resignation, [Lebanese leader Saad Hariri](https://www.wsj.com/articles/hariri-wants-lebanon-kept-out-of-the-saudi-iranian-conflict-1515697159?mod=article_inline) remains beholden to Riyadh as he struggles to form a government and manage a looming economic crisis. Mr. Hariri—who was designated to continue as prime minister in the wake of this year’s elections—had little choice but to attend Saudi Arabia’s premier investment conference last week, when Riyadh needed a show of support amid an international uproar over the [killing of dissident Jamal Khashoggi](https://www.wsj.com/articles/saudi-attorney-general-says-evidence-points-to-premeditated-killing-of-khashoggi-1540466602?mod=searchresults&page=1&pos=4&mod=article_inline) in the kingdom’s Istanbul consulate, Lebanese political analysts said. He needs Saudi political backing and money to remain in charge of a new government that has taken almost six months to form but could come together as soon as Monday night. He also needs Saudi help to counter the rise of his political rival, [Hezbollah, the Iran-backed militia and political party](https://www.wsj.com/articles/hezbollah-allies-gain-seats-in-lebanon-parliament-vote-unofficial-results-show-1525727354?mod=article_inline) in Lebanon. Mr. Hariri laughed during the conference when Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman joked about the prime minister’s time in Riyadh last November, a 17-day period that Lebanese President Michel Aoun described as an “abduction.” “Prime Minister Saad is staying for two days in Saudi Arabia so please no rumors that he has been kidnapped,” Prince Mohammed said. “I am here at out of my free will,” replied Mr. Hariri, arms in the air, smiling. Mr. Hariri’s Saudi sojourn last year remains a mystery, with no official explanations from either Mr. Hariri or the Saudis beyond denials he was held against his will. While there, Mr. Hariri read an awkward statement on state television, saying he was resigning and staying in Riyadh because he feared assassination in Lebanon. He later gave an interview to Saudi state television during which he appeared to be taking cues from officials off-camera. Mr. Hariri stayed in Saudi Arabia until Nov. 21, when he went to France and met French President Emmanuel Macron. Later, back in Lebanon, Mr. Hariri rescinded the resignation and resumed his duties as prime minister. While many Lebanese cringed at his embrace last week of Prince Mohammed, the optics were crucial for Mr. Hariri, who was pledging support for an essential political patron at a critical moment for both Saudi Arabia and Lebanon, said Sami Atallah, director of the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, a Beirut think tank. In Lebanon’s fractured political system, Saudi Arabia, Iran and other regional powers fund parties and maneuver behind the scenes for influence, and Mr. Hariri is Saudi Arabia’s biggest Lebanese ally. “Hariri had to appease the Saudi leadership,” Mr. Atallah said, adding: “If he gives up on his foreign backers while the rest are still receiving financial, military, and political support, he will be weakened further.” Mr. Hariri’s coalition suffered heavy losses in May elections, and he needs Saudi-backed political parties to make concessions to form a government. Lebanon often takes months to form a working government, but the delay this year is hurting the economy, causing worries about foreign investors yanking their deposits and forcing the country to default on its foreign debt, said Jason Tuvey, senior emerging markets economist at Capital Economics in London. Mr. Hariri’s coalition suffered heavy losses in May elections. Above, campaign posters in Beirut on May 3.Photo: Hassan Ammar/Associated Press A working cabinet, representing Lebanon’s 18 Christian and Muslim sects, is a condition for Lebanon to receive $11 billion in loans and grants from countries and international lenders to shore up an economy battered by spillover effects of the Syrian civil war. A $1 billion Saudi Arabian line of credit is in the package. Mr. Hariri, a Sunni Muslim, is also grappling with the rising power of Shiite Hezbollah. His inability to contain Hezbollah’s rise was one reason that Saudi officials were angry with Mr. Hariri’s leadership last year, and May’s election turned the tide further toward Hezbollah. “Iran has a tighter control over Lebanon because it now has a majority in parliament,” said Sami Nader, director of the Levant Institute for Strategic Affairs, a think tank in Lebanon. Saudi officials and Mr. Hariri’s office didn’t respond to requests for comment. Mr. Hariri has worked this year to maintain good relations with Saudi Arabia, the country of his birth and where a construction business turned his father, the late former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, into a wealthy powerful man. Mr. Hariri has met Prince Mohammed several times and traveled to Riyadh since last November’s controversy. He has posted on [Twitter](http://quotes.wsj.com/TWTR) playful selfies of himself and the prince, hamming it up for the camera. He praised Prince Mohammed at last week’s conference for galvanizing support for the Lebanese aid package that can be tapped after a government is formed. “I was in constant contact with the crown prince regarding the kingdom’s contribution,” Mr. Hariri said. “He also played a great role in talking with other countries to encourage them to invest in Lebanon.” Lebanon’s debt-to-GDP ratio of 150% is the third highest in the world. Half the government’s revenue is spent servicing that debt. In September, the cost of insuring Lebanon’s debt against default rose by 600 basis points amid doubts about the state’s ability to pay back its loans. In a July interview, Riad Salameh, the governor of Banque du Liban, the country’s central bank, said the country has the tools to stave off a currency devaluation, including $44 billion in foreign-cash reserves. He said the country needs a government formed to unlock foreign aid and undertake economic changes. “Reforms are needed,” he said. “The quicker the better.”

## AT: Saudi Bad

#### [LT] Doran 18 of NYT: Even if the Saudis aren’t objectively morally good, they are comparatively better than allowing Iran or Russia to enter the region and take power.

Doran, Michael. [Senior fellow at the Hudson Institute]. “Trump Is Crude. But He’s Right About Saudi Arabia.” New York Times, Nov 21, 2018. h􀄴ps://www.nytimes.com/ 2018/11/21/opinion/trump-saudi-arabia-khashoggi.html

Notably absent from Ms. Power’s list of evildoers, however, are Iran and its proxies. The omission is telling. As part of its pivot toward Iran and away from the Sunni states and Israel, the Obama administration turned a blind eye to the slaughter in Syria that Moscow, Tehran and its proxies unleashed, and, thanks to the nuclear deal, delivered countless billions to the Iranian war machine. His critics would say that Mr. Trump is now similarly emboldening a reckless Saudi regime. This is a false analogy. The Saudis are not the moral equivalents of Iranians and the Russians. The kingdom has sheltered comfortably for over 75 years under the American security umbrella, which the United States happily extended not least because the Saudis and their oil have played a pivotal role in American economic strategies. Mr. Trump’s statement acknowledged that the Saudis are assisting him with stabilizing global oil prices as he seeks to quash Iranian oil sales. Whatever Prince Mohammed’s faults may be, he actively supports the American regional order that the Iranians openly seek to destroy.

#### [LT] Phillips 18 of Heritage: The Houthis commit worse atrocities than Saudi, as they purposely kill civilians and starve humanitarian aid on a greater extent.

Phillips and Posey 18 James Phillips [Senior Research Fellow, The Heritage Foundation] and Madyson Hutchinson Posey [Research assistant], "Ending US Military Support to Saudi Arabia in Yemen Would Trigger Dangerous Consequences.” The Heritage Foundation Blog. December 6, 2018. [Premier].

In a new resolution, a bipartisan group of senators is calling for the United States to end its involvement—specifically its support of Saudi Arabia—in the Yemen conflict. On Wednesday, the Senate voted 63-37 to pass a procedural measure that will clear the way for a floor debate on the issue next week. The push comes largely in response to the recent murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi. The Trump administration has banned 21 Saudi suspects in that murder from entering the U.S., imposed sanctions on 17 Saudi officials, and expressed its willingness to take further action if warranted by ongoing investigations. Many senators seek to do more to punish the Saudis, even if it means sacrificing the interests of the Yemeni government and making a negotiated settlement of the conflict more difficult. The killing of Khashoggi was certainly abhorrent, but ending U.S. support for the multinational coalition in Yemen is not the proper solution. It risks dangerously conflating two separate issues and would inevitably trigger unintended consequences that would undermine U.S. national security interests in the region. Senators must remember that Saudi Arabia is not the only belligerent in Yemen. A cutoff of U.S. support would also hurt the elected and internationally recognized government of Yemen, which was ousted by Iran-backed Houthi rebels in 2015 in a bloody coup that violated a [U.N.-brokered ceasefire](https://www.cnn.com/2014/09/21/world/meast/yemen-prime-minister-resigns/index.html). Withdrawing U.S. support would also harm the interests of other U.S. allies fighting in Yemen, including the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. The war in Yemen is complex. Those who rush to blame Saudi Arabia entirely for the suffering of the Yemeni people ignore the war crimes and heavy-handed treatment meted out by the Houthis to their opponents and the ruthless role that Iran plays in supporting the Houthi Ansar Allah (“Supporters of Allah”) movement, a Shia Islamist extremist group. The Saudis are rightly criticized for not doing more to prevent civilian casualties as they target Ansar Allah positions. But the Houthis should not be given a free pass for deliberately targeting civilian targets in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates with increasingly sophisticated Iranian ballistic missiles. Ansar Allah also deserves criticism for its violent role in destabilizing Yemen and creating the conditions that led to the current humanitarian disaster. Ansar Allah regularly attacks the Saudi border, launches missiles strikes into Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, and diverts international medical and food aid to favor its own supporters and sell on the black market. Ansar Allah also has targeted U.S. Navy vessels, those of allied nations, and civilian shipping in the [Red Sea](https://www.heritage.org/middle-east/commentary/bab-el-mandeb-the-us-ignores-the-most-dangerous-strait-the-world-its-peril) with Iranian-supplied missiles, gunboat attacks, and boat bombs. Undermining the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen risks exacerbating this threat to international shipping and giving Iran the opportunity to threaten oil shipments through the Bab al-Mandab Strait, just as it has threatened to do in the Strait of Hormuz. Those who advocate withdrawing support for Saudi Arabia apparently believe that they can somehow end the current conflict in Yemen through a one-sided strategy that penalizes allies and boosts Ansar Allah, a group that chants “Death to America” and looks more like Hezbollah, Iran’s Lebanese proxy group, every day. Never mind that Saudi Arabia is supporting the internationally recognized government of Yemen in this effort. Never mind that leaving Ansar Allah to run amuck will not bring an end to the humanitarian suffering, but only prolong it. The U.S. currently extends only limited support to Saudi Arabia in Yemen centered on intelligence and information sharing. There are no U.S. troops involved in combat operations, except for occasional commando raids and air strikes against Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, a Sunni terrorist group that continues to target the U.S. homeland, as well as Saudi Arabia, France, and other countries. The Trump administration already has stopped the aerial refueling of Saudi warplanes involved in the Yemen conflict and called for a negotiated settlement. But the United States cannot afford to abandon its allies and hope for the best. Undermining the Yemeni government and the Saudi-led coalition would make an acceptable political settlement impossible. The Yemeni government and Saudi Arabia will continue to fight this war with or without U.S. support. Those who would connect two unrelated issues, condemn Saudi involvement, and ignore Iran’s hostile role inside Yemen will only do more harm to innocent Yemeni civilians and empower Iran and its Yemeni proxies.

#### [LT] D’Amours 18 of Al-Ajazeera: The last time Canada tried to punish Saudi Arabia for its abuses, Saudi Arabia punished it with sanctions, expelling their ambassador, and overall harming the alliance.

Jillian Kestler-D'Amours 18 of Al-Ajazeera [Jillian Kestler-D'Amours, 8-1-2018, No Publication, "Saudi Arabia is using Canada to send a message, analysts say", (), accessed 2-7-2019, https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/saudi-arabia-canada-send-message-analysts-180808203344288.html] //AT

Montreal, Canada - Saudi Arabia's decision to [expel](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/08/saudi-arabia-expels-canadian-ambassador-criticism-arrests-180806050810633.html) Canada's ambassador, recall thousands of students studying in the North American country, and suspend future trade with Ottawa took many off guard this week. Saudi authorities pointed to a series of tweets, in which Canada's foreign affairs ministry called for the release of jailed Saudi human rights activists, as the reason for the ongoing diplomatic flare-up. But experts say the spat is not about the statements, but rather, it's the latest attempt by Riyadh to warn other countries of the consequences of speaking out against the kingdom's human rights record. "It's pretty clear that [Saudi Crown Prince [Mohammed bin Salman](https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/people/mohammed-bin-salman.html)] is using Canada to send a message to the rest of the world that if you want to trade with Saudi Arabia, then you need to shut up on human rights," said Nader Hashemi, director of the University of Denver's Center for Middle East Studies at the Josef Korbel School of International Studies.

#### [LT] Foy 18 of MBC: Backlash only incentivizes Saudi to go to Russia when faced with no other help.

Henry Foy, Moscow Bureau Chief, October 29, 2018, “Russia-Saudi Arabia rapprochement reshapes more than the oil market,” Financial Times, <https://www.ft.com/content/aa39b74c-4f0c-11e8-ac41-759eee1efb74> (accessed 1/7/19)

As governments and businesses issued condemnations of Saudi Arabia this month amid the furore over the suspected murder of Jamal Khashoggi, one country just sat and shrugged. “In truth, we do not know what happened,” said Russian president Vladimir Putin. “So why should we take any steps that could harm our relations with Saudi Arabia?” Days later, at an investment conference in Riyadh shunned by many of the west’s business leaders, Russia arrived with a sizeable delegation including 30 top executives. It was the strongest signal of a burgeoning relationship that has united two of the world’s energy superpowers and has the potential to up-end the politics of the Middle East. On the sidelines of the ‘Davos in the desert’ conference, the Saudi energy minister said the kingdom aimed to acquire 30 per cent of Russian gas producer Novatek’s $21bn liquefied natural gas project in the Arctic.

## AT: Terror

#### [NU] Dudley 18 of Forbes: The number of terror attacks decreased by 23% and deaths reduced by 27%.

Dominic Dudley 18 of Forbes [Dominic Dudley, 12-5-2018, Forbes, "Terrorism In Decline: Number Of Deaths By Terrorist Groups Falls For Third Year In A Row", (), accessed 2-14-2019, https://www.forbes.com/sites/dominicdudley/2018/12/05/terrorism-in-decline/#7d854e9b203c] //AT

Is the world starting to get to grips with the scourge of terrorism? There are at least some hopeful signs. Last year, the number of deaths caused by terrorist groups was 18,814, 27% less than the year before and the third consecutive year of improvement. At the same time, the number of attacks fell by 23%. These numbers come from the Global Terrorism Index 2018, compiled by the Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP) and published today. According to the index, most countries saw their situation improve last year, with 94 countries showing a decline in the impact of terrorism, compared to 46 countries where the problem got worse.

#### [LT] Gilsinan 18 of The Atlantic: U.S. cooperation with Saudi Arabia has been successful, and it has even foiled terror plost in the past.

Kathy Gilsinan 18 of Atlantic [Kathy Gilsinan, 10-16-2018, Atlantic, "Why the U.S. Can’t Quit Saudi Arabia", (), accessed 2-14-2019, https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/10/jamal-khashoggi-american-saudi-counterterrorism-relationship/573148/] //AT

By 2006, Saudi Arabia had largely contained its own terrorism problem—at times using methods that highlighted the difference between American interests in counterterrorism and values of rule of law, including arbitrary detention and torture, as Amnesty International detailed in a 2011 [report](https://www.amnestyusa.org/files/saudisecurity.pdf). The success of day-to-day counterterrorism cooperation between the United States and the kingdom (which consists, among other things, of intelligence sharing about threats as well as training, countering terrorist financing, and [Saudi funding](https://www.wsj.com/articles/saudi-arabia-to-contribute-100-million-to-u-s-backed-efforts-in-syria-1534469569) for efforts like the counter-isis campaign in Syria) is difficult to measure, though former national-security officials from the Bush, Obama, and Trump administrations told me it was useful. “They gained tremendous experience and capability,” said Townsend. The most notable public evidence of a payoff was when, as Riedel has detailed, then-Crown Prince Mohammed bin Nayef [tipped off](http://csweb.brookings.edu/content/research/essays/2015/the-prince-of-counterterrorism.html) U.S. officials in 2010 that al-Qaeda had smuggled bombs into printer cartridges on UPS and FedEx planes already in flight, disrupting the plot. In another high-profile instance, The Washington Post [reported](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/2013/02/05/8f3c94f0-6fb0-11e2-8b8d-e0b59a1b8e2a_story.html?utm_term=.00157a14c1c5) (though the administration has never confirme) that the CIA began operating a drone base in Saudi Arabia around 2011 to target Yemen’s al-Qaeda affiliate, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula; the newspaper said that the drone mission flown to kill the American-born radical cleric Anwar al-Awlaki was flown in part from that base.d

#### [LT] Al-Jazeera 19: The reason that the Saudis gave weapons to terrorists was that they needed to buy their loyalties and support their allies.

Al-Jazeera 19 [Al-Jazeera, 2-5-2019, "Saudi Arabia, UAE gave US arms to al-Qaeda-linked groups: Report", (), accessed 2-9-2019, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/02/saudi-arabia-uae-gave-weapons-al-qaeda-linked-groups-cnn-190205055102300.html] //AT

[Saudi Arabia](https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/country/saudi-arabia.html) and the UAE entered Yemen's war in 2015 leading a military coalition to try and restore the internationally recognised government of President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi. The two Gulf countries wanted to restore the Hadi government after a civil war broke out between Hadi's supporters and those loyal to the [Houthis](https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/subjects/houthis.html). But according to CNN, the coalition was using US-manufactured weapons "as a form of currency to buy the loyalties of militias or tribes, bolster chosen armed actors, and influence the complex political landscape," local commanders and analysts said. According to the Pentagon, the Gulf monarchies were breaking the terms of their arms deal with Washington. A US defence official told CNN that there was an ongoing investigation into the issue.