# AT: Neg

## AT: Conflict Cooling Down

### AT: December 2018 Ceasefire

#### [DL] Al-Jazeera 19: Due to the increasing crossfire and certain political leaders stepping down, the December 2018 peace talks have been pushed back and it’s gradually becoming likely to fail as both sides violate it.

Al-Jazeera 18 [Al-Jazeera, 1-29-2019, Al-Jazeera, "Aid group warns Yemen truce 'on verge of collapsing'", (), accessed 1-29-2019, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/01/aid-group-warns-yemen-truce-verge-collapsing-190129123045611.html] //AT

A humanitarian group has warned that a ceasefire agreed in Yemen's key port city of Hodeidah is on the verge of collapsing, as a retired Dutch general in charge of the truce stepped down from his role. The US-based International Rescue Committee said on Tuesday that recent clashes in the city between Houthi rebels who control it and pro-government forces backed by a Saudi-led coalition have increased dramatically since last week. "In recent days, with clashes erupting inside Hodeidah and both parties accusing each other of violations, the agreement is increasingly in peril," Frank McManus of the group said. The developments threaten to unravel a ceasefire and prisoner swap signed in December, the group said, urging the international community to step up pressure on the warring parties to stick to their commitments. The warning comes a day after the United Nations envoy for Yemen [urged warring sides to withdraw their troops](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/01/envoy-urges-yemen-warring-sides-withdraw-hodeidah-190128181713015.html) from the city - a lifeline for millions of Yemenis facing starvation. Martin Griffith on Monday said that the expected timeline for the truce and the prisoner swap has been [pushed back](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/01/envoy-urges-yemen-warring-sides-withdraw-hodeidah-190128181713015.html).

#### [DL] Al Bawaba 19: There were over 1000 violations in the December 2018 ceasefire from both sides.

Al Bawaba 19 of [Al Bawaba, 2-5-2019, Al Bawaba, "1,080 Hodeidah Ceasefire Violations Since Yemen Accord", (), accessed 2-14-2019, https://www.albawaba.com/news/1080-hodeidah-ceasefire-violations-yemen-accord-coalition-spokesman-al-maliki-1248298] //AT

The Iranian-backed Houthi militia is using human shields and continues to violate a cease-fire in Yemen, a spokesman for the Arab coalition told a weekly press briefing in Riyadh on Monday. Col. Turki Al-Maliki showed the media videos featuring examples of the violations. Footage showed fighters threatening people and forcing them out of their homes, turning their properties into barracks and using them for military purposes. The cease-fire, brokered in Stockholm between Yemen’s warring parties, went into effect on Dec. 13, 2018, in the strategic port city of Hodeidah. They were the first direct talks in more than two years between representatives of Yemen’s internationally recognized government and the Iranian-aligned Houthis. The besieged Houthi-held city is an entry point for 70 percent of foreign humanitarian aid into the country, according to the UN, which has described Hodeidah as a “lifeline” for Yemen’s war-ravaged population. There have been 1,080 violations since the cease-fire came into effect, including the Houthis setting up military camps in different provinces, Al-Maliki said. Coalition raids killed more than 270 Houthi fighters at a training site in Al- Mahwit on Jan. 23, he added. He showed photographs of Iranian-made drones that had been destroyed by the coalition, which was targeting drone warehouses near Sanaa. The Royal Saudi Air Force had intercepted and destroyed anti-civilian drones in Abha and the militia were hiding in pipes, digging trenches to store weapons and planting mines that threatened global maritime and commercial lines in the southern Red Sea. There have been 216 ballistic missiles launched by the Houthis toward Saudi Arabia between March 26, 2015, and Feb. 4, 2019, according to the coalition. The total loss of Houthi militia sites, weapons and equipment from Jan. 21, 2019, to Feb. 4, 2019, was 335. The number of Houthi militia killed was 1,129, the briefing heard.

### AT: Peace Talks

#### [DL] Nebehay 18 of Reuters: The Houthis once failed to show up because of safety issues.

Stephanie Nebehay 18 of U.S. [Stephanie Nebehay, 9-8-2018, U.S., "Yemen peace talks collapse in Geneva after Houthi no-show", (), accessed 2-6-2019, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-un/yemen-peace-talks-collapse-in-geneva-after-houthi-no-show-idUSKCN1LO08Z?feedType=RSS&amp;feedName=worldNews] //AT

GENEVA (Reuters) - An attempt to hold peace talks for Yemen was abandoned on Saturday after three days of waiting for the Houthi movement’s delegation, but the United Nations envoy vowed to press ahead with diplomacy. The U.N. is renewing efforts to end Yemen’s war under a peace plan that calls on the Iranian-aligned Houthis and the internationally recognized government, backed by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, to work on a peace deal under a transitional governing body. U.N. Special Envoy Martin Griffiths said the Houthis’ failure to come to Geneva for the first talks in three years did not signify that the peace process was deadlocked. Griffiths, who held three days of talks with a Yemeni government delegation, said he would meet in coming days with the Houthi leadership in the Yemeni capital Sanaa and in Muscat, Oman. “They would have liked to get here, we didn’t make conditions sufficiently correct to get them here,” Griffiths told a news conference, declining to elaborate. Houthi leader Abdul Malik al-Houthi, whose forces control northern Yemen and the capital Sanaa, accused the Saudi-led coalition of blocking his movement’s delegation from traveling to the peace talks. “We all know that the talks collapsed because of the obstruction of the national delegation from leaving and traveling to Geneva by the coalition forces,” he said in a speech broadcast on the group’s al-Masirah TV. A Saudi-led military coalition intervened in Yemen’s war against the Houthis in 2015 with the aim of restoring the government of Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi. The humanitarian situation has worsened sharply since, putting 8.4 million people on the brink of starvation and ravaging the already weak economy. The Houthi group said they had wanted guarantees from the United Nations that their plane, supplied by Oman, would not have to stop in Djibouti for inspection by the Saudi-led coalition, after being “sequestrated” there last time for months by the Saudi-led military coalition. They also wanted the plane to evacuate some of their wounded to Oman or Europe. The coalition have controlled Yemen’s airspace since 2015. Griffiths said on Saturday that the restart of a peace process was “a very delicate, fragile moment”. “People are coming at a time when perhaps all of their constituencies are not fully engaged and don’t see ahead of time results that will come out of talks,” he said.

#### [DL] Dewan 18 of Middle East Eye: In the past three years, no peace talk has been successful.

Khalil Dewan 18 of Middle East Eye [Khalil Dewan, 11-1-2018, Middle East Eye, "Why the US call for Yemen ceasefire is doomed to fail", (), accessed 2-1-2019, https://www.middleeasteye.net/opinion/why-us-call-yemen-ceasefire-doomed-fail] //AT

But above all, US support for the Saudi-led coalition isn’t working. More than three years in and the conflict remains at a stalemate. All previous UN special envoys and talks about peace talks have failed. The UN says the Saudi-led coalition [may have committed war crimes](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/28/world/middleeast/un-yemen-war-crimes.html), while the Saudi blockade on ports has brought its southern neighbour to the brink of famine, affecting over [14 million](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-45964795) Yemenis. The US war on terror strategy in Yemen is in retreat. The US entered Yemen broadly to neutralise Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), but "[secret deals](https://apnews.com/f38788a561d74ca78c77cb43612d50da)" were cut with Al-Qaeda as part of the civil war by the Saudi-led coalition to manipulate territorial dynamics against the Houthis. This directly blurs the US counterterrorism objective versus Saudi-led strategies to win the war. One must question whether, if Pompeo is attempting to bring an end to the war, why is the US still refuelling Saudi-led coalition aircraft? Surely a concrete step such as ending refuelling would send a stronger message to stop bombing of densely populated areas in Yemen. Pompeo’s vision for parties to "replace conflict with compromise" punches above its weight in Yemen. Focusing only on the Saudi-led coalition and the Houthis isn’t necessarily pragmatic either, as conflict tensions exist between Hadi, the [UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council](https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/yemens-southern-separatists-announce-popular-uprising-1595446795) (STC), late president Ali Abdullah Saleh’s loyal forces and tribal militias scattered in between. For the Houthis, US calls for peace are the height of hypocrisy. Hussain al-Bukhaiti, a Yemen-based journalist and Houthi supporter, told me that Pompeo’s remarks are a "cover up for a new forthcoming operation in Hodeidah". He added: "To ask the Houthis to stop missile attacks in return for the coalition to only stop bombing highly populated areas is a US project to contain the war in Yemen. "If the US want to bring peace in Yemen, they can start by stopping the supply of weapons to the Saudi-led coalition," he added. Back in August, the head of the Houthi Supreme Revolutionary Committee, Mohammed Ali al-Houthi, claimed the [US is obstructing dialogue](http://www.sabanews.net/ar/news472045.htm) on Yemen’s peace prospects. A child suffering from a diphtheria infection lies on a bed, amid an acute diphtheria outbreak, at a hospital in the capital Sanaa, on 19 October, 2018 (AFP) An anti-US campaign was then launched dubbed "America is killing the Yemeni people". Having won many hearts and minds to the Houthi side, with [US bombs found](https://www.middleeasteye.net/www.theguardian.com/world/2018/aug/19/us-supplied-bomb-that-killed-40-children-school-bus-yemen) in the wreckage of the school bus destroyed by a Saudi strike that killed 40 children in August, Pompeo’s "forgive and forget" compromise idea will not go down well in Houthi territory. Based on my own engagement with the Houthis, there’s a clear rift between the political bureau and military wing, especially on whether to take part in peace talks or continue fighting the Saudi-led coalition. Speaking to Salem Thabet al-Awlaki on Thursday, the official spokesperson for the UAE-backed STC explained "the specifics of the American call to stop the war are not clear". Although the STC will remain committed to the UN-led peace process, it will not drop its "self-determination goals" to see secession from north Yemen. Despite the US pressure on Yemen, there’s been no official response from these groups. Whatever the measure, all parties in Yemen should give peace a chance. The major question is how the Iranians will react to the mounting pressure on the Houthis. Iranian fatigue in Syria and Iraq amid ongoing economic sanctions will not spur a swift response. The Houthis' asymmetric warfare policy announced last year will not be halted any time soon. It seeks to drain the Saudi-led coalition’s economy, and is a game changer in the conflict. The Houthis have executed several missiles inside Saudi Arabia, and two drones were confirmed destroyed by Saudi Arabia at [Abha International Airport and Jizan](https://www.spa.gov.sa/viewfullstory.php?lang=en&amp;newsid=1751122). Such strikes remain an active threat to the Saudi-led coalition. Houthi drones and missiles are the only strategy that appears to be working for them on the military front. After Pompeo’s failed attempt to address it this week, the Houthis will continue using it. Meanwhile, the Saudis are escalating strikes against the Houthis, including in the capital Sanaa. Time will tell how the parties will respond by the end of the month.

## AT: Econ

#### [DL] Ashford 18 of WR: The $110 billion number is made up by Trump; experts believe it to be closer to around $20 billion, and the 4000 jobs created are only a tiny fraction of the defense industry.

Emma Ashford 18 of War on the Rocks [Emma Ashford, 10-22-2018, War on the Rocks, "The U.S.-Saudi Alliance Was in Trouble Long Before Jamal Khashoggi’s Death", (), accessed 1-31-2019, https://warontherocks.com/2018/10/the-u-s-saudi-alliance-was-in-trouble-long-before-jamal-khashoggis-death/] //AT

America’s key interest in the Middle East is stability. Yet in recent years, Saudi foreign policy has far more often been destabilizing than stabilizing. Saudi Arabia is often portrayed as a [bulwark against Iranian](https://www.wsj.com/articles/dont-ditch-riyadh-in-a-fit-of-righteousness-1539645239) regional influence, but it’s unclear why a destabilizing reactionary Saudi foreign policy is any better than a revolutionary Iranian one. Just as Iran sponsors Hezbollah, Saudi Arabia has sponsored various militant groups in Syria. Iran meddles in Lebanese politics, while Saudi Arabia recently kidnapped the Lebanese prime minister. If America’s regional interest is stability — rather than simply taking sides — it doesn’t make sense to back either country in their regional aspirations. Even arms sales — a more contemporary argument in favor of a close partnership with Saudi Arabia — are no longer convincing. With his typical exaggeration, President Donald Trump cited $110 billion in arms sales and [the resulting U.S. jobs](http://time.com/5424150/trump-saudi-arabia-arms-deal/) as an excellent reason to maintain good relations with Riyadh. In fact, experts assess that Saudi arms sales are in reality worth only about $20 billion, while the 4,000 jobs created are [a tiny fraction](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/12/opinion/saudi-arabia-arms-sales.html) of the overall U.S. defense industry. With Saudi human rights abuses now regularly making headlines, it is much harder to justify the sale of offensive weapons to the kingdom.

#### [DL] Macias 18 of CNBC: Arms sales to Saudi Arabia only make up less than 2% of sales for defense companies.

Amanda Macias 18 of CNBC [Amanda Macias, 11-26-2018, CNBC, "Limits on arms sales to Saudi Arabia would likely have little impact on US defense firms' revenue", (), accessed 2-1-2019, https://www.cnbc.com/2018/11/26/saudi-arms-sale-limits-would-have-slight-impact-on-us-defense-firms.html] //AT

"I tell you what I don't want to do," Trump said to CBS' "60 Minutes" last month, when he was asked about possibly blocking arms sales to Riyadh. "Boeing, Lockheed, Raytheon, all these [companies]. I don't want to hurt jobs. I don't want to lose an order like that. There are other ways of punishing, to use a word that's a pretty harsh word, but it's true." However, if Congress imposed short-term restrictions on Saudi weapons sales the resulting impact looks to be less than 2 percent of sales for Lockheed Martin, [Raytheon](https://www.cnbc.com/quotes/?symbol=RTN), [Boeing](https://www.cnbc.com/quotes/?symbol=BA) and [General Dynamics](https://www.cnbc.com/quotes/?symbol=GD), and negligible for [Northrop Grumman](https://www.cnbc.com/quotes/?symbol=NOC). Here's a breakdown of what top defense firms are selling to Saudi Arabia and which contracts are at risk.

## AT: Emboldening Iran

#### [DL] Salicanan 18 of Al-Jazeera: Iran perceives Saudi’s relationship with the U.S. as a threat, which incentivizes themselves to proliferate in defense.

Stasa Salicanan, Al Jazeera Center for Studies, January 2018, http://studies.aljazeera.net/mritems/Documents/2018/1/22/435b5cc4bb214fa6a634f76e2b5cd96e100.pdf The Growing Arms Deals in the Gulf: Existential Need or Fear Politics?

Political and ideological rivalries among several ambitious players in the Gulf region perpetuate perceived fear and instability, and breed escalation. Geopolitical tensions between the two ‘heavyweights’, Iran and Saudi Arabia, and the new Gulf crisis have accentuated the region-wide arms build-up since mid-2017. This paper probes into how the perceptions of threats have solidified an endless pursuit of arms purchases. The Saudis seem to be countering Iran’s quest for regional dominance and have increased their arms expenditure. Similarly, **the Iranians remain sceptical about the Saudi-US alliance, which add to the decades-long perceived ‘threats’ against the Islamic Republic .** The complexity of historical rivalries and the dynamics of the new Gulf crisis have hindered the possibility of an alternative balance of power, much less a region free of instability. The civilian devastation in Yemen has provoked a moral dilemma in Europe for delivering arms to the Saudi-led Arab Alliance and indirectly fuelling war atrocities.

#### [DL] Babbin 18 of The Spectator: Iran would have no support from its citizens or Russia if it attacked Israel.

Jed Babbin 18 of American Spectator [Jed Babbin, 4-23-2018, American Spectator, "Why Iran Doesn’t Attack", (), accessed 2-1-2019, <a class="vglnk" href="https://spectator.org/why-iran-doesnt-attack/" rel="nofollow"><span>https</span><span>://</span><span>spectator</span><span>.</span><span>org</span><span>/</span><span>why</span><span>-</span><span>iran</span><span>-</span><span>doesnt</span><span>-</span><span>attack</span><span>/</span></a>] //AT

Second, the Iranians probably haven’t obtained Russian support for any attack on Israel. So far, Russia has turned a blind eye to Israeli attacks on Syrian-Iranian targets despite its alliance with Iran and Turkey to keep Assad in power. Though Russian consent won’t be a sine qua non of any counterattack, Israel’s relations with the Putin regime are generally good and Russia may be telling Iran to hold off on any action until Trump makes his decision on the Obama nuke deal, in which Russia has a great investment. Third, as MEMRI reports, it’s entirely unclear that Iran has any popular support for an attack on Israel which clearly would primarily be part of its adventurism in Syria. Credible reports of anti-regime demonstrations in Iran, based principally on its Syria campaign, are becoming public irregularly. All of this is not to say that a general war between Israel and Iran won’t erupt at any time. More likely are post-May Iranian counterattacks on Israeli military or civilian targets. Restraint will characterize any Israeli responding attacks unless Iran orders Hizballah to launch its rockets and missiles at Israeli civilians.

#### [DL] ACA 18: Historically, even when Iran had the intention to proliferate, they never did because they adhered to international law that presented their proliferation.

ACA [ACA, 5-2018, ACA, "Arms Control and Proliferation Profile: Iran", (), accessed 2-6-2019, https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/iranprofile] //AT

Iran is not a nuclear-weapons state and, though it has pursued a program to develop nuclear warheads in the past, has adhered to the terms of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) since adoption in October 2015, as verifid by all quarterly IAEA reports. Under the JCPOA, for well over a decade, it will take Iran 12 months to produce enough weapons-grade uranium for one bomb. The deal also bars Iran from selling conventional arms for five years from the start of implementation, though branches of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps continue to allegedly smuggle arms to Iranian proxies in Syria, Lebanon, and elsewhere. Iran’s active ballistic missile program is one of the largest deployed missile forces in the Middle East, with over 1,000 short- and intermediate-range ballistic missiles as well as a space-launch vehicle that could potentially be converted into an ICBM.

#### [DL] Lederer 18 of MilitaryTimes: Iran has explicitly stated that they do not want to escalate tensions or wage a war with the U.S.

Edith M. Lederer 18 of Military Times [Edith M. Lederer, 9-27-2018, Military Times, "Iran says it doesn’t want war with the US", (), accessed 2-1-2019, https://www.militarytimes.com/flashpoints/2018/09/27/iran-says-it-doesnt-want-war-with-the-us/] //AT

Rouhani said it was "quite strange, unprecedented and amazing" that while presiding over the Security Council as its president Trump also called on the 14 other council members to violate the legally binding resolution endorsing the JCPOA that the council adopted unanimously in 2015 — including a "yes" vote from the United States. He added that Trump not only disagreed with that resolution but said whoever implements it "will be punished." Responding to a question about whether the harsh language that Trump and his top official have used about Iran might lead to war, Rouhani said Iran since the 1979 revolution "has been subjected to that type of language many times." But he said Trump administration officials "speak with a different style, presumably because they're new to politics." As for war, Rouhani said, "We do not wish to go to war with American forces anywhere in the region. We do not wish to attack them. We do not wish to increase tensions — none of the above." "But we ask the United States of America to adhere to laws and respect national sovereignty of nations," he said. Rouhani also said "America must think again about her presence in the region, in the Persian Gulf, in the Sea of Oman, in Afghanistan, in Iraq and other places."

#### [DL] Faux 16 of The Nation: Iran is surrounded by both Israel and Pakistan, who both possess nuclear warheads that deter an Iranian attack, which is why Iran has empirically never carried out a threat.

Jeff Faux’s latest books are The Global Class War and The Servant Economy. ﻿ Why Is Iran Our Enemy? The Nation, 7/13/16, https://www.thenation.com/article/why-is-iran-our-enemy/

﻿Still, despite the inflammatory rhetoric of its leaders, Iran is by no stretch of the imagination a serious threat to the United States, Europe, its Arab neighbors, or Israel. At best, it is a third-rate military power with a dysfunctional economy who’s entire GDP is only a little over 60 percent of the US military budget. The supposedly terrified Israel has somewhere between 80 and 200 missiles with nuclear warheads that could send Iran back to the Stone Age in minutes. There is no evidence to suggest that even the most fanatical elements in the Iranian government are suicidal. ﻿ Pakistan, on Iran’s border, is similarly armed. The two other major powers in the region, Turkey and Egypt, are militarily superior to Iran. Even Saudi Arabia, with one-third of Iran’s population, has a bigger and better air force. Beyond its military weakness, Iran’s “soft power” appeal in the region is also limited. Neither its people nor their language is Arabic. And in a part of the world where religious sectarianism is taken very seriously, Iran’s brand of Islam is Shia, which represents less than 15 percent of the Muslims in the Middle East and North Africa. Like all sovereign states, Iran tries to influence events in its neighborhood. Given the lingering trauma of the war with Iraq, the Saudi/Sunni rivalry and the hostility of the US superpower, Tehran’s primary objective is stability on its western border. This means friendly governments in Iraq, which has a Shia majority, and in Syria, where despite a Sunni majority, the ruling class is Alawite, an offshoot of Shiism. Like all Islamic states, Iran supports the Palestinian cause against Israel. Here again, a sub-context is rivalry with Saudi Arabia. Iran was a major supporter of Hamas until recently, when the wealthier Saudis elbowed them out. It also remains the primary outside backer of Lebanon’s Hezbollah, although in recent years Iran’s economic troubles led to cutbacks in its financial support. In any event, there has been no significant fighting between Hezbollah and Israel in ten years, save for a few skirmishes when one or another’s soldiers get too close to the border. Coming from the US foreign-policy hawks whose Middle East interventions lit the fuse of civil war, religious fanaticism, and barbarism, the charge that Iran is the source of regional instability is absurd. It becomes more so when you consider that Iran is arguably the Middle Eastern country that is most unequivocally opposed to ISIS, Al Qaeda, the Taliban, and other militant Sunnis. Indeed, Iranian support for the Iraqi army and the affiliated Shia militias is now crucial to US success against ISIS, including the plan to recapture Mosul. As Vali Nasr, former adviser to Barack Obama and now dean of the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University, told The New York Times, “The only way in which the Obama administration can credibly stick with its strategy is by implicitly assuming that the Iranians will carry most of the weight and win the battles on the ground.” Moreover, while our supposed allies, the Saudis, were busy covering up their links to the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks, the Iranians granted the United States permission to fly to Afghanistan over their territory, agreed to help rescue downed American pilots, and provided assistance to the Northern Alliance—America’s military ally in the US invasion. All of which American officials have acknowledged. In return, George W. Bush, in his 2002 State of the Union speech, attacked Iran as part of an international “Axis of Evil,” helping to undermine those within Iran calling for a softening of relations. As Michael Axworthy, a former head of the Iran desk at the British Foreign Office, notes, “It reinforced the hardliners’ position on the US and the West—that they could not be trusted.” ﻿ This fear of the West is enormously useful to the Islamic reactionaries in their ongoing struggle to keep control of Iran’s future. The conservative Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, rules for life and commands the loyalty of the armed forces. But there is a sizable and growing popular movement in Iran for more liberal foreign—as well as domestic—policies, including more contact with the United States. Despite the obstacles to democracy, in 2013 the people elected a progressive reformer, Hassan Rouhani, as president, who, after a two-year struggle, led Khamenei to accept the nuclear agreement. Evidence of growing Westernization is widespread in Iran—in the shops and shopping malls, the billboards advertising appliances and cars, the cellphones and selfies, and especially in the visible pushback by women against the strict Islamic dress code. Social life is nowhere near as repressive as in the US-supported theocracies of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Oman, or Turkmenistan. Women in Iran drive cars, manage businesses, and are elected to public office. Between 20,000 and 30,000 Jews live in Iran—the largest Jewish population in the Middle East outside of Israel. There are some 60 synagogues, a Jewish Member of Parliament, and a memorial in Tehran to Jewish soldiers who served in the war with Iraq. Jews, like Christians and Zoroastrians, are allowed to practice their religion, but not to proselytize. It’s no liberal democracy, but hardly Nazi Germany—or Saudi Arabia. So, as the Iranian villager asked, why does our government hate them so much? ﻿ The only answer that makes sense is that it reflects the subordination of US policy in the Middle East to the interests of 1) the despotic dynasties that rule Saudi Arabia and the gulf sheikdoms; 2) the Israeli government, especially under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu; and 3) the American politicians, pundits, lobbyists, and national-security bureaucrats whose careers and bank accounts are enhanced by both. It is in the interests of all three to divert attention from the catastrophic consequences of our intervention in the region. How else can you explain the Bush and Obama administrations’ reluctance to confront the ruling classes of the gulf sheikdoms for their nurturing of ISIS and other terrorists groups inspired by the Saudis’ own Wahhabi fundamentalism? Only when ISIS threatened the Saudis themselves did their support for the Islamic State cease, although it continues to flow to the principal Al Qaeda affiliate in Syria. And how else can we explain the US supply of weapons (including cluster bombs) and aerial intelligence to the Gulf States’ intervention against the Houthi Shias in Yemen, while letting them go AWOL in the war against the Sunni ISIS? ﻿ For Netanyahu, Iran provides the monster needed to rationalize and divert attention from his own disastrous and brutal policies in the West Bank and Gaza. During the 1980s, the monster was Iraq under Saddam Hussein. After Saddam’s regime was destroyed and Iraq was occupied by the United States, an alleged genocidal and irrational Iran became the principal horror narrative of the Israeli right wing, a line promptly echoed by the US policy class. To Barack Obama’s credit, he was willing to push through the snake pit of divided Washington loyalties to achieve the nuclear deal—far more important to our national security than isolating Iran. To complete the deal he must also make sure that the United States lives up to its promise that it will not punish international bankers who provide capital for urgently needed economic development projects in Iran. A growing economy should in turn reinforce the still fragile shoots of liberal democracy sprouting in that ancient land. It will of course take time to erode the mutual mistrust between the governing classes of the two countries. But for ordinary Americans, understanding that Iran is not our existential enemy should help us to answer the larger question of exactly what we are doing in the Middle East.

#### [NU] Nuclear Threat Initiative 19: Iran is trying to develop a sophisticated and domestic ballistic missile system program.

Nuclear Threat Initiative 19 [NTI, 1-2019, "Iran Nuclear, Biological, Chemical, and Missile Weapons Programs", (), accessed 2-6-2019, https://www.nti.org/learn/countries/iran/] //AT

Following the Iran-Iraq war, Iran committed itself to the development of one of the most sophisticated [ballistic missile](https://www.nti.org/learn/glossary/ballistic-missile/) programs in the Middle East. Iran has pursued a dual-track strategy, developing both liquid and solid-fueled systems. [13] While Iran's program was initially dependent on foreign technical assistance, particularly from [North Korea](https://www.nti.org/country-profiles/north-korea/), Iran now likely has the indigenous capacity to develop, test, and build ballistic missiles. [14] Iran's first ballistic missiles were Soviet [Scud](https://www.nti.org/learn/glossary/scud/)-B and Scud-C models acquired from North Korea (renamed Shahab-1 and [Shahab-2](http://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/iranian-ballistic-missile-models/#shahab2)). [15] In 2003, Tehran deployed a medium-range ballistic missile (MRBM), the [Shahab-3](http://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/iranian-ballistic-missile-models/#shahab3), which is a derivative of North Korea's Nodong missile. [16] Since 2004, Iran has test-fired numerous variants of the Shahab-3, which were designed to increase its range, payload, and accuracy, including the [Ghadr-1](http://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/iranian-ballistic-missile-models/#Ghadr1)and the [Emad](http://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/iranian-ballistic-missile-models/#Emad). [17] In 2008, Iran successfully tested the [Sejjil](http://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/iranian-ballistic-missile-models/#sejil2), a two-stage, solid fueled MRBM. [18] Visit the [CNS Iran Missile and SLV Launch Database](http://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/cns-iran-missile-and-slv-launch-database/) for a comprehensive visualization of all known Iranian missile launches since the Iran-Iraq War. In addition to its missile program, Iran possesses a space launch capability. Iran has successfully launched several satellites aboard its [space launch vehicle (SLV)](https://www.nti.org/learn/glossary/space-launch-vehicle-slv/) the [Safir](http://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/iranian-ballistic-missile-models/#safir), with reports of an attempted launch from the new [Simorgh](http://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/iranian-ballistic-missile-models/#simorgh) SLV. Many have expressed concern over the dual- use capabilities of these systems and their potential application for [intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs)](https://www.nti.org/learn/glossary/intercontinental-ballistic-missile-icbm/). [19] Iran is not a member of the [Missile Technology Control Regime](https://www.nti.org/learn/glossary/missile-technology-control-regime/) or the [Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation](http://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/hague-code-conduct-against-ballistic-missile-proliferation-hcoc/). In 2015, to support implementation of the JCPOA, the UN Security Council adopted [Resolution 2231](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2231(2015)), which called on Iran "not to undertake any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons." [20] The U.S., U.K., France, and Germany have claimed that Iran's subsequent ballistic missile tests were "inconsistent with" and "in defiance of" UNSCR 2231, with the U.S. imposing sanctions on Iran in response to its ballistic missile tests, most recently in 2017. [21]

## AT: Leverage

#### [LT] If we keep on threatening to end arms sales, it will eventually be like the boy who cried wolf – Saudi Arabia will eventually realize that we’re all bark and no bite.

#### [LT] Ending arms sales now proves that we can actually utilize our leverage instead of always just using bluster, so down the road we can be more credible.

#### [DL] Gould 18 of DefenseNews: Trump opposes stopping arms sales.

Joe Gould 18 of Defense News [Joe Gould, 10-15-2018, Defense News, "Trump doubles down: He’s not stopping Saudi arms sales", (), accessed 2-15-2019, https://www.defensenews.com/congress/2018/10/11/trump-doubles-down-hes-not-stopping-saudi-arms-sales/] //AT

WASHINGTON — U.S. President Donald Trump signaled for the [second time in 24 hours](https://www.defensenews.com/congress/2018/10/11/trump-warns-halting-saudi-arms-sales-would-hurt-economy/) he would oppose stopping arms sales to Saudi Arabia even if its government was found to have murdered a Saudi journalist. Trump said Thursday morning he wants answers amid reports the Saudi government is to blame in the disappearance of Jamal Khashoggi, an outspoken critic of the Saudi government and its de facto leader, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. But Trump said he wants to avoid a move that would send Riyadh to the U.S. defense industry’s competitors overseas.

#### [DL] Larison 18 of American Conservative: The U.S. has never used its leverage of arms sales to end Yemen.

Daniel Larison 18 of American Conservative [Daniel Larison, 9-4-2018, American Conservative, "It Is Time to End U.S. Involvement in the War on Yemen", (), accessed 2-14-2019, https://www.theamericanconservative.com/larison/it-is-time-to-end-u-s-involvement-in-the-war-on-yemen/] //AT

The Spanish government’s decision is a welcome one, and it shows that Western governments can and must stop supporting Saudi Arabia while it wages a pitiless and unnecessary war against its poor neighbor. The U.S. should follow the example of the European allies that have rightly chosen to stop fueling the war on Yemen. The U.S. is a much larger arms supplier to the Saudis, and so it has far more leverage than other states, but to date our government has refused to exercise the considerable leverage it has to halt the coalition’s bombing campaign. Sen. Rand Paul calls for doing just that in a recent [op-ed](http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/404996-situation-in-yemen-should-lead-us-to-return-to-a):

## AT: Saudi Goes to Alternatives

#### [DL] Caverley 18 of NYT: The U.S. accounts for over 60% of Saudi Arabia’s weapons imports, and alternatives would cost a fortune and take years of retraining, consequently hampering its military.

Jonathan D. C**averley** is an associate professor at the United States Naval War College and a research scientist at M.I.T.**October 12**, 2018, Want to Punish Saudi Arabia? Cut Off Its Weapons Supply, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/12/opinion/saudi-arabia-arms-sales.html

Perhaps selling weapons “strengthens international partnerships,” as Mr. Navarro put it, or at least discourages Saudi Arabia from finding different ones. Mr. Trump on Thursday cited “four or five alternatives” to American weapons, and the need to avoid “letting Russia have that money and letting China have that money.” This, however, is unlikely even in the long term. **Saudi Arabia is in the middle of a major war, and more than 60 percent of its arms deliveries over the past five years came from the United States. The Saudi military relies not just on American tanks, planes and missiles but for a daily supply of maintenance, training and support, such as intelligence and refueling. In the longer term, almost all of Saudi Arabia’s remaining exports come from Europe. To truly squeeze Saudi Arabia, a coordinated embargo — much like the one now in place against Russia — would be necessary but relatively easy. European governments already feel strong domestic political pressure not to export to regimes like Saudi Arabia.** **Transforming the Saudi military to employ Russian, much less Chinese, weapons would cost a fortune even by Gulf standards, would require years of retraining and would greatly reduce its military power for a generation. Russia cannot produce next-generation fighter aircraft, tanks and infantry fighting vehicles for its own armed forces, much less for the export market. China has not produced, never mind exported, the sophisticated aircraft and missile defense systems Saudi Arabia wants**. Last month, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo certified that Saudi Arabia was minimizing civilian casualties in the Yemen air campaign apparently to avoid jeopardizing $2 billion in weapons sales. That small number does not show how powerful the Saudis are so much as how cheaply the United States can be bought. Given these sales’ low domestic economic impact and the enormous costs of going elsewhere for Saudi Arabia, the United States has the preponderance of influence in this arms trade relationship. It should act accordingly.

#### [DL] French 18 of The National Review: The Saudi military is highly dependent on advanced U.S. technology, which is why nearly every single one of Saudi’s planes and tanks are from the U.S. If the U.S. were to suspend these sales, Saudi would be forced to suffer a huge military setback.

David French 18 of National Review [David French, 10-18-2018, National Review, "Arms Deals Give Leverage to America, Not the Saudis", (), accessed 1-29-2019, https://www.nationalreview.com/corner/arms-deals-give-america-leverage-not-the-saudis/] //AT

Of all the talking points justifying American inaction in response to the indescribably brutal murder of Jamal Khashoggi, perhaps the worst is the idea that the Saudis somehow have leverage over America because of their large-scale arms deals. The truth is exactly the reverse. The Saudi military is highly dependent on advanced American weaponry. American F-15s comprise close to half the Saudi fighter force, and the Saudi variant of the F-15E Strike Eagle represents a substantial portion of the air force’s striking power. On land, the Saudi army is dependent almost exclusively on American M1 Abrams tanks and Bradley infantry fighting vehicles. They can’t just waltz over to a different country and transform their armed forces — not without suffering enormous setbacks in readiness and effectiveness during a years-long transition. A fundamental reality of arms deals is that a major arms purchase essentially locks the purchasing nation in a dependent posture for training, spare parts, and technical upgrades. Indeed, one of the reasons for engaging in an arms transaction — aside from the economic benefit — is that the transaction gives America enormous power over the national defense of the purchasing nation. You buy our weapons, and we gain power over you. Well, we gain potential power. The question is whether we have the will to exercise that power. Moreover, Trump’s claim that the Saudis could simply go to China or Russia betrays an odd ignorance about Chinese and Russian arms. Many of their most advanced weapons aren’t quite ready for prime time. If the Saudis are terrified of Iran, purchasing worse weapons that would require new training cycles, new spare parts, and new technical relationships is a terrible option. It’s a recipe for a serious military setback. For example — [as Washington Post columnist Josh Rogin observes](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/josh-rogin/wp/2018/10/16/trump-has-it-totally-and-completely-backwards-on-saudi-arms-sales/?utm_term=.dc3847cee780) — the State Department just approved the sale of Terminal High Altitude Air Defense missile-defense system to the Saudis. The Saudis are rightfully concerned about Iranian missile attack. Is it the position of the Trump administration that the Saudis have leverage over us if they cancel that deal and seek an inferiormissile-defense system from a competing country? As Rogin says, Trump’s thinking is “totally and completely backwards.” Buying a weapons platform is not like choosing between a Honda Accord and a Toyota Camry — where if one dealer ticks you off, you can just walk across the street and immediately get a substantially similar product. Trump is displaying his ignorance here, and his surrogates on television (many of whom know better) are exploiting understandable civic ignorance to push the administration’s line. We can’t expect Americans to know exactly how arms deals work or how F-15s are serviced and upgraded. But we should expect the president to understand these realities. For all the president’s bluster, he’s demonstrating a surprising timidity in the face of an undeniable provocation from one of our more mendacious “allies.” We hold the cards in this alliance, and it’s time — for once — to stand up to a repressive and brutal regime, even if we do have a common Iranian foe. The world’s strongest nation, with the world’s largest economy, needs Saudi Arabia far less than they need us. End support for the brutal Saudi bombing campaign in Yemen. Impose conditions on continued American military cooperation with Saudi Arabia. It’s time for the junior partner in this alliance to finally learn its place.

### AT: Europe

#### [DL] Dewan 18 of CNN: European countries like the U.K. and France have halved their arms sales, while countries like Denmark, Finland, and Germany, completely suspended their sales to Saudi Arabia, which consequently increases Saudi’s reliance on the U.S.

Dewan 18 of CNN [Angela Dewan, 11-23-2018, CNN, "These are the countries still selling arms to Saudi Arabia", (), accessed 1-29-2019, https://www.cnn.com/2018/11/22/middleeast/arms-exports-saudi-arabia-intl/index.html] //AT

A number of countries have restricted arms sales to Saudi Arabia since the kingdom began airstrikes on Yemen in 2015, in a war that the UN describes as [the world's worst man-made humanitarian disaster.](http://www.cnn.com/2018/11/21/politics/mattis-yemen-peace-talks/index.html) [Calls for more restrictions on arms exports have been growing](http://www.cnn.com/2018/11/19/middleeast/khashoggi-yemen-saudi-arabia-analysis-intl/index.html), particularly in Europe, since the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Turkey last month. US President Donald Trump, however, has [repeatedly pointed to the US' lucrative arms deals](http://www.cnn.com/2018/11/20/politics/trump-saudi-arabia/index.html) with the Saudis as a reason to stand by the kingdom. Denmark and Finland on Thursday became the latest countries to suspend new arms deals with Saudi Arabia. Denmark's Foreign Ministry said it was freezing new deals over both Khashoggi and Yemen, while the Finnish Foreign Ministry mentioned only Yemen. Finland also banned new arms sales to the United Arab Emirates, which is part of the Saudi-led coalition in the conflict. Their announcements came just two days after Germany said it was stopping all arms transfers to the kingdom. Denmark and Finland are not major suppliers of weapons to Saudi Arabia, but Germany certainly is. It had already suspended new arms deals to Saudi Arabia, but on Monday it widened that ban to include the transfers of weapons on existing orders as well. So where is Saudi Arabia getting its weapons from? Arms deals are often done in secret or with little publicity. The [Stockholm International Peace Research Institute](https://www.sipri.org/) (SIPRI) tries to track deals involving major weapons, and a database of Saudi imports from the last decade shows the United States as the biggest supplier, followed by the United Kingdom, France, Spain and then Germany. But a lot of exporters still selling to the Saudis have dramatically decreased their supply in recent years. The United Kingdom, for example, transferred arms worth an estimated $843 million in 2016 but almost halved that value to $436 million last year, according to SIPRI. (The database uses values constant with 1990 prices to eliminate currency fluctuations and inflation.) French exports of major weapons to Saudi Arabia were worth $174 million in 2015 but dropped to $91 million in 2016 and $27 million last year. The value of Spanish exports also dramatically decreased in that time period, but the Spanish government confirmed this year it would go ahead with arms deals it had previously suggested it would freeze, bowing to pressure from Spanish manufacturers, [according to reports.](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/sep/13/spain-saudi-arabia-proceed-bomb-deal-yemen-concerns) Despite these decreases, the overall value of Saudi weapons imports actually increased by 38% between 2016 and 2017. That was almost entirely because of a huge uptick in transfers from the United States, which almost doubled its exports in terms of value from $1.8 billion to $3.4 billion in that time. Germany also multiplied its exports from $14 million to $105 million, although it is expected to be much lower this year following its suspension.

### AT: Russia

#### [DL] Dewan 18 of CNN: Russia has had generally unsuccessful arms deals with Saudi Arabia with limited sales in rifles and other negligible items.

Dewan 18 of CNN [Angela Dewan, 11-23-2018, CNN, "These are the countries still selling arms to Saudi Arabia", (), accessed 1-29-2019, https://www.cnn.com/2018/11/22/middleeast/arms-exports-saudi-arabia-intl/index.html] //AT

"Russia has tried hard in the past 10 to 15 years to get into the large Saudi arms market, but it has not been very successful. Saudi Arabia has acquired Russian rifles and may have bought some other items, but such deals have been very small," said Pieter Wezeman, a senior researcher with SIPRI's arms transfers and military expenditure program.

#### [DL] Foreign Policy 18: Russia is allies with Iran, who is fighting Saudi Arabia in the proxy war.

Dina Esfandiary, Ariane Tabatabai 18 of Foreign Policy [Dina Esfandiary, Ariane Tabatabai, 5-13-2018, Foreign Policy, "Moscow and Beijing Have Tehran's Back", (), accessed 1-30-2019, https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/07/25/moscow-and-beijing-have-tehrans-back/] //AT

In the last several years, Russia has played an important role in the development of Iran’s nuclear and aerospace industries, with its involvement in the construction of the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant and the sale of airplanes and their parts. And it increasingly supports Iranian regional activities in the Middle East and South Asia, most notably by fighting alongside Iran and the Bashar al-Assad regime to push back the opposition in Syria and by allegedly supporting Taliban groups in Afghanistan to defeat the Islamic State offshoot there. China’s energy dependence and Belt and Road Initiative have made Iran an increasingly attractive partner. Beijing remains involved in building up Iran’s infrastructure, including electricity, dams, cement plants, steel mills, shipbuilding, motorways, and airports. Defense cooperation, including arms and technology trade and joint military drills, has become an increasingly significant part of Iran’s relationship with both countries, with China in the Persian Gulf and Russia in the Caspian Sea. The 2015 Iran nuclear deal made the pursuit of joint initiatives easier for Russia and China—but the likely collapse of the deal won’t be a disaster for them. Both countries have a longstanding presence in the Iranian market and understand how to navigate it. Both are searching for ways to insulate their state and local banks from the U.S. market and third-party U.S. sanctions.

### AT: China

#### [DL] Zheng 18 of SCMP: China’s weapons are an extremely small portion Saudi’s imports, China’s military technology is significantly worse than the U.S.’ and China does not even want to sell arms to Saudi Arabia in the first place because they do not want to increase tensions with the U.S.

Zheng 18 of SCMP [Sarah Zheng, 10-22-2018, South China Morning Post, "Trump fears China could replace US in arms sales to Saudi. He shouldn’t", (), accessed 1-29-2019, https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/2168849/china-may-seek-boost-ties-saudi-arabia-it-cant-fill-us-arms] //AT

But in the military realm, China’s arms exports to Saudi Arabia lag far behind those of the US and its European allies. Beijing exported only around US$20 million in arms last year compared to US$3.4 billion from Washington, according to data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, a Swedish think tank. Jonathan Fulton, assistant professor of political science at Zayed University in Abu Dhabi, said China had grown more serious in its regional arms relationships with Gulf states in recent years, with the potential to serve as a “wedge” as US-Saudi relations frayed. Along with Riyadh’s previous indications that it was willing to consider funding in yuan, increased arms sales would be a “natural progression” of their relationship, he said. “Part of the reason why [Saudi Arabia] is diversifying is there’s been so many kinds of structural changes in the relationship with the US,” Fulton said. “Another important part is just obviously the commercial relationship and economic relationship between these Gulf states and China, with these energy exports. We’re seeing a lot more engagement both ways.” But as evidence piles up that Saudi Arabia ordered Khashoggi’s assassination, which the government denies, the backlash is getting louder. A bipartisan group of US senators have pressured Trump to enact sanctions and key corporate sponsors have pulled out of the high-profile “Davos in the Desert” investment forum to be held in Riyadh this month. “I would expect to see some kind of … Saudi-led way to ease the tensions between the US and Riyadh because I don’t think they can afford to let the US relationship deteriorate,” Fulton said. Simone van Nieuwenhuizen, an Australia-based researcher of China-Middle East relations at the University of Technology Sydney, said China would be “extremely unlikely” to follow US sanctions if they were levelled against Saudi Arabia, but may not necessarily increase trade with the country either. “I think China is likely to keep a low profile on this issue and see how it plays out before directly addressing it,” she said. “While its technology is developing, China still lags behind the US in the sophistication and capability of its military equipment. It simply can’t fill the gap.” Robert Mason, director of the Middle East Studies Centre at the American University in Cairo, said China would not want to get involved at this stage to avoid further tensions with the Trump administration. “I’m sure China will be interested to expand relations if and when US-Saudi ties deteriorate. However, Saudi policy looks set to shift to admitting to the accidental killing of Jamal Khashoggi inside its consulate in Istanbul, and I’m sure they will try to de-escalate during Secretary Pompeo’s visit,” he said. “It is unlikely the US will change a decades-old policy favouring close economic and security ties with the Kingdom, including considerable counterterrorism cooperation and the containment of Iran, over this one incident.” Sun Degang, a Middle East expert at Shanghai International Studies University, said that if the US and Saudi Arabia were to part ways, it would be possible for China to develop deeper economies ties with the Arab nation, including using the yuan to trade oil. “But from what we see now, US-Saudi tensions have remained at a diplomatic level and haven’t deteriorated at a fundamental level,” he said.

#### [DL] Ramani 17 of The Diplomat: Historically, China has a defense partnership with Iran and seeks stronger alliances with it.

Samuel Ramani, The Diplomat 17 of Diplomat [Samuel Ramani, The Diplomat, 3-17-2017, Diplomat, "The Risks of the China-Saudi Arabia Partnership", (), accessed 2-1-2019, https://thediplomat.com/2018/02/the-risks-of-the-china-saudi-arabia-partnership/] //AT

As U.S.-Saudi Arabia relations have improved considerably under Donald Trump, the need for Saudi Arabia to purchase arms from China will likely decrease in the years to come. As Qatar has been able to covertly purchase Chinese SY-400 missiles with little U.S. scrutiny, and China has a long-standing defense partnership with Iran, the Chinese government is likely to forge stronger defense links with Saudi Arabia’s chief rivals, straining the Beijing-Riyadh partnership.

### AT: Domestic

#### [DL] Stratfor 18: Saudi Arabia is struggling with implementation of a domestic industry, as its defense companies lack logistical ability and it also fails to find skilled workers.

Stratfor 18 [Stratfor, 11-9-2018, Stratfor, "Saudi Arabia Lays the Foundation for a Defense Industry of Its Own", (), accessed 1-29-2019, https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/saudi-arabia-defense-industry-weapons-imports-vision2030] //AT

While Saudi Arabia has certainly laid the groundwork for its defense industry and has made some early progress in developing it, guiding the sector to maturity will be no simple matter. It is one thing to agree on paper to significant technology transfers and local job creation, but it is another to effectively implement such deals. Struggles by defense companies to satisfy stipulations within pending agreements that mandate local sourcing of services and raw materials have led to contract delays. It has also proved particularly difficult for defense companies with well-established and staffed manufacturing plants in the United States and Europe to set up assembly lines in Saudi Arabia, despite the relative simplicity of assembly compared with full manufacturing. A particular problem those companies have run into has been in finding a sufficient number of Saudis who have both the necessary technical skills and the willingness to work on a factory floor. The shortcomings of the Saudi educational system have forced defense companies to conduct their own staff training, causing delays and adding costs. In fact, the choice of who would lead SAMI provides an illustrative point of the larger issue. Taking the helm as CEO of the state-owned defense company was not a Saudi, but rather Andreas Schwer, a German citizen and former head of combat systems at Rheinmetall AG.

## AT: Saudi Loses Yemen

#### [DL] DePetris 18 of National Interest: Saudi’s war efforts have utterly failed in the past three years with no significant progress, but instead turning Yemen into a blood-torn war zone.

Daniel R. 18 of National Interest [Daniel R., 12-6-2018, National Interest, "Three Ways to Rethink the U.S.-Saudi Arabian Alliance", (), accessed 1-31-2019, <a class="vglnk" href=<https://nationalinterest.org/feature/three-ways-rethink-us-saudi-arabian-alliance-38052>] //AT

For instance, Riyadh’s three and a half year air campaign in Yemen has failed in its primary military objective of pushing the Houthis out of the Yemeni capital and back into the northern highlands. Instead, Saudi (and Emirati) bombing has transformed Yemen into hell on earth, where small children die of disease and starvation every day, weddings are turned into funerals, food is enormously expensive, and the country’s economy is insolvent. The Saudi-led political isolation and economic blockade of Qatar, meant to force Doha to sever relations with Iran, has only solidified ties between both. The kidnapping and forced resignation of the Lebanese prime minister earlier in the year—later taken back upon his release under French pressure—was an international embarrassment, giving further proof to MbS’s highly impulsive decision-making. Finally, there is now the state-sanctioned murder of a permanent American resident and journalist, apparently on the orders of the Crown Prince. This has exposed the Saudi government’s true nature to the world: that of an authoritarian system run by fear of dissent, self-interest, and paranoia.

#### [DL] Murphy 15 of Christian Science Monitor: The Houthis only want political representation and autonomy in Yemen.

Murphy 15 of CSM [Dan Murphy, 2-8-2015, Christian Science Monitor, "Yemen Briefing: Who are the Houthis, and what do they want?", (), accessed 2-6-2019, https://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2015/0208/Yemen-Briefing-Who-are-the-Houthis-and-what-do-they-want] //AT

The Houthi clan hails from Saada Province in the north, where the country’s Zaydi Shiite community, about 30 percent of Yemen’s 24 million people, are concentrated. The Houthi movement was founded in the early 1990s by Hussein al-Houthi, a respected cleric and tribal leader. Initially it was a peaceful Shiite revivalist movement, but as it evolved and pressed for more national political power and autonomy. In Saada, open conflict with the central government became inevitable. In 2004, Mr. Houthi was killed by government forces in Saada, sparking an open insurrection from the now fully militant movement. His youngest brother, Abdul Malik al-Houthi, is now the group’s leader. The Houthis’ have received some support in recent years from Iran, and their slogan, “Death to America, Death to Israel, Curse the Jews and Long Live Islam,” isn’t exactly reassuring. Saudi Arabia despises and fears them as a Shiite movement on its border. But they are also staunch enemies of Al Qaeda, and have vowed to wipe out the group on their own. Their political aspirations don’t appear to extend beyond Yemen itself, with their desires boiling down to maximum autonomy in Shiite-majority areas, and as much national influence as their strength of arms can secure.

## AT: Proliferation

### AT: Saudi Arabia

#### [DL] Cordesman 18 of of The Hill: The U.S. presence in the region has created a balance of forces that firmly deters Iran.

Cordesman 18 of The Hill [Anthony Cordesman, 3-21-2018, The Hill, "Saudi Arabia is a critical American security partner in the Middle East", (), accessed 2-14-2019, https://thehill.com/opinion/international/379542-saudi-arabia-is-a-critical-american-security-partner-in-the-middle-east?fbclid=IwAR3FTVManGPPooQUW55V4h0MOAUuzYscQEVUIFEOSSBH6G19nvh1fACepcs] //AT

It is certainly true that Saudi Arabia needs the United States as much or more than the United States needs Saudi Arabia. Saudi military forces are steadily improving, but it is the U.S. presence in the region that create a balance of forces that firmly deters Iran and has helped Saudi Arabia defeat its own terrorist threats from groups like Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. U.S. arms shipments, advisory efforts and exercises also play a critical role in improving Saudi forces. But the United States needs Saudi Arabia as well. Saudi Arabia is now the most critical single security partner in ensuring the stable flow of petroleum out of the Gulf region. While the United States is largely eliminating its need for direct petroleum imports, it is steadily increasing its dependence on the health and growth of the global economy and imports from Asian states like China, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, which are critically dependent on Gulf petroleum exports. The end result is that U.S. strategic interests in the region continue to increase in spite of the steady cut in U.S. direct oil imports. This is why focusing on more U.S. arms sales to Saudi Arabia and Saudi investment in the United States, ignoring the growing role Saudi Arabia has played in fight terrorism since 2003, down playing the need to cooperate in checking Iran, and treating the war in Yemen as is if Saudi Arabia does not face real threats is not the way the United States should deal with Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman’s visit to the White House. Saudi Arabia’s reform and economic development plans are critical to its stability and the region’s security. The kingdom needs U.S. encouragement and an understanding that Saudi Arabia cannot implement these plans effectively without outside support. The burden sharing argument has become absurd. Saudi Arabia cannot be treated as a source of ready money every time the United States has a need. It is already spending more than 10 percent of its economy on security, which is three times the economic burden security places on the United States. This spending is too high given the kingdom’s other needs, and the United States should be focusing on better ways to make its security partnerships with Saudi Arabia, as well as the other Gulf states and Jordan more efficient and less costly, not simply on spending more. At the same time, Iran is all too real a threat. Effective joint action in dealing with Iran’s nuclear programs, its ballistic and cruise missile programs, its asymmetric threats to Gulf shipping, and expending military influence in the region are all critical common U.S. and Saudi priorities.

#### [DL] Marshall 18 of HuffingtonPost: Saudi Arabia never intends to proliferate, they only threaten to draw attention from the U.S.

Marshall, Jonathan. “Saudi Arabia’s Nuclear Threats Are Bluster.” Huffington Post. May 19, 2016. Web. December 08, 2018.

Bleek observes that the very frequency of leaks about Saudi Arabia’s nuclear intentions weighs against the seriousness of that threat: “History suggests that while some states have trumpeted their potential desire for nuclear weapons — think Germany in the early years of the Cold War, or Japan more recently — they tend not to be those that later went on to actually acquire them. And for good reason: calling attention to proliferation intentions is counterproductive if one is intent on actually proliferating. Instead, states tend to draw attention to their potential proliferation in the service of another goal: rallying others to address the security concerns that are motivating potential proliferation, and especially securing protection from powerful allies.” Saudi Arabia’s latest nuclear leaks may be having their intended effect of bolstering the Arab monarchy’s bargaining leverage with Washington. Although President Obama stopped short of promising a formal military alliance at the recent summit with members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, he reaffirmed America’s “ironclad commitment to the security of our gulf partners,” and promised more wide-ranging military aid, including creation of “an early-warning capability for a regional missile defense system.” The Obama administration should stop making such concessions in the face of dubious Saudi proliferation warnings. It should simply stick to its course of seeking a comprehensive nuclear agreement with Iran. Such an agreement remains the best guarantee of Saudi Arabia’s long-term security. And in the short term, the Saudis have no legitimate reason to fear Iran’s nuclear program, which is one of the most closely inspected on Earth.

#### [DL] Zakria 15 of Washington Post: Saudi Arabia does not have the technological abilities to build a nuke.

**Zakari 6-11-15 (Fareed Zakria writing for The Washington Post “Why Saudi Araabia can’t get a nuclear weapon”**[**https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/saudi-arabias-nuclear-bluff/2015/06/11/9ce1f4f8-1074-11e5-9726-49d6fa26a8c6\_story.html**](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/saudi-arabias-nuclear-bluff/2015/06/11/9ce1f4f8-1074-11e5-9726-49d6fa26a8c6_story.html)**June 11, 2015, Accessed 7/17/15, LC)**

Of the many unnerving aspects of the future of the Middle East, a nuclear arms race would top the list. And to feed that unease, Saudi Arabia has been periodically dropping hints that, should Iran’s nuclear ambitions go unchecked, it might just have to get nuclear weapons itself. This week, the Saudi ambassador to London made yet another explicit threat, warning that “all options will be on the table.”¶ Oh, please! Saudi Arabia isn’t going to build a nuclear weapon. Saudi Arabia can’t build a nuclear weapon. Saudi Arabia hasn’t even built a car. (By 2017, after much effort, the country is expected to manufacture its first automobile.)¶ Saudi Arabia can dig holes in the ground and pump out oil but little else. Oil revenue is about 45 percent of its gross domestic product, a staggeringly high figure, much larger than petro-states such as Nigeria and Venezuela. It makes up almost 90 percent of the Saudi government’s revenue. Despite decades of massive government investment, lavish subsidies and cheap energy, manufacturing is less than 10 percent of Saudi GDP.¶ Where would Saudi Arabia train the scientists to work on its secret program? The country’s education system is backward and dysfunctional, having been largely handed over to its puritanical and reactionary religious establishment. The country ranks 73rd in the quality of its math and science education, according to the World Economic Forum — abysmally low for a rich country. Iran, despite 36 years of sanctions and a much lower per capita GDP, fares far better at 44.¶ And who would work in Saudi Arabia’s imagined nuclear industry? In a penetrating book, Karen Elliott House, formerly of the Wall Street Journal, describes the Saudi labor market: “One of every three people in Saudi Arabia is a foreigner. Two out of every three people with a job of any sort are foreign. And in Saudi Arabia’s anemic private sector, fully nine out of ten people holding jobs are non-Saudi. . . . Saudi Arabia, in short, is a society in which all too many men do not want to work at jobs for which they are qualified; in which women by and large aren’t allowed to work; and in which, as a result, most of the work is done by foreigners.”¶ None of this is to suggest that the kingdom is in danger of collapse. Far from it. The regime’s finances are strong, though public spending keeps rising and oil revenue has been declining. The royal family has deftly used patronage, politics, religion and repression to keep the country stable and quiescent. But that has produced a system of stagnation for most, with a gilded elite surfing on top with almost unimaginable sums of money.¶ Saudi Arabia’s increased assertiveness has been portrayed as strategic. In fact, it is a panicked and emotional response to Iran, fueled in no small measure by long-standing anti-Shiite bigotry. It is pique masquerading as strategy. In October 2013, after having spent years and millions of dollars campaigning for a seat on the U.N. Security Council, it abruptly declined the post at the last minute, signaling that it was annoyed at U.S. policy in its region.¶ Its most recent international activism, the air campaign in Yemen, has badly backfired. Bruce Riedel, a former top White House aide, says that damage to civilians and physical infrastructure “has created considerable bad blood between Yemenis and their rich Gulf neighbors that will poison relations for years. Yemenis always resented their rich brothers, and now many will want revenge.” He notes that the air campaign is being directed by the new defense minister, the king’s 29-year-old son, who has no experience in military affairs or much else.¶ But couldn’t Saudi Arabia simply buy a nuclear bomb? That’s highly unlikely. Any such effort would have to take place secretly, under the threat of sanctions, Western retaliation and interception. Saudi Arabia depends heavily on foreigners and their firms to help with its energy industry, build its infrastructure, buy its oil and sell it goods and services. Were it isolated like Iran or North Korea, its economic system would collapse.¶ It is often claimed that Pakistan would sell nukes to the Saudis. And it’s true that the Saudis have bailed out Pakistan many times. But the government in Islamabad is well aware that such a deal could make it a pariah and result in sanctions. It is unlikely to risk that, even to please its sugar daddy in Riyadh. In April, Pakistan refused repeated Saudi pleas to join the air campaign in Yemen.¶ So let me make a prediction: Whatever happens with Iran’s nuclear program, 10 years from now Saudi Arabia won’t have nuclear weapons. Because it can’t.

#### [DL] Young 18 of Carnegie: Saudi Arabia is a party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty and they risk international isolation if they violate it.

Hussain 18 of Carnegie Middle East Center [Hussain, 3-8-2018, Carnegie Middle East Center, "Does Saudi Arabia Intend to Develop a Nuclear Weapons Capability?", (), accessed 2-3-2019, https://carnegie-mec.org/diwan/75723] //AT

Speculation about Saudi Arabia’s possible desire to acquire or develop nuclear weapons has arisen periodically since 1988, when the Saudis secretly acquired nuclear-capable Chinese missiles. Now that Saudi Arabia is pressing ahead with its plans to build civilian nuclear power plants, the speculation has predictably intensified. In reality, Saudi Arabia is highly unlikely to seek nuclear weapons, no matter what becomes of Iran’s nuclear program, because the negative consequences of doing so would far outweigh any conceivable strategic gain. The kingdom, a signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, has tied its future to full integration with the global economic and industrial system. It cannot afford the international ostracism that nuclear proliferation would bring.

### AT: Iran

#### [DL] Waltz 12 of USAToday: When Israel proliferated in the 1960s and was at war with many of its neighbors, Iran didn’t proliferate.

**Waltz 12 (**Kenneth Waltz, Column: Iranian Nukes? No Worries, USA today news, June 17, 2012, t **dating to 1945. History shows that when countries acquire the bomb, they feel increasingly vulnerable and become acutely aware that their nuclear weapons make them a potential target in the eyes of major powers**. This awareness discourages nuclear states from bold and aggressive action. Maoist China, for example, became much less bellicose after acquiring nuclear weapons in 1964, and India and Pakistan have both become more cautious since going nuclear.¶ Drop the sanctions¶ **Another oft-touted worry is that if Iran obtains the bomb, other states in the region will follow suit, leading to a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. But the nuclear age is now almost 70 years old, and fears of proliferation have proved to be unfounded. When Israel acquired the bomb in the 1960s, it was at war with many of its neighbors. If an atomic Israel did not trigger an arms race then, there is no reason a nuclear Iran should now.**¶ For these reasons, the U.S. and its allies need not take such pains to prevent the Iranians from developing a nuclear weapon. **Diplomacy should continue because open lines of communication will make the Western countries feel better able to live with a nuclear Iran. But the sanctions on Iran can be dropped:** They primarily harm ordinary Iranians, with little purpose.¶ Most important, policymakers and citizens worldwide should take comfort from the fact that where nuclear capabilities have emerged, so, too, has stability. When it comes to nuclear weapons, now as ever, more could be better.

## AT: Social Reforms

#### [DL] Dixon 18 of The Guardian: Saudi Arabia continues its human rights abuses.

Dixon, Rodney. “The world can no longer ignore Saudi Arabia’s human rights abuses.” The Guardian. 10/15/18. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/oct/15/saudi-arabia- human-rights-jamal-khashoggi-disappearance

For the dozens of women and other activists arrested in Saudi Arabia this past year alone, Jamal Khashoggi’s disappearance last week at the Saudi Embassy in Istanbul will not have come as a surprise. For those who have been able to leave the kingdom after speaking out, meanwhile, it has now become overwhelmingly clear that even on the outside they need to be extremely careful. The regime has a knack for using threats against family members as leverage in return for silence; these threats have taken on a new, alarming meaning. The thoroughness of the Saudi regime in silencing opponents has significantly increased since Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman came to power in 2017. I investigated this increase in detentions in a report I co-authored in January this year. We were requested by the families of some of those detained to release our findings in an attempt to get governments and the United Nations to act to have them released. **The report found that more than 60 perceived opponents of the Saudi government had been arrested – including prominent human rights defenders – in a major crackdown by the Saudi authorities.** To date, no concrete steps have been taken to free them. They remain detained, with the exact whereabouts of many still unknown.

## AT: Terrorism

#### [LT] Reuters 17: When the U.S. or Saudi deals with weapons, some of them end up in the hands of terrorists.

Reuters Editorial 17 of U.S. [Reuters Editorial, 12-14-2017, U.S., "Arms supplied by U.S., Saudi ended up with Islamic State,...", (), accessed 2-1-2019, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-mideast-crisis-iraq-arms/arms-supplied-by-u-s-saudi-ended-up-with-islamic-state-researchers-say-idUSKBN1E82EQ] //AT

Conflict Armament Research (CAR) said most Islamic State weapons were looted from the Iraqi and Syrian armies. But some were originally provided by other countries, mainly the United States and Saudi Arabia, to Syrian opposition groups fighting against President Bashar al-Assad. “These findings are a stark reminder of the contradictions inherent in supplying weapons into armed conflicts in which multiple competing and overlapping non-state armed groups operate,” the group said in a 200-page report. CAR documented at least 12 cases of weaponry purchased by the United States that ended up in Islamic State’s hands, either captured on the battlefield or acquired through shifting alliances within the Syrian opposition. Most of these items later ended up in Iraq, the monitor said. In one case, it took only two months for Islamic State fighters in Iraq to get their hands on a guided anti-tank missile the United States bought from a European country and supplied to a Syrian opposition group.

#### [DL] Thrall 18 of CATO: Arms sales provide things like fighter jets, tanks, and missiles, which are used in military operations, not lone terrorists.

Trevor Thrall and Caroline Dorminey, 3‐13-2018, "Risky Business: The Role of Arms Sales in U.S. Foreign Policy," Cato Institute, https://www.cato.org/publications/policy‐analysis/risky‐business‐role‐arms‐sales‐us‐ foreign‐policy#full (PDf [6 link)](file:///C:\Users\Andrew\Desktop\PDFs\PDF%206.pdf)

Nor does the threat of transnational terrorism justify most arms sales. Most fundamentally, the actual threat from Islamist‐inspired terrorism to Americans is extraordinarily low. Since 9/11, neither al Qaeda nor the Islamic State has managed an attack on the American homeland. Lone wolf terrorists inspired by those groups have done so, but since 9/11 those attacks have killed fewer than 100 Americans, an average of about 6 people per year. There is simply very little risk reduction to be gained from any strategy. The idea that the United States should be willing to accept the significant negative effects of arms sales for minimal counterterrorism gains is seriously misguided.49 Moreover, even if one believed that the benefits would outweigh the potential costs, arms sales still have almost no value as a tool in the war on terror for several reasons. First, the bulk of arms sales (and those we considered in our risk assessment) involve major conventional weapons, which are ill suited to combatting terrorism. Many U.S. arms deals since 9/11 have involved major conventional weapons systems such as fighter jets, missiles, and artillery, useful for traditional military operations, but of little use in fighting terrorists. Insurgencies that hold territory, like the Islamic State, are one thing, but most terrorist groups do not advertise their location, nor do they assemble in large groups. Second, there is little evidence from the past 16 years that direct military intervention is the right way to combat terrorism. Research reveals that military force alone “seldom ends terrorism.”50 This comports with the American experience in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere in the war on terror to date. Despite regime change, thousands of air strikes, and efforts to upgrade the military capabilities of friendly governments, the United States has not only failed to destroy the threat of Islamist‐inspired terrorism, it has also spawned chaos, greater resentment, and a sharp increase in the level of terrorism afflicting the nations involved.51 Given the experience of the United States since 2001, there is little reason to expect that additional arms sales to countries like Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Qatar, or the United Arab Emirates will reduce terrorism, much less anti‐American terrorism specifically. Relatedly, many arms deals since 9/11, made in the name of counterterrorism, were irrelevant to U.S. goals in the global war on terror because they provided weapons to governments fighting terrorist groups only vaguely (if at all) linked to al Qaeda or ISIS. Although selling weapons to the governments of Nigeria or Morocco or Tunisia might help them combat violent resistance in their countries, terrorist groups in those countries have never targeted the United States. As a result, such arms deals cannot be justified by arguing that they advance the goals of the United States in its own war on terror in any serious way. Finally, arms sales are completely useless to combat the largest terrorist threat to the U.S. homeland — lone wolf attackers already living in the United States. As noted, none of the successful attacks in the United States since 9/11 resulted from operations directed by al Qaeda or ISIS. And in fact only two foiled attempts since then — the underwear bomber and the printer‐bomb plot — can be ascribed to al Qaeda.52 Instead, in almost all cases, persons already living in the United States, inspired by Islamist groups, decided to carry out attacks on their own. Clearly, arms sales to foreign nations won’t help with that problem; rather, as many analysts have suggested, amplifying conflicts abroad may well make the problem worse.53 In sum, the strategic value of arms sales for the United States is very low given today’s security environment. Different circumstances would produce a different analysis. Although today there is little reason for the United States to worry about the Russian threat to Europe, during the Cold War foreign policy experts agreed that preventing the Soviet Union from dominating the European continent was critical to American security. As a result, the United States sensibly provided NATO allies with advanced weapons. This strategy greatly enhanced the fighting capability of NATO, thereby bolstering deterrence and ensuring European security. Today, happily, the United States faces no such threats. For this reason, the argument in favor of arms sales cannot rest on national security grounds but must rest instead on “national interest” grounds, that is, on the benefits gained from helping other nations improve their own security, and from maintaining conditions generally believed to be in the national interest, such as regional stability or the prevention of war. This is already a much weaker position than the conventional wisdom acknowledges. Even worse for such sales’ advocates, however, is the fact that arms sales are notoriously uncertain tools for achieving those objectives.

#### [NU] Straits Times 17: There is a Middle Eastern counterterrorism coalition with over 40 countries that vow to fight terrorists in the Middle East. This coalition also helps other member countries build up their own counter-terrorism capacity.

Straits Times 17 [Straits Times, 11-18-2017, "New Islamic alliance 'will wipe terrorists from the earth'", (), accessed 2-6-2019, https://www.straitstimes.com/world/middle-east/new-islamic-alliance-will-wipe-terrorists-from-the-earth] //AT

RIYADH • Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince vowed to "pursue terrorists until they are wiped from the face of the earth" as officials from 40 Muslim countries gathered in the first meeting of an Islamic counter-terrorism alliance. "We will not allow them to distort our peaceful religion. Today we are sending a strong message that we are working together to fight terrorism," Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who is also Saudi Defence Minister, said in his keynote address on Sunday in Riyadh. The summit is the first meeting of defence ministers and other senior officials from the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition, which officially counts 41 countries and identifies as a "pan-Islamic unified front" against violent extremism. The alliance was announced in 2015 under the auspices of Prince Mohammed, whose rapid ascent since his appointment as heir to the throne in June has shaken the political scene across the region. Sunday's meeting comes as several military coalitions, including key Saudi ally the United States, battle to push the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) group from its last remaining bastions in Iraq and Syria. The alliance groups largely, although not exclusively, Sunni-majority or Sunni-ruled countries. It excludes Saudi Arabia's archrival, Shi'ite-dominated Iran, as well as Syria and Iraq, whose leaders have close ties to Iran. Sunday's meeting coincides with an escalation in tensions between Riyadh and Teheran, particularly over wars in Syria and Yemen and the political structure of Lebanon. Saudi Arabia accuses Iran of supporting armed groups across the Middle East, including Lebanon's Shi'ite Hezbollah and Yemen's Houthi rebels. "The pillar of this coalition is inclusion," said Saudi general Abdulelah al-Saleh, the alliance's acting secretary-general, playing down the exclusion of the three countries. "Our common enemy is terrorism, not any religion, sect or race." The alliance brings together Muslim or Muslim-majority nations including Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Afghanistan, Uganda, Somalia, Mauritania, Lebanon, Libya, Yemen and Turkey. Retired Pakistani general Raheel Sharif, who has been appointed commander-in-chief, also insisted that the coalition was not against any religion or state. It aims to "mobilise and coordinate the use of resources, facilitate the exchange of information and help member countries build their own counter-terrorism capacity", he said. While the alliance officially includes Qatar, which is the target of a boycott led by Saudi Arabia, organisers in Riyadh said no Qatari officials were present. Qatar's flag was also absent.

## AT: U.S.-Saudi Alliance

#### [DL] Isackson 18 of FairObserver: The U.S. and Saudi Arabia have created a Middle Eastern security alliance coalition together, protecting the Middle East.

Peter Isackson 18 of Fair Observer [Peter Isackson, 9-24-2018, Fair Observer, "The NATO Clone in the Middle East", (), accessed 2-6-2019, https://www.fairobserver.com/region/middle\_east\_north\_africa/arab-nato-saudi-arabia-iran-cold-war-arab-world-news-headlines-21391/] //AT

Donald Trump and Saudi Arabia have agreed to clone NATO in the Middle East, presumably to show who’s boss. The Daily Devil’s Dictionary reports. At the end of the latest Gulf Cooperation Council summit, Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir revealed that the Saudis have been working with the United States on what he calls “a new security alliance of Arab countries,” which will be called the Middle East Strategic Alliance, or MESA. According to the [Iranian broadcast network, Press TV](https://www.presstv.com/Detail/2018/12/10/582524/Saudi-Jubeir-US-Arab-NATO-Iran-external-aggression-Israel), “[T]he new pact would be similar in style to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and would seek to protect the Middle East from ‘external aggression.’” Here is today’s 3D definition: External aggression: The action of any nation or organization outside of one’s own national boundaries that in some way contradicts, opposes or fails to comply with policies decided inside the national boundaries or in any way questions the regional authority of the government in question. The Saudis have become experts at throttling internal aggression. They freely arrest, incarcerate, torture or assassinate (and dismember) Saudi citizens who express opinions at variance with the government’s policies. Their perfection of the art of countering internal aggression has encouraged them to appeal to the moral force of [Donald Trump](https://www.fairobserver.com/category/world-leaders-news/donald-trump-news/), [Jared Kushner](https://www.fairobserver.com/region/north_america/jared-kushner-mohammed-bin-salman-saudi-arms-deal-us-politics-news-32393/)and John Bolton to take on the problem of “external aggression.” President Trump would like nothing better than lead a “coalition of the willing” to oppose Iran, whom both the US and Saudi Arabia detest, though for very different historical reasons. Saudi Arabia and Iran are natural rivals, first because they are so similar. Both have put in place an authoritarian political system built around their interpretation of Islamic law. Both export oil and both actively support groups in the region. But they are culturally very different, speaking two different languages (Arabic and Farsi) and representing the two principal branches of Islam (Sunni and Shia). Committed to a permanent “[war for terror](https://www.fairobserver.com/region/north_america/war-on-terror-human-costs-death-toll-us-wars-history-54018/),” the US opted for the Sunni cause long ago. The US seems to consider Sunni terrorism more respectable than Iran’s Shia terrorism, even though most of America’s direct terrorist enemies have been Sunnis: al-Qaeda and the Islamic State assuming the starring roles. And, of course, Saudi Arabia’s resources have played a major role historically in encouraging and supporting the terrorism that has unfolded in the West, including 9/11. It’s true, however, that 40 years ago Iran actually sequestered 53 Americans (before releasing them), a much more serious offense apparently than the thousands killed on September 11, 2001. The ambition of this project is to create the equivalent of NATO in the Middle East. NATO was initially designed to play a specific ideological role in the Cold War. It was all about defending free market capitalism of the West from the threat of the authoritarian, Marxist regime of the Soviet Union, guilty of ruling its people with an iron hand and of being indifferent to human rights. A perfect pretext for a new military alliance. The current proposal has nothing to do with free markets or human rights. It appears simply to provide the means of making Saudi Arabia the dominant nation in the Middle East, whose power will be magnified by the association of Israel (with its undeclared nuclear capacity) and the brutal military regime in Egypt. MESA even appears to be the means of making Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, who already exercises absolute power inside the kingdom, the de facto ruler of the region and protector of Israel, with the US playing the role of global protector of both. This is manifestly not about human rights, since the world now knows what it has long preferred to ignore: That Saudi Arabia has always been and is now more than ever a brutal, despotic regime that shows far less sensitivity to human rights than the Stalinist regime did 70 years ago. But there’s another significant difference. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was geographically coherent. The nations that created it were located around or near the north Atlantic Ocean. The founders, the United States and the nations of Western Europe, aimed at combining their collective force to prevent further expansion of the Soviet Union, which of course was not an Atlantic country. For its positive role in defeating Nazi Germany to end the European chapter of World War II, the victorious Allies agreed, at the Yalta conference in February 1945, to give the Soviet Union a free reign over Eastern Europe. The idea that colonial control was a natural right associated with military prowess was still very much a part of the culture of political leaders at that time. The Soviet Union had earned the right to treat Eastern Europe as a virtual colony. But of course, as a communist country with a heretical economic system, the rules were clear: It must not take one step further, which is why NATO was put in place. Does the US now consider Shia Islam to be the equivalent of Soviet communism? The US military has traditionally been dedicated to “making the world safe for democracy” and “protecting our freedoms.” Is the new mission justified by the need to defend Saudi Arabia’s nonexistent democracy and freedoms? Or, as people used to say when George W. Bush invaded Iraq with the original “coalition of the willing”: Is it just about the oil? (Trump’s answer: No, it’s both the oil and the sale of weapons.)

#### [DL] Blanchard 18 of CRS: Saudi Arabia and the U.S. cooperate to combat terrorism, and Saudi Arabia themselves have sought out stronger relations with the U.S. for counterterrorism.

Blanchard 18 of CRS [Christopher Blanchard, 9-21-2018, CRS, “Saudi Arabia: Background and U.S. Relations”, (), accessed 2-5-2019, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL33533.pdf>] //AT

Persistent terrorist threats appear to be one factor that has led the Saudi government to seek stronger partnerships with the United States. Since 2017, Saudi officials have announced plans to contribute to stabilization efforts in Syria and have reengaged with Iraqi leaders in line with U.S. preferences. 43 Saudi leaders also seek support from their regional neighbors and from the United States to confront what they describe as efforts by Iran and their Hezbollah allies to destabilize Yemen through support for the Ansar Allah/Houthi movement (see “Conflict in Yemen” below).

#### [DL] Reuters 18: The U.S. and Saudi Arabia both have a vested interest in countering Iran – not just in Yemen, but also in Syria and Lebanon.

Reuters 18 of VOA [Reuters, 10-16-2018, VOA, "US, Saudi Arabia Have Leverage on Each Other; Using It Has Costs", (), accessed 2-5-2019, https://www.voanews.com/a/us-saudi-arabia-have-leverage-on-each-other-using-it-has-costs/4616830.html] //AT

U.S. lawmakers have grown uneasy with a Saudi-led coalition’s war in Yemen because of civilian casualties. The Khashoggi case could accentuate calls in Congress to limit U.S. support for the coalition. The U.S. military refuels jets for the coalition carrying out strikes against the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels and also engages in limited intelligence sharing. A small number of U.S. special forces are on the Saudi border with Yemen to help the kingdom defend against missiles fired by the Houthis into Saudi Arabia. Yemen is just one theater where Sunni Gulf states such as Saudi Arabia are vying for regional supremacy with Shi'ite Iran. The United States and Saudi Arabia both wish to contain Iran, and Washington depends on Riyadh to serve as a bulwark against Iranian influence, notably in Syria and Lebanon.

#### [DL] Cowen 18 of Bloomberg: Saudi Arabia depends on the U.S. military to protect its oil fields.

Tyler Cowen 18 of Bloomberg [Tyler Cowen, 10-22-2018, Bloomberg, "The U.S. Needs Saudi Arabia, and Vice Versa", (), accessed 2-3-2019, https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2018-10-22/jamal-khashoggi-killing-u-s-and-saudis-still-need-each-other] //AT

The Saudis typically have recycled their petrodollar surpluses, investing them in [American enterprises](https://money.cnn.com/2016/04/19/investing/saudi-arabia-threat-dump-us-assets-911-bill/index.html). As for the other major regional powers: Turkey doesn’t have the oil, and Iran, with its much larger population, is more likely to invest surplus revenue at home (and furthermore is afraid of confiscation, given its longstanding pariah status). Whether you like it or not, the Saudis are America’s natural business ally. The connections between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia run much deeper than the import-export ledger, however. One feature of the geography of Saudi Arabia is that its major oil fields stand apart and can be taken over without controlling the major Saudi cities. That is one reason why the Saudis were so wary of Saddam Hussein. That risk means the Saudis are especially dependent on American military protection. In turn, the U.S. knows it has a lot of leverage over the Saudis, and therefore making deals with the Saudis involves easier enforcement and lower transaction costs. The same cannot be said of deals with Iran. So in the Saudi-Iran rivalry, the U.S. ends up siding with the Saudis.

#### [DL] Wald 18 of NYT: Saudi Arabia’s private sector is economically dependent on U.S. companies while the U.S. isn’t dependent on Saudi oil.

Ellen R. Wald 18 of NYT [Ellen R. Wald, 10-18-2018, NYT, "Saudi Arabia Has No Leverage", (), accessed 2-3-2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/18/opinion/saudi-arabia-economy-united-states.html] //AT

On Sunday, the Saudi government [released](https://www.spa.gov.sa/viewfullstory.php?lang=en&newsid=1827989#1827989) a recalcitrant statement: “The Kingdom also affirms that if it receives any action, it will respond with greater action, and that the Kingdom’s economy has an influential and vital role in the global economy and that the Kingdom’s economy is affected only by the impact of the global economy.” These are empty threats. Saudi Arabia is not in a position to harm the United States. In fact, when it comes to relations between the United States and Saudi Arabia, Washington has all of the leverage. American policymakers shouldn’t forget that. One of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman’s primary objectives is to diversify the Saudi economy and wean his country off its dependence on oil. Unemployment in Saudi Arabia is at more than 12 percent, and [some 70 percent of employed Saudis](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/17/world/middleeast/young-saudis-see-cushy-jobs-vanish-along-with-nations-oil-wealth.html?module=inline) work for the government. The Saudi [labor ministry estimates](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-saudi-labour-jobs/saudi-arabia-needs-1-2-million-jobs-by-2022-to-hit-unemployment-target-official-idUSKBN1HW1CO) that the economy needs to create 1.2 million jobs by 2022 to lower unemployment to a still dismal 9 percent. But because the country lacks business experience and special expertise outside of the oil and petrochemical industries, that won’t be possible without foreign — and particularly American — participation. That’s why the Saudis have been making so many deals recently: The Public Investment Fund has [partnered with AMC](https://www.thenational.ae/business/economy/saudi-arabia-s-pif-signs-cinema-deal-with-us-based-amc-entertainment-1.683714) to open and run movie theaters across the country because AMC knows how to manage cinemas. Saudi Arabia is pursuing deals for [Snap](https://www.cnbc.com/2018/04/03/snap-is-in-talks-to-set-up-shop-in-saudi-arabia.html) and [Amazon](https://www.cnbc.com/2018/04/13/saudi-crown-prince-woos-amazon-lockheed-and-others-to-build-a-tech-hub.html) to open facilities in the kingdom because they can offer tech opportunities. It’s not just the private sector. The Saudi government bureaucracy also relies heavily on American management expertise. Riyadh has been hiring American consultants since the 1950s, and in recent years American firms like McKinsey, Boston Consulting Group and Oliver Wyman have [worked on hundreds of projects](https://www.consultancy.uk/news/12082/saudi-arabia-a-lucrative-battleground-for-management-consultants) for the kingdom. In some cases, Saudi government bureaucrats work side by side with these consultants to implement government programs. The Saudi Public Investment Fund — the kingdom’s sovereign wealth fund, which is estimated to have more than $250 billion in assets — is also closely tied to the American economy. To name just a few of its major investments: It put [$3.5 billion into Uber](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/02/technology/uber-investment-saudi-arabia.html?module=inline) in 2016 and almost [half a billion dollars](https://www.cnn.com/2018/10/15/investing/saudi-arabia-global-investments/index.html) in the start-up Magic Leap this year; it invested [$45 billion in SoftBank’s Vision Fund](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-softbank-group-saudi/softbank-anxiously-monitoring-saudi-arabia-situation-executive-idUSKCN1MQ2TH), which invests heavily in American technology start-ups; and it made [a $5 billion investment](https://www.arabianbusiness.com/banking-finance/399372-blackstone-said-to-raise-5bn-for-saudi-backed-infrastructure-fund) with a possible growth to $20 billion in a Blackstone fund for United States infrastructure. Much of the tens of billions of dollars cannot be pulled out on a whim. These start-ups are private companies without open markets for their shares. Prince Mohammed is building a domestic reputation with this tech portfolio, so its success is politically important, too. All of this is at risk if the dispute worsens between Saudi Arabia and the United States over Mr. Khashoggi’s disappearance. Not only could the Saudis not retaliate because their economy is so intertwined with that of the United States, but they will also be susceptible to pressure. Targeted sanctions — if it comes to that — could force consultants to withdraw or cut off the Saudi Public Investment Fund’s access to the profits of its investments. More likely, though, is that a continuing dispute would force American businesses like AMC to seriously reconsider involvement in the country because of negative publicity. What about oil? Whereas Saudi Arabia could once shock the world economy by cutting oil exports or production to raise prices, it no longer has that power. The oil market today is significantly more diverse than it was in 1973, when Saudi Arabia and other Arab petroleum exporters unilaterally raised the price of oil and unsettled the American economy. In fact, the United States now produces more oil than Saudi Arabia, and imports make up a smaller percentage of domestically refined crude oil.

### AT: Raised Oil Prices

#### [LT/IT] Turak 18 of CNBC: Hiked oil prices only spur green technology. Indeed, in the 1973 oil embargo, when oil prices quadrupled, the renewable energy sector fostered.

Natasha Turak, 10-16-2018, CNBC, “Saudi Arabia could hike oil prices over the Khashoggi case. Here’s why it would backfire”, (), accessed 2-2-2019, https://www.cnbc.com/2018/10/16/saudi-arabia-could-spike-oil-prices-over-journalist-case--but-it-would-backfire.html //AD

Saudi Arabia’s not-so-veiled threat issued in a government statement Sunday emphasized its “vital role in the global economy” and that any action taken upon it will be met with “greater action”. But as oil ticks upward, a look at history and geopolitics suggests that **while a Saudi-driven oil price spike would bring pain for much of the world, it would ultimately backfire on itself.** “If this is something the Saudis were allowed to do, they’d be really shooting themselves in the foot,” Warren Patterson, commodities analyst at ING, told CNBC’s Squawk Box Europe on Tuesday. “In the short to medium term we’ll definitely see an incremental amount of demand destruction, but the bigger issue is in the longer term.” Any action in withholding oil from the market, he said, “would only quicken the pace of energy transition.” But the extraordinary move to place a stranglehold on oil markets — one not taken since the Arab oil embargo of 1973 — would ultimately backfire on Saudi Arabia, leading many analysts to believe it’s not a likely course of action. “Riyadh would be hesitant to go down this route. While there would probably be a significant near-term boost to the Kingdom’s oil income, pushing oil prices higher would only serve to rile President Trump,” London-based research consultancy Capital Economics wrote in a client note Monday. “The Saudis are determined to remain close with Washington to preserve its ‘anti-Iran’ axis.” What’s more, if history is any guide, oil embargoes are self-defeating. The **1973 oil embargo, imposed by Arab OPEC members** on countries supporting Israel during that year’s Yom Kippur war between Israel and several Arab states, **quadrupled oil prices and led to shortages across the U.S. But it failed to diminish support for Israel and only spurred the development of alternative energy research and increased exploration in other markets.** “In addition,” Capital Economics wrote, “higher oil prices would simply encourage other producers to raise output and grab market share from Saudi Arabia.”

#### [DL] Colgan 18 of Washington Post: The oil market is so flexible that even if Saudi cut off its oil, the U.S. will be able to import from other countries.x

Jeff D. Colgan, 10-16-2018, Washington Post, "Analysis", (), accessed 2-2-2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/10/16/saudi-arabia-hinted-at-a-u-s-oil-embargo-its-not-1973/ //AD

Most people [misunderstand the events of 1973](https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-organization/article/emperor-has-no-clothes-the-limits-of-opec-in-the-global-oil-market/1A35BB1511789C7AEC0F36AAAAD2C188). Price controls imposed by the Nixon administration actually created the gasoline shortages — the Saudi oil embargo decreased world oil production by just 2 to 4 percent, and only for a few months. Even more importantly, [a lot has changed since 1973](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09636412.2010.505865). Back then, the oil market functioned mostly on long-term contracts. **Today’s more flexible global oil system mostly uses spot markets — meaning a buyer can easily find oil from another country. So the United States could replace its imports from Saudi Arabia relatively easily with imports from elsewhere.** The **global market alone could probably adjust smoothly to a Saudi embargo**, but there are other safeguards in place. For instance, in 1974, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger helped create the [International Energy Agency](https://www.iea.org/about/). Its primary purpose is to redistribute oil in a crisis, ensuring that its members — mostly in Europe and North America — cooperate to share scarce oil. The United States also has a massive [Strategic Petroleum Reserve](https://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/pet_stoc_typ_d_nus_SAS_mbbl_m.htm). It holds three months’ worth of U.S. imports from all countries — and Saudi Arabia represents [less than 10 percent of those imports](https://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/pet_move_impcus_a2_nus_ep00_im0_mbbl_m.htm). If needed, the United States could calm market jitters by releasing oil from the reserve. Still, Saudi Arabia could drive up the world price of oil in the short to medium term. It would have to restrict its own total oil production, not just sales to the United States. That could be costly to American consumers, although oil producers in the United States would benefit from higher oil prices. In the long term, driving up the price of oil is a [bad strategy for Saudi Arabia](https://read.amazon.com/kp/embed?asin=B074D4YPDQ&preview=newtab&linkCode=kpe&ref_=cm_sw_r_kb_dp_lfEXBb4P3FA3C&tag=thewaspos09-20). It encourages other producers, including those in the United States, to produce more. Over time, that brings the price down while simultaneously eating into Saudi Arabia’s market share. And high or volatile oil prices have another effect: They encourage consumers to consume less oil, by buying hybrid cars or switching to alternative fuels. For those reasons, Saudi Arabia has often argued against higher oil prices at the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Overall, the United States has little to fear from Saudi Arabia’s oil policies

#### [DL] Colgan 18 of Washington Post: Saudi Arabia would never raise oil prices, as they would force other producers to ramp up production, consequently decreasing its market share.

Jeff D. Colgan, 10-16-2018, Washington Post, "Analysis", (), accessed 2-2-2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2018/10/16/saudi-arabia-hinted-at-a-u-s-oil-embargo-its-not-1973/ //AD

Most people [misunderstand the events of 1973](https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/international-organization/article/emperor-has-no-clothes-the-limits-of-opec-in-the-global-oil-market/1A35BB1511789C7AEC0F36AAAAD2C188). Price controls imposed by the Nixon administration actually created the gasoline shortages — the Saudi oil embargo decreased world oil production by just 2 to 4 percent, and only for a few months. Even more importantly, [a lot has changed since 1973](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09636412.2010.505865). Back then, the oil market functioned mostly on long-term contracts. Today’s more flexible global oil system mostly uses spot markets — meaning a buyer can easily find oil from another country. So the United States could replace its imports from Saudi Arabia relatively easily with imports from elsewhere. The global market alone could probably adjust smoothly to a Saudi embargo, but there are other safeguards in place. For instance, in 1974, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger helped create the [International Energy Agency](https://www.iea.org/about/). Its primary purpose is to redistribute oil in a crisis, ensuring that its members — mostly in Europe and North America — cooperate to share scarce oil. The United States also has a massive [Strategic Petroleum Reserve](https://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/pet_stoc_typ_d_nus_SAS_mbbl_m.htm). It holds three months’ worth of U.S. imports from all countries — and Saudi Arabia represents [less than 10 percent of those imports](https://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/pet_move_impcus_a2_nus_ep00_im0_mbbl_m.htm). If needed, the United States could calm market jitters by releasing oil from the reserve. Still, Saudi Arabia could drive up the world price of oil in the short to medium term. It would have to restrict its own total oil production, not just sales to the United States. That could be costly to American consumers, although oil producers in the United States would benefit from higher oil prices. **In the long term, driving up the price of oil is a**[**bad strategy for Saudi Arabia**](https://read.amazon.com/kp/embed?asin=B074D4YPDQ&preview=newtab&linkCode=kpe&ref_=cm_sw_r_kb_dp_lfEXBb4P3FA3C&tag=thewaspos09-20)**. It encourages other producers, including those in the United States, to produce more. Over time, that brings the price down while simultaneously eating into Saudi Arabia’s market share.** And high or volatile oil prices have another effect: They encourage consumers to consume less oil, by buying hybrid cars or switching to alternative fuels. For those reasons, Saudi Arabia has often argued against higher oil prices at the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Overall, the United States has little to fear from Saudi Arabia’s oil policies

#### [DL] Ashford 18 of WR: Due to the growth of domestic shale oil production, the U.S. has become far less dependent on Middle East oil.

Emma Ashford 18 of War on the Rocks [Emma Ashford, 10-22-2018, War on the Rocks, "The U.S.-Saudi Alliance Was in Trouble Long Before Jamal Khashoggi’s Death", (), accessed 1-31-2019, https://warontherocks.com/2018/10/the-u-s-saudi-alliance-was-in-trouble-long-before-jamal-khashoggis-death/] //AT

Take oil. It’s true that Saudi Arabia remains among the world’s largest producers of oil, producing around a quarter of the world’s crude oil. And thanks to changing production patterns — notably [the growth of shale oil production](https://www.economist.com/business/2018/10/20/the-shale-boom-has-made-america-the-worlds-top-oil-producer) in the United States — America is far less directly dependent on Middle Eastern energy. Certainly, this doesn’t mean Saudi oil supplies are unimportant to the United States. Since oil is priced globally, Saudi domestic stability is still key to ensuring a reasonable price for oil. Yet oil markets have come a long way since [the Carter Doctrine](https://www.airuniversity.af.mil/Portals/10/SSQ/documents/Volume-12_Issue-1/Ashford.pdf). During President Jimmy Carter’s time, the United States was reeling from twin oil shocks, as the 1973 OPEC embargo and the 1979 Iranian revolution triggered oil shortages and price hikes throughout the Western world. The Carter Doctrine — which promised to protect Middle Eastern oil-rich states, prevent Soviet regional hegemony, and protect global oil supplies — effectively committed the United States to act as Saudi Arabia’s [guarantor of security](https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/saudi-arabia-withdrawl-us-forces), a commitment fulfilled during the Gulf War. Today, most of these risks have disappeared. Innovations like spot pricing and strategic reserves [help to stabilize the market](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/21/opinion/21press.html) during shocks. There is no Soviet threat poised to dominate the region. To [ensure the free flow of oil](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/persian-gulf/2016-12-12/getting-out-gulf), the United States doesn’t need a heavy military presence in the region. Instead, it needs to protect the global commons (i.e., sea lanes), and maintain the expeditionary capacity to re-enter the region if it becomes necessary, a posture often described as an over-the-horizon approach. Energy security is a good reason to maintain a U.S. interest in Middle Eastern stability. It is no longer a sufficient reason to provide the Saudi government carte blanche.

### AT: Petrodollar

#### [DL] Bulloch 18 of Forbes: The U.S. dollar is so strong that it is literally the global reserve currency, which is why other countries always demand U.S. dollars.

Douglas Bulloch xx of Forbes [Douglas Bulloch, xx-xx-xxxx, Forbes, "Why The Petro-Dollar Is A Myth, And The Petro-Yuan Mere Fantasy", (), accessed 2-2-2019, https://www.forbes.com/sites/douglasbulloch/2018/04/26/the-petro-dollar-is-a-myth-the-petro-yuan-mere-fantasy/#1d6433986a14] //AT

Bringing this up to date, it was a long time ago when the link between oil and the dollar mattered much at all beyond the financial returns of non-dollar based oil companies. Since the 1980s, the dollar has been consolidated as the global reserve currency because of the strength and dynamism of the U.S. economy, and oil exporters have demanded to be paid in U.S. dollars because that's the currency they prefer to hold on to. To do otherwise is to take on exchange risk. Exporters can, and routinely do, accept payment in whatever exchange medium they wish -- tanks, planes and construction services -- but their central banks demand dollars for reasons entirely unconnected to oil. Because the U.S. dollar is a hard currency, easily exchangeable, underwritten by the U.S. taxpayer, and founded upon decades of broadly consistent macro-economic policy management.

#### [DL] Newman 17 of DesertSun: Oil makes up a miniscule amount of the demand for U.S. dollars, so even if we did switch to the Petroyuan, it would make no marginal difference on our economy.

Tim Newman 17 of DesertSun [Tim Newman, 11-14-2017, DesertSun, "The Myth of the Petrodollar", (), accessed 2-5-2019, http://www.desertsun.co.uk/blog/5988/] //AT

Now according to [this site](http://www.businessinsider.com/heres-how-much-currency-is-traded-every-day-2016-9?IR=T), total foreign exchange (FX) transactions are valued at $5.1 trillion dollars per day. Trade in USD accounts for a whopping 88% of that, i.e. $4.49 trillion per day. According to [another site](https://www.reuters.com/article/bis-survey-volumes/table-global-fx-volume-reaches-5-3-trillion-a-day-in-2013-bis-idUSL6N0GZ34R20130905), total FX was $5.3 trillion per day in 2013 of which USD trades accounted for 87%, i.e. $4.6 trillion per day. Again, we only need orders of magnitude here. So, the demand for dollars driven by oil sales equals around $2-3 trillion dollars per year. Meanwhile, the overall demand for dollars equals around $4.5 trillion dollars per day. From these figures alone one can conclude that the currency in which oil is traded makes no difference whatsoever to the value of the USD. Reasons for going to war and bringing about regime change vary, but it is unlikely anyone would do so to protect one-three-hundredth of its currency demand. So what would happen if a country switched to selling oil in yuan or euros? Well, those who hold USD would go to the FX market and buy yuan or euros at the prevailing rate and then use them to buy the oil. No need for any wars when you have a large and functioning FX market. You’ll notice that those peddling the myth of petrodollars driving American foreign policy never go into details of how all it is all supposed to work. There are good reasons for this.

## AT: THAAD

#### [DL] Brummer 18 of BIN: Saudi Arabia now purchases Iron Dome anti-missile systems from Israel.

David Brummer 18 of Breaking Israel News | Latest News. Biblical Perspective. [David Brummer, 9-13-2018, Breaking Israel News | Latest News. Biblical Perspective., "Saudi Arabia Reportedly Purchases Israel’s Iron Dome Missile System", (), accessed 2-4-2019, https://www.breakingisraelnews.com/113759/saudi-arabia-israel-iron-dome/] //AT

Reports have surfaced – in Arabic language newspapers, such as the London-based Al-Khaleej Online – as well as Israel-based news outlets that Saudi Arabia has purchased Israel’s [Iron Dome](https://www.breakingisraelnews.com/113285/enemies-of-israel-pay-the-price-opinion/)missile defense system. There are several elements to the supposed deal – which the Saudis sought – to better-protect them against Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen. It is thought that the United States helped mediate the deal, which included further plans to reach an agreement on broad military cooperation between the two countries. The Al-Khaleej story – published on Thursday – cited “high-level diplomatic sources” as revealing that Riyadh had purchased the Israeli system, with counter claims that Israel was highly reluctant to sell the Iron Dome to an Arab nation. There was no confirmation by Saudi officials, and Israeli security officials strongly denied the report, the Haaretz daily said.

#### [DL] Fisher 17 of NYT: THAAD is extremely ineffective; THAAD tried to fire 5 times at a Houthi missile and missed all five times.

Max Fisher 17 of NYT [Max Fisher, 12-4-2017, No Publication, "Did American Missile Defense Fail in Saudi Arabia?", (), accessed 2-4-2019, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/12/04/world/middleeast/saudi-missile-defense.html] //AT

The blast was small, and satellite imagery of the airport taken immediately before and after the blast is not detailed enough to capture the crater from the impact, the analysts said. But it does show ground damage from the emergency vehicles, supporting the finding that the warhead hit just off the runway. While the Houthis missed their target, Mr. Lewis said, they got close enough to show that their missiles can reach it and can evade Saudi defenses. “A kilometer is a pretty normal miss rate for a Scud,” he said. Even the Houthis may not have realized their success, Mr. Lewis said. Unless they had intelligence sources at the airport, they would have little reason to doubt official reports. “The Houthis got very close to creaming that airport,” he said. Laura Grego, a missile expert at the Union of Concerned Scientists, expressed alarm that Saudi defense batteries had fired five times at the incoming missile. "You shoot five times at this missile and they all miss? That's shocking,” she said. “That's shocking because this system is supposed to work.”