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Trump's foreign policy and its impacts on the US- Saudi relations(2016-2020):Analysis of the political, economic, and military relations

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Dedications

This humble work would never have recognized the light without the material and moral assistance provided to me by my dear parents: **Yazir Barkahum and Balboul said**, to my honorable parents I dedicate this start, which I hope will be a token of loyalty to them, I also dedicate this work to all my dear brothers **Tayab ,Mohamed, Ibrahim ,Hawasse ,Adel** and my sisters specially, **Saida ,Thaldja, Hanane** along with my best teacher Fares Lounnes and I do not forget to thank my friends: **Djihad, Ahlam, S aadia, Fatiha, karima and Mohamed Baali**. For motivating me to finish this work.

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I am very pleased to dedicate the fruit of my effort to my parents, for their endless sacrifice, unconditional love, and raising me in a stable house hold, where Instilled moral values and taught me to embrace life,

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Declaration

We hereby declare that this dissertation is our own original work, which we have created ourselves.

All the literature we used is properly quoted and is listed in the References. We declare that we worked on our final master's dissertation on our own using only cited literary sources, other information and sources in agreement with the disciplinary regulations for the Faculty of Letters and Languages at the University Mohammed Boudiaf of M'sila and with the regulations and laws of research of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in Algeria.

We agree with the storage of this work in the library of the Faculty of Letters and Languages at the University Mohammed Boudiaf of M'sila and making it accessible for study purposes.

BALBOUL Afaf

BOUKRAA Hala

M'sila:17/ 09/2021.

Abstract:

This dissertation addresses first and foremost the intricate charade of the US relationships with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia over time, devoting focal emphasis on the impact of Trump's Administration on US-Saudi Arabia relations through analyzing the political, economic, and military aspects. The vast, different political systems, world-views, and cultures have been repeatedly questioned. Recently, visible fissures in the partnership over Iran's nuclear deal and counter-extremism in the Middle East have raised concerns about its future capability. Nonetheless, as evidenced by US President Donald Trump's visit to Riyadh in May 2017, the relationships appear to be as strong as ever. The present paper investigates the unique characteristics of the US-Saudi relationships that have ensured stability in the face of clear divisions. This is accomplished by reviewing a brief history of both countries in order to better understand US-Saudi relations. In addition, this research considers the relationships' impacts on the election of US President Donald Trump. It also identifies the key drivers of the US-Saudi partnership in the political, economic, military, and security spheres. Using a descriptive-analytical approach, the researchers seek to determine how relationships between both countries, with opposing values, remained entwined through shared interests.

Keywords: the US, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Iran Nuclear Deal, Counter-Extremism, The Middle East, Donald Trump.

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List of Abbreviations:

USA: United States of America

UN: United Nations

UK: United kingdom

UAE: United Arab Emirates

KSA: Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

ARAMCO: Arabian American Oil Company

ZOA: Zionist organization of America

WWII: World War two

SOCAL :Southern California Gas Company

CASOC: California Arabian Standard Oil Company

MAAG: Military Assistance Advisory Group

USMTM: United States Military Training Mission

OPEC: Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

MDAA: Missile Defense advocacy Alliance

RSAF: The Royal Saudi Air Force

CENTCOM: US Central Command

CIA: The Central Intelligence Agency

AWACS: Air borne Warning and Control System

NSC: The National Security Council

THAAD: Terminal High Altitude Area Defense

DMDC: Defense Man power Data Center

GCC: Gulf Cooperation Council

ISIS: Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

USAF: United States Air Force

WAMY: World Assembly of Muslim Youth

USCENTCOM: The United States Central Command

MBS: Mohammed bin Salman

AKP: The Justice and Development Party(Turkish: Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP)

YPG: People's Protection Units

PKK: Kurdistan Workers' Party

SDF: Syrian Democratic Forces

EO-2:Equipment Operator Second Class

TPP: Trans-Pacific Partnership

FTA: Free trade Agreement

USMCA: United States- Mexico- Canada agreement

NAFTA: The North American Free Trade Agreement

NSA: National Security Agency

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General introduction

1. Background of the study

The location of the Arabian Gulf has been strategically important since ancient times. Apart from being in the middle of the ancient world, it has been one of the most important trade routes that colonial powers competed for control over the region. Currently, the Gulf region is one of the busiest waterways in the world, due to the passage of many oil tankers through it.

It is worth recalling that the discovery of oil at the beginning of the twentieth century in the region, the Arabian Gulf because of the life line of the world economy and the source of economic strength, due to its large oil reserves. This arouses competition among European powers to control the Arabian Gulf. After the end of WWII, the Arabian Gulf became of strategic importance to the US. Among the factors that drove the US to make the Arabian Gulf the core pillar of its foreign policy, are (1) oil reserves found abundantly in the region, (2) the creation of the state of Israel in the Middle East, (3) the rise of Nationalism in Middle Eastern countries, and (4) the Cold War, which compelled the US to back anti-Communist regimes.

Since the primary motive for the US foreign policy is to secure oil from the region, it concluded the Anglo- American Petroleum Agreement (1944) with the UK to control Middle Eastern oil. In this regard, F. D. Roosevelt, US President, addressed the British ambassador stating ' Persian oil is...yours. We will

partake in both Iraqi and Kuwaiti oil. However, Saudi oil is ours' (Yergin, 1991, p.401).

The kingdom of Saudi Arabia represents strategic importance to US foreign policy. The bilateral relationships which date back to 1933, the year of officially establishing relationships between both countries, are based on mutual interests.

2. Statement of the problem

Both countries of Saudi Arabia and the US work to achieve their mutual interests. The diversity of common interests between both countries reflects the level of partnership between the US and Saudi Arabia and cooperation in almost all fields.

It is worth mentioning that the US and Saudi Arabia are united by a common concern for regional security, oil exports, sustainable development, the Middle East issues, and the peace process. As a result of this long cooperation between the countries, the US became the largest trade partner of Saudi Arabia, and; meanwhile, Saudi Arabia became the largest oil exporter to the US. According to *ATC Trade Statistics*, published in July 2019, Saudi Arabia is ranked first as a US trade partner among other Arab countries. The volume of trade exchange between the two countries reached \$ 37 billion in 2018 and \$ 41 billion in 2019. In addition, Saudi investments in the US reached \$ 184, 4 billion. Since common interests are the core of US-Saudi relationships, they; in fact, have assured

promotion, development, and stability. Moreover, the US-Saudi relationships form the basics of regional security and stability in the Middle East.

During the Obama administration, bilateral relationships between the US and Saudi Arabia have been marred by a state of tension and disagreement, with regard to their visions towards the outstanding issues in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia considered Obama's strategies for a gradual withdrawal from the region a loss for an ally country, which would pose an existential threat to Saudi Arabia and its interests in the long term. Because it relies on the US protection umbrella, it will also lead to an increase in the relationship between the US and Iran, the most dangerous enemy to Saudi Arabia.

When Donald Trump became US President, he built US foreign policy towards the Middle East on the bilateral investment of relationships with rich countries; such as Saudi Arabia to strengthen the US economy and restore the role of the US in the region after its decline during the Obama era.

The present research highlights Trump's foreign policy and its impacts on the bilateral relationships with Saudi Arabia. It analyzes the determinants of the US foreign policy under US President Donald Trump, and how the latter drove the US-Saudi Arabian bilateral relationships at the political, economic, and military levels.

3. The literature review:

No other region than the Middle East plays an important role in the shaping of both the foreign and domestic policies of the US. It is worth mentioning that the Middle East contains both the Arab countries and the established state of Israel, and based on this fact, the US foreign policy takes two different approaches: A constant approach towards Israel and a changing approach towards the Arab and Gulf countries.

Although the 9/11 attacks and the global War on Terror convinced the US administration to reshape its foreign policy towards the Middle Eastern countries, the need to secure petroleum sources and oil from the Gulf countries has had impacts on guiding the ways in which the US determined its economic and foreign policy towards the countries of the region; the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in particular.

Since the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been considered as the single, largest US ally in the region, the US-Saudi alliance has been built on decades of security cooperation and strong business ties which have been dominated by US interests in Saudi oil. Although the bi-lateral US-Saudi relationships have survived severe challenges; including the 1973 oil embargo and 9/11 attacks, successive US administrations have held that Saudi Arabia is a critical strategic partner for the US in the region.

Relations between the two countries have grown especially warm under US President Donald Trump and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman. Both

leaders have pushed the US- Saudi relationships towards improvement for better maintaining the Strategic position of Saudi Arabia in the Middle East. In addition, they ramped up efforts to counter Iran, Saudi Arabia's main regional rival. However, recent actions of the Saudi Crown Prince, particularly the assassination of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, have posed threats on the US- Saudi alliance, as many members of the US Congress have called for punishing Riyadh and reassessing the relationship.

A plethora of literature is available on the US- Saudi relationships. A large portion of this literature highlights the aforementioned relationships and examines the nature of these special relationships between the US and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Officially, articles and publications of scholars and researchers are the main sources of most of the references.

The researchers have gone through the following literature on the US- Saudi relationships:

- **Bronson (2005)** believed that after both countries of the US and Saudi Arabia signed, on Jan. 17, 1951, the first formal defense pact of 'the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement,' their bilateral relations had been transformed into a broader security partnership. This agreement made the two countries' relations grow and improved. During the Cold War, the Saudi regime became an ally and a bulwark against the rise of Communism by the administrations of Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon

Administrations. Intertwined and growing economic, military, and security interests characterized the partnership.

- **Conge and Okruhlik (2009)** explained that the US- Saudi relationships tend to be used by the Americans as a stabilizing state in the Middle East, whose government is able to contrast the increase of Islamic radicalism in other middle eastern nations. In addition to powerful interests and material supplies, the US has also supported the Saudis in their interventions in other nations by supplying them with arms that have thereafter enabled the Saudis to increase the severity of the war in Yemen. Such US support of arms has also inspired a lot of critical debate. Accordingly, it can be argued that the relationships between the US and Saudi Arabia appear to be of great importance for the state of the Middle East.
- In his article, **Benjamin (2016)** examined US foreign relations with Saudi Arabia. According to him, these relationships have existed for a very long time. Since King Saud permitted US oil companies to drill for oil on Saudi Arabian soil in 1932, it is clear that the aim of US -Saudi relations have always been primarily rooted in the continuance of the oil business, but that for the US relations in Saudi Arabia may also establish some American influence in those countries that Saudi Arabia itself is an important ally to. In return, the Saudis may have benefitted from these US relations in the sense that they have been granted more power in the Middle East.

- In their article entitled 'Saudi Arabia's Empty Oil Threats: Riyadh Won't Sabotage Trump's Iran Policy', **Miller and Nowrouz zadeh (2018)** assumed that despite the large amounts of critique targeted against American policies in the Middle East as well as its lasting political bond with Riyadh, the current Trump Administration continued to foster relations with the Saudis regardless of their increasing unpopularity among the American public. Moreover, **Miller and Nowrouz zadeh** stated that the unpopularity of the Saudis is largely due to the frequent charges of human rights violations both within the Saudi borders and outside of them by non-profit organizations; such as, Amnesty International, and is a result of 9/11 and other Saudi involvements in global terrorism, be it funding, or harboring terrorist groups, or perpetuating the act itself. Some examples of the kinds of human rights violations that Saudi Arabia has been charged with are the current Saudi Arabian interventions in their neighboring country of Yemen, which has been viewed as "the worst humanitarian disaster in the world today", as well as their involvement in the murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi. In addition, the Saudi involvement in the 9/11 terrorist attacks, as well as their alleged active funding of terrorist organizations in the broader Middle Eastern region has made them an ambiguous and dubious partner for the US, but one that Washington is continuing to be on friendly terms with because of shared interests in the oil trade and the control and division of regional power.

As seen above, the literature review dealt much with issues related to the US-Saudi relationships from different perspectives. The common issue that was relevant to these researches and studies was to figure out the nature of these relationships between both countries, and on what basis these relationships have been established.

4. Research Questions and hypotheses:

The present research addresses the following questions:

- ✚ What were the determinants of Trump's foreign policy towards the Middle East, and Saudi Arabia, in particular?
- ✚ How did Trump's foreign affairs influence US-Saudi Arabia relations?
- ✚ What were the impacts of Trump's foreign policy towards Saudi Arabia?

Based on the aforementioned research questions, it is hypothesized that:

- ✚ Trump's foreign policy is pro-Israeli in the Middle East, and it backed non-democratic regimes;
- ✚ Trump's foreign policy aimed at exploiting the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia;
- ✚ Trump intervened to direct US- Saudi relationships in the military, economic, and political levels.

5. The objectives of the study:

The objectives of the present research are as follows:

- ✚ To illustrate the determinants of Trump's foreign policy in the Middle East and the Gulf region;
- ✚ To investigate the reasons behind Trump to conduct a special relationship with Saudi Arabia;
- ✚ To identify the impacts of US foreign policy on US-Saudi relationships;
- ✚ To highlight how US-Saudi relationships were conducted at the political, economic, and military levels.

6. The significance of the study:

Managing US-Saudi relations does not seem so easy, in light of a deep security partnership and wide economic overlaps, and the convergence /or divergence of views on critical issues in the region, which witnesses conflicts and civil wars in several countries.

With his nomination as a new US President in January 2017, Donald Trump placed on the list of priorities for US policy in the Middle East, finding a basis for bilateral and strategic relations consistent with the countries of the region, within a more realistic framework in dealing with common threats from Iran's influence and terrorist organizations , "ISIS" and "Al-Qaida".

In a sign of the new US administration attaching unusual importance to its relations with Saudi Arabia, Trump chose Saudi Arabia in May 2017, as the first

country to visit in the region. The US- Gulf Summit in May 2017 constituted a milestone in the history of relations between the two countries, to break out of Obama's policies towards the region. That summit also confirmed the state of increasing closeness from the US point of view and its vision of its interests in the region, according to a "new strategic partnership" that would serve its national security and enhance its economic capabilities, through arms deals and other deals in several fields.

The main point that makes the present paper significant is that it shows the change of US foreign policy towards Saudi Arabia after Donald Trump became a US President. Besides, it analyzes the impacts of Trump's foreign policy on the US-Saudi Arabia politically, economically, and militarily.

7. The research methodology:

The present study demands the use of an analytical descriptive approach. For the sake of accomplishing this research, the researchers will fall back on using books, videos, articles, websites, archival and historical documents to collect the necessary data needed to fulfill the requirement of this study. Moreover, the aim of using an analytical descriptive approach is to analyze, define, and show how did the US foreign policy work, and how did Trump's foreign affairs influence US - Saudi Arabia relations at the political, economic, and military levels.

8. The structure of the dissertation:

The present research paper is entitled: *Trump's foreign policy and its impacts on the US- Saudi relations (2016- 2020): Analysis of the political, economic, and military relations*. It is divided into three chapters. As for the first chapter, the researchers provide an over view of the US- Saudi bi-lateral relationships, as well as its nature, issues, and limitations. In the second chapter, the researchers highlight the 2017 presidential election in the US. In addition, they analyze Trump's inauguration as a new US President, and how it changed US foreign policy. Moreover, this chapter outlines important decisions and actions made since he took office. The third chapter provides an analysis of the political, economic, and social impacts of trump's foreign policy on US-Saudi Arabia relations.

Chapter one: A brief history of US- Saudi relations:

Introduction:

Saudi Arabia, ruled by the Al-Saud royal family since 1932, has a significant role and global influence through its control of the two Islamic Holy Mosques and its vast oil reserves. Saudi Arabia and the US have had close relationships since the discovery of oil in the kingdom in 1933. Both countries have maintained a level of economic and security cooperation. As a result, their partnerships have remained strong and Saudi Arabia has become the US's largest foreign military sales dealer, and the US has had long a military presence in the Kingdom.

The US-Saudi relationships are one of America's most important, enduring, and complex bilateral connections in the Middle East. It has been tested by many issues, including oil policies, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and confrontation with Iraq. Especially after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on America, in which many of those involved were Saudi dissidents, both sides have critiqued and re-evaluated that link (Blanchard, 2020, p. 1).

The present chapter provides a history of the US-Saudi relationship and discusses its nature, problems, and limits.

The establishment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and US recognition 1932:

Since its establishment in 1932, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has had to deal with a lot of problems. Furthermore, the Great Depression (1929-1933) affected Saudi Arabia and lowered pilgrimage revenues, the new nations' principal source of income, with the number of pilgrims falling to 29,000 in 1932 and 20,000 the following years, as well as a border dispute with Yemen that turned in to violence. King Abdul Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud (1853-1953), who had unified the Kingdom, had evolved into an international states man and led the nation out of the Medieval rain to the twentieth century. During his reign, the kingdom underwent a radical transformation due to the discovery of vast petroleum reserves beneath the kingdom's deserts and. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia became more worldly on September 23, 1932, today is known as Independence Day, than the first Saudi Wahhabi state when it was founded in the mid-the 1700s (Wynbrandt, 2004, p. 187).

The political landscape was still dominated by tribal alliances, feuds, and shifting loyalties. Ibn Saud, like all of his forefathers, has held back the title of "Imam" since the end of the eighteenth century. Though he was more addressed as a king at that time.

Common allegiance to Wahhabism led him to unify the rest separate tribes within the Kingdom. The title indicated his leadership of Jihad under which the Kingdom

had been founded. However, following the consolidation of its lands and the defeat of the Ikhwan.

Ibn Saud terminated the military offensive role as Imam, the symbolism of the title was later carried in the flag of the new state, in which it reflects the two forces that brought the country together: Islam and Jihad, which established Saudi sovereignty and Wahhabism form of Islam across the Kingdom (Wynbrandt, 2004, p. 188). Ibn Saud initiated contact with Arab leaders, as well as the UK, Russia, and other foreign powers, in 1932 after capturing Riyadh, the future capital of the Kingdom. As a result, by the time the kingdom was formally established, it had gained international prominence. However, during the process of creating the kingdom, king Ibn Saud confronted a particularly difficult hurdle over the border location of Asir with Yemen's leaders and their alliances.

Both parties signed the treaty of Taif in May of 1934 to stop the war between the two countries. However, the pact failed to make an end to the issue over the boundary position. As a result, Ibn Saud won the release of hostages and achieve formal recognition of Ibn Saud's authority over Asir. After that, the two men's relations warm-up (Wynbrandt, 2004, p. 188-9). Despite the fact that the US recognized the kingdom in 1931, no official diplomatic visits between the two countries occurred until 1940. The Saudis saw the Americans as a comparable power to the United Kingdom, and a country with no history of colonialism in the region (Wynbrandt, 2004, p. 195).

US cooperation with Saudi Arabia and the bilateral economic relations:

Following the establishment of the ARAMCO, a US- Saudi joint oil company, the company sought to strengthen US-Saudi relations by reducing the number of US policy makers and organizing travel arrangements for Saudi royalty to visit the US. The US administration recognized the need for stronger ties with Saudi Arabia and declared that the kingdom is critical to the US interests and defense, besides the strategic importance of oil. The appointment of a *chargé d' affaires* to Jeddah strengthened US-Saudi ties in 1942, and Crown Prince Saud made an official visit to Washington in October 1943. Prince Faisal and his brother Khalid visited the US in the same year, meeting President Roosevelt, Congressmen, and other government officials; while two delegations led by US army generals visited Saudi Arabia. The first group was tasked with assessing the current oil situation. The second visit, made by General Roys, the US commander in chief in the Middle East in December, aimed to make plans for the construction of a military airfield in Dhahran (Wynbrandt, 2004, p. 195-196).

Furthermore, on February 14, 1945, when King Abdul Aziz met with US President Roosevelt aboard the *USS Quincy*, a Navy Cruiser, in the Great Bitter Lake along the Suez Canal, and; therefore, the US-Saudi relationships were highlighted. The ambition of King Abdul Aziz to find a strong partner to ensure the Kingdom's independence, as well as the US need for oil and military reach, resulted in what

appeared to be a mutually beneficial alliance. However, despite these hopes and ambitions, the two leaders could not agree on a fundamental issue: the displacement of Jews during WWII to settle in Palestine. King Abdul Aziz, on the other hand, consented to grant US ships access to Saudi ports and confirmed the deal to build a US air force facility in Dhahran (Wynbrandt, 2004, p. 196).

However, as other Arab states had been, Ibn Saud confirmed that Saudi Arabia would not be colonized. As a result, the monarch declared that the site would be leased for only five years before returning to Saudi Arabia with all of its structures and buildings. In addition, President Franklin D. Roosevelt agreed to give light weaponry to Saudi Arabia in exchange for the king's agreement to declare war on the axis, which occurred in March 1945, a declaration that eased Saudi Arabia's entrance to the United Nations. Additionally, in April, Roosevelt sent Ibn Saud a letter in which he stated that the US would never take hostile action against Arabs and that the US would not change its stance toward Palestine without full consultation with both Arabs and Jews (Wynbrandt, 2004, p. 197).

US oil exploration in Saudi Arabia and the creation of California Arabian Standard Oil company 1933:

The world financial crisis of 1929-1933 left Saudi Arabia severely in debt, with the government's spending bringing the deficit to £300,000. Thus, the Saudi monarch collaborated with a US citizen, Charles Crane, a well-connected Chicago philanthropist and former ambassador, who was instrumental in

Reversing the government's fiscal deficit by discussing his alternative solutions.

Crane and the king was unable to meet until 1930 when Crane arranged for Karl- s. Twitchell ,a geologist and mining engineer ,conducted a survey of the country, and successfully found a rich source of oil that was of great interest to the US. Years after conducting the survey, Twitchell discovered a geological structure indicating the presence of oil and returned to the US to report his findings. As a result, Saudi Arabia preferred to work with the American company SOCAL, which offered \$ 50,000 in gold for the 60-year concession (Wynbrandt,2004,p.189-191). Later, on May 29, 1933, both countries signed an agreement allowing Standard Oil of California and its wholly-owned subsidiary (CASOC) to explore for oil, with an anti-imperial clause" to forbid the company's influence on internal affairs". SOCAL also owed the king £ 20,000 and established a wholly-owned subsidiary, CASOC, which was the fore runner of (ARAMCO) and was founded in 1944. Finding oil necessitated an influx of non-Muslims into the Kingdom. As a result, King Abd AlAziz Ibn Saud justified their presence in the kingdom by citing the following verse from the Holy Quran: "Say: O ye that reject faith .I worship not that which he worships ,Nor will ye worship that which I worship. And I will not worship that which ye have been wont to worship, nor will ye worship that which I worship .To you be your way and to me mine"(Quran 109:1-6).

Formalizing the Mutual Defense Assistance

Agreement(1951):

US- Saudi relations began with the tiniest of connections. Despite the kingdom's formal recognition in 1931, no US ambassador traveled in a formal capacity until 1940, when Bert Fish, the US envoy to Egypt, was co-accredited to the Kingdom of the Hejaz and Nejd and its Dependencies. Fish made only one trip to Jidda in the year before he left to serve in Cairo, to visit the monarch and founder, King Abd al-Aziz bin Abd al-Rahman Al-Saud. Furthermore, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has seen the first presence of US armed forces into the country, which happened almost accidentally at the end of WWII, when the US requested permission to build a modern air base near the Hasa oilfields in Dhahran to support the movement of men and materiel into the Burma theater (Pollack, 2002, pp.78-9).

The early 1950s were a warm period, and the main complications stemmed from the US alliance with the UK, then a major regional power whose bases encircled the kingdom, entangling them in Arabian Peninsula border disputes and aligning them with the Saudis traditional rivals in Iraq and Jordan. Both republics were ruled by Hashemite dynasties, whom King Abdul Aziz had driven out of the Sea emirate of Hejaz, which included the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. The Saudis were influenced by the Hashemite's proximity to the oil fields, revanchist ambitions, and British-led and trained military forces to reach an agreement concluded a mutual defense assistance pact with the US on June 18, 1951. It

included a long-term lease of Dhahran Airfield, which came under the auspices of the Military and Advisory Group (MAAG), also known as the US Military Training Mission from 1959 to the present (USMTM). As a result, this agreement laid the ground work for the development of long-term security relationships (Pollack, 2002, p. 79).

The oil embargo and energy crises (1973):

The Arab oil embargo was one of the most successful weapons introduced in to the world of politics in recent years, with one of the main reasons being that oil reserves are not evenly distributed across nations. More than 63 percent of known world petroleum reserves are located on the territories of members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), ten of which are Arab countries. As a result, the Persian Gulf holds the majority of these reserves. The remaining is owned mostly by the US (approximately 6%), as well as Communist countries (about 15 percent) (Brosche, 1974, p. 6).

The Arab oil embargo was initially used as a tool to achieve political objectives. Saudi Arabia and other oil-rich countries imposed a blanket embargo on oil shipments to the US and UK during the 1967 Six-Day War. It should also be noted that in 1967, Saudi Arabia stopped the supply of oil involuntarily in response to Nasser's demands, and so did not strictly enforce the measure. After one month, the boycott was lifted thanks to Saudi Arabia's efforts, and its impact

was never felt. Indeed, Saudi Arabia had previously objected to the use of oil as a weapon for the Arab cause (Brosche, 1974, p. 7).

Oil and politics should not be intertwined, according to King Faisal in particular. He declared that the Arabs should not use oil as a political weapon and that he would not allow it. The situation has shifted, but it is tough to pinpoint why. From an economic standpoint, it is arguable that in the past, Saudi Arabia was entirely reliant on oil income to meet its own needs. As a result, oil weapons were of limited utility and may harm the state that attempted to employ them. Today's surge in oil income, considerably in excess of present demands, allows oil producers to be more flexible in their use of this weapon without fear of retribution from the countries affected. On the political front, it is unquestionably crucial that, with Nasser's death and the failure of a comparable figure to emerge in the Arab world, King Faisal did not have to bow to outside pressures and can maintain control of the weapon himself. Not only had King Faisal's reluctance vanished in 1972, but other Arab leaders in positions of power have issued no fewer than 15 threats to use oil as a weapon against their political opponents, with the US being singled out (Brosche, 1974, p. 7).

In reaction to those threats, the Americans claimed, "They need us as much as we need them," "They can't drink the oil," and "boycotts never work," have been popular responses from the US side. They did not appear to be taking these threats seriously. Increasing pressures built up inside OPEC in the months leading up to the beginning of the Arab-Israeli War on October 6, 1973, to take a

tougher stance in negotiations with the major international oil firms, which were mostly based in the US. Furthermore, Libya seized a controlling stake in the bulk of the remaining foreign oil businesses functioning in the country (Brosche, 1974, p.8).

These demands were based in part on market realities, and they were made in light of the combined effects of currency parity adjustments and inflation in developed countries. Another key element was Arab nations' growing enmity against the US, and to a lesser extent, other Western countries that supported Israel in her conflict with Arab countries. Mohammed Anwar Al-Sadat, the Egyptian President, called on Arab governments to use their oil to oblige the US to end its pro-Israeli support policy in May 1973 (Brosche, 1974, p.8).

On May 15, Libya, Iraq, Kuwait, and Algeria temporarily ceased oil exports to the West as a symbolic protest against Israel's ongoing existence. On August 31, Saudi Arabia's King Faisal issued a warning to the US. He warned Arab leaders against using oil as a political weapon, saying it would be "very difficult" for his country to retain amicable relations with the US and continue delivering oil due to the US's entire backing of Zionism against the Arabs. On the other hand, he cautioned the Arab leaders against the use of oil as a political weapon (Brosche, 1974, p.9).

On September 4, oil ministers from a number of Arab countries gathered in Kuwait to develop a single policy for utilizing their oil reserves as a diplomatic weapon against Israel. The conference failed to establish an agreement on joint

action because conservative and liberal states had radically opposing viewpoints. The time has not yet arrived for all Arab countries to impose an oil embargo (Brosche, 1974, p.9).

The fourth Arab-Israeli war began on October 6, 1973. The US continues its constant support policy to Israel with weaponry, as part of its backing for the country. As a response, Arab oil-exporting countries took concerted measures to decrease oil supplies to Europe and Japan, as well as to stop supplying the US and the Netherlands entirely.

Almost overnight, they made the world aware of how this powerful weapon might be efficiently utilized to achieve political aims, as well as the implications that a lack of oil supply would have on the industrialized nations. This time, Saudi Arabia took the lead in the Arab counter-offensive against the US and other countries (Brosche, 1974, p.9).

The ten member-states of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) decided on October 17, in Kuwait to reduce petroleum production by at least 5% each month until Israel if it had completely withdrawn from territories occupied in the 1967 Six-Day War and Palestinian legal rights had been restored (Brosche, 1974, pp.9-10).

Several Arab countries have also put total embargoes on exports to the US. Similar absolute bans on shipping to the Netherlands were imposed later in October. At meetings of Arab Oil Ministers held in Kuwait on November 5 and Vienna on November 18, more cuts were announced. At the latter meeting, it was

Resolved to exempt all members of the European Community from these cuts, except for the Netherlands, in recognition of the Common Market countries' political stance on the Middle East situation in their statement. Furthermore, on October 16, the Gulf states unilaterally declared a seventy percent rise in the advertised price of crude oil, abandoning the price formula agreed to in Tehran in February 1971 (Brosche, 1974, p. 10).

On November 21, 1973, Henry Kissinger, US Secretary of State, cautioned the Arab governments that if the oil embargo persisted "unreasonably and indefinitely," the US could have to contemplate punitive measures. He did not say what kind of countermeasures the US would be willing to take, or whether any time tables had been set. He did say, though, that "those countries engaging in economic pressure against the US", should evaluate whether they should keep the embargo in place while peace talks were ongoing. Later, Saudi Arabian Oil Minister Yamani responded directly to Kissinger's words, saying that if the US tried to use military force, Saudi Arabia would blow up its oil resources (Brosche, 1974, p. 11).

These last words reflect the crisis in densification, with threats and counter-threats of embargoes, boycotts, and other forms of political and economic pressure, and how serious and terrible the situation was. When the oil-producing countries ultimately resolved to relax the embargo against the United States, freeze posted prices, and increase production levels at the end of March 1974, it

Was a huge relief in the international political arena. The world now recognized the importance, effectiveness, and dangers of oil as a political weapon in international affairs. Oil consumers would be wise to establish an agreement with oil-producing nations to avoid an outbreak of this type of economic warfare (Brosche, 1974, pp. 10-1).

As it is mentioned previously, Saudi Arabia has the world's second-biggest proven oil reserves (16 percent of total) and was the world's largest crude oil exporter by volume in 2018. Saudi officials have declared intentions to restore oil output to more than 9.8 million barrels per day (mb/d) from a maximum capacity of 12 mb/d following a September attack on vital oil installations at Abqaiq and Khurais (Blanchard, 2020, p. 29).

Saudi oil authorities announced in 2018 that the kingdom intends to invest more in maintaining and/or expanding spare capacity. Saudi Arabia consumed 3.7 million barrels per day (mb/d) of its production in 2018, primarily for transportation and energy generation. From January to August 2019, 75 percent of Saudi crude oil exports traveled to Asia, with the biggest buyers being Japan, China, South Korea, and India. Because Saudi Arabia's national budget is heavily reliant on oil export income, a downward trend in oil prices from 2014 to mid-2017 sparked some public and official anxiety in the country. Saudi authorities established a three-pronged strategy to address these issues:

- ✚ Agreements with other oil producer states and control output are being negotiated;

- ✚ Price hikes in domestic electricity and gasoline to cut consumption;
- ✚ A plan to offer public shares in the state-owned oil company Saudi ARAMCO and reinvest proceeds in the kingdom's Public Investment Fund (PIF). (Blanchard, 2020, p. 29).

In this regard, officials have taken strong stances in international climate change negotiations, requesting compensation for "Loss and Damage" caused by other nations' actions that may diminish demand for fossil fuels, as well as compensation for losses caused by climate change. A quick global shift away from petroleum-derived fuels would put the kingdom's budgetary stability at risk, as well as its society and political economy (Blanchard, 2020, p. 32).

Arms sales and US military presence:

For decades, Saudi Arabia's armed forces have relied on US arms supplies, training, and upkeep. Majorities in Congress have long supported sustained arms sales to Gulf region allies, especially Saudi Arabia, as a way to improve interoperability, reduce the need for deployments, deter Iran, and support American industry (Blanchard, 2020, p. 23).

In this regard, the Saudi government increased its security cooperation with the Truman Administration because both governments viewed the ex-Soviet Union as a formidable security threat. One of these advancements—Dhahran Airfield—provided the US with a new geostrategic advantage, although without the Truman

administration's persistence, particularly from the State Department, this airfield probably would not have been built. In addition to the completion of the U.S. airfield in Dhahran in 1946, which was "particularly important as a staging point in the event there was trouble with the Russians," Truman established the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement (MDAA) of 1951 with Saudi Arabia. The MDAA was a five-year agreement that provided U.S. military training support to Saudi Arabia and resulted in the creation of the US Military and Training Mission (USMTM) of 1953, which remains a major pillar for US-Saudi military relations today. President Truman's successes came with a price for US-Saudi relations. For instance, the mere idea of a U.S.-occupied airfield at Dhahran reinforced growing Saudi suspicions of US imperialistic motives in the 1940s. The Saudi government saw little reason for a continued US military presence now that World War II had ended, and the proposal gave King Abdul Aziz concern about the future nature of US-Saudi relations. While King Abdul Aziz still preferred a partnership with the US against the Soviet threat, the increased US military presence in Saudi Arabia concerned the king (Bronson, *Thicker*, p.48).

Moreover, during the 1950s, the US government was eager to maintain access to the valuable Dhahran airbase (located in Saudi Arabia's Eastern province), which had come under US control in 1945. As a result, in 1957, President Eisenhower invited King Saud to Washington, where he promised the King significant military and economic support in exchange for permission for the US military to occupy Dhahran. The air base at Dhahran (which remained under US control until 1962,

And the nag in from 1991 to 2001) was the largest US military base in the eastern hemisphere during the 1950s, and was thus a critical component of US military dominance (Lowenstein J, 2016.p.9).

In addition, In June 1974, President Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, Secretary of State, met with Prince Fahd Al Saud, Saudi Minister of Interior Affairs, in Washington D. C., where the leaders reaffirmed their joint commitment to combating communist influences in the Middle East. In this meeting, Nixon and Kissinger also expressed their admiration for Saudi Arabia's leadership, emphasizing that the US "attitude toward Saudi Arabia and the Saudi people was based on friendship and respect. Thus, by the mid-1970s, the US and Saudi governments had established a relatively strong partnership, based on their shared opposition to communism as well as the Saudi government's commitment to implement a moderate oil policy that would keep oil prices low for the benefit of the US and Europe. In exchange, the US promised to provide economic and military support to the Saudi monarchy (Lowenstein J, 2016.p.9).

Since 2009, the US has proposed a succession of high-value arms sales to Saudi Arabia, including the declaration in 2010 that the Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF) would reconstruct and expand its main fighter units with upgraded F-15 aircraft (Blanchard, 2020.p.23).

In May 2017, President Trump signaled a continuation and deepening of bilateral defense cooperation, announcing completed and proposed defense sales during his visit to Riyadh with a potential value of more than \$110 billion. The sales

Include cases that the Obama Administration had proposed and notified to Congress, cases developed under the Obama Administration on which Congress had been preliminarily consulted, and new sales that remain under development (Blanchard, 2020, p. 23).

On going and planned sale cases are expected to significantly boost Saudi military capability, and executives in both nations have described them as symbolic vows to collaboration amid a moment of regional turbulence and political change. Saudi spending on maintenance and training, as well as decisions about force posture and command structures, will influence the overall effect of new acquisitions on Saudi military preparedness and capabilities, as they have in the past. Since 2015, Saudi and Emirati use of US weapons in Yemen has spurred increased congressional scrutiny of new sales to those nations, while Congress has yet to act to permanently halt any proposed sales. Majorities in the House and Senate in the 116th Congress rejected the Trump Administration's use of emergency arms sales authority in May 2019 to expedite sales of air-to-ground munitions and other defense systems to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (Blanchard, 2020, p. 23).

However, Congress did not vote to override the president's vetoes of related disapproval resolutions (S.J.Res. 36, S.J.Res. 37, and S.J.Res. 38). Congress also directed the President in April 2019 to "remove the United States Armed Forces from hostilities in or affecting the Republic of Yemen, except the United States Armed Forces engaged in operations directed at a Qaida or associated forces," but the

Senate did not vote to override President Trump's veto of S.J.Res.7 (Blanchard, 2020, p.23).

The US Military Training Mission in Saudi Arabia (USMTM) and the Saudi Arabian National Guard Modernization Program (PM-SANG) are in charge of US defense cooperation with the country. Since the 1950s and 1970s, they have been active under unique bilateral agreements and funded by Saudi purchasing. Until 2017, Saudi military and national guard forces were led by two different senior members of the royal family, and it is unclear what, if any, impact post-2017 leadership changes and Saudi plans to increase self-sufficiency in defense production may have on the future acquisition of US weapons and training among these forces (Blanchard, 2020, p.24).

According to the Department of Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), there was 555 US military personnel (including 314 active-duty soldiers) in Saudi Arabia as of September 2019. The Department of Defense stated in October 2019 that it had extended or authorized deployments of 3,000 US personnel to the kingdom since September 2019 in order to “assure and reinforce Saudi Arabia's defense.” Two fighter squadrons, one air expeditionary wing, two Patriot missile defense batteries, and one Terminal High Altitude Area Defense System will be deployed (THAAD) (Blanchard, 2020, p.24). US President Trump stated in a letter to Congress in November 2019 that “this personnel will remain deployed as long as their presence is required” to carry out the duties mentioned in the letter. These include “improving regional defenses against air and missile

threats,” “supporting the operation of US fighter aircraft from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,” and “assuring our partners ,discouraging further Iranian provocative behavior, and bolstering regional defensive capabilities.” According to press sources in January 2020, the US force presence was anticipated to be 2,500 personnel (Blanchard, 2020, p.24).

In light of recent attacks on Saudi oil installations and other infrastructure, US authorities are allegedly considering coordinated air-defense operations with the Saudi military to better protect against air and missile attacks. President Trump has indicated that Saudi Arabia has agreed to fund related US deployment and operational costs, although the Department of Defense has not publicly specified any related arrangements. Through Foreign Military Sales cases, Saudi Arabia already pays for the incremental expenses of some US military training and advice services (Blanchard, 2020, p.25). Previously ,the kingdom provided billions of dollars to cover the additional costs of US military activities during the 1991 Gulf War. Current legislation allows designated countries and regional organizations to accept burden-sharing contributions (Blanchard, 2020, p.25).

Saudi Arabia and the Reagan Doctrine:

The Reagan Doctrine was a groundbreaking policy concept established by the Reagan Administration (1981-9) to counter what it saw as Soviet expansionism in the developing nations. Its goal was to promote anti-Soviet in urgencies' by supplying rebel forces with American assistance to raise the costs of

maintaining or acquiring clients and, maybe, overturn Soviet-backed regimes and hasten the end of the Cold War (Marshall, 1988. §.1).

US President Reagan took office with a bold commitment to roll back Soviet gains in the Third World without risking the trauma, or cost of another Vietnam-style intervention. The Reagan Doctrine, as his policy became known, ironically took its cue from Soviet support to left-wing insurgencies in Africa and Central America in the 1970s. The Reagan doctrine; however, benefited anti-communist resistance and counter-revolutionary insurgencies in Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, and Nicaragua. In the Middle East, two regional adversaries diverted resources to assist Washington in the hope of receiving reciprocal favors due to its technical and military expertise and experience in covert operations (Marshall, 1988. §.2).

In Central America, Africa, and the Middle East, Israel has been a particularly active agent of US policy, most notably in support of the Contras and arms deals with Iran. For its part, Saudi Arabia has made a significant commitment to covertly supporting the Reagan administration's future policy objectives. One overarching goal was to neutralize, or at the very least limit, the power of the Israeli lobby in the United States. It gave Washington access to its bank accounts, sending petrodollars to the third world to stoke anti-communist rebellions (Marshall, 1988. §.3).

Arms and influence:

Saudi Arabia played a financial role in weaning Egypt away from the Soviet Union and transforming it into a staunch US ally in the early 1970s. The Saudis funded the airlift of Moroccan troops to Zaire in 1977 to save the Mobutu regime from Katanga secessionist forces. They gave tens of millions of dollars to the Yemen Arab Republic in 1979, when it was engaged in border clashes with its pro-soviet neighbor to the south, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. It is worth mentioning that Saudi Arabia has been sending arms and finances to the government and/or opposition forces in North Yemen since 1962. The Saudis also bankrolled Somalia in the late 1970s to the tune of \$200 million at Washington's request, thereby helping to move that former Soviet client into the Western camp and securing for the US access to a naval base in the Indian Ocean. The "special relationship" between Riyadh and Washington took off after 1981 when the Saudis turned to the Reagan administration to protect their advanced weapons orders from congressional interdictions at the hands of the Israel lobby. After only two weeks in office, Caspar Weinberger, US Secretary of Defense, declared that the administration would do everything possible to strengthen Saudi defenses in the aftermath of the Shah's fall in Iran (Marshall, 1988, §.4).

The date was March 6, 1981. The administration announced plans to provide new arms to the Saudis to halt what it saw as a "serious deterioration" in Western security concerns in the region. Israeli officials and a majority of the

Senate Foreign Relations Committee slammed the decision almost immediately. On April 1, the National Security Council (NSC) decided to add five AWACS surveillance plans, the most advanced of their kind in the world, to the administration's initial arms package. The total cost of the Saudi purchase, including the AWACS, was \$8.5 billion. President Reagan vowed to push the sale through, declaring that Saudi Arabia must not fall like Iran and that if Congress blocked the sale, the US would lose "all credibility" in the Middle East. Finally, in late October, after extraordinary arm-twisting by President Reagan, the Senate approved the deal by a narrow vote of 52 to 48. The administration lost a lot of political capital as a result of the victory, as evidenced by subsequent legislative battles over arms sales to friendly Arab regimes. The victory appears to have come at a cost to Riyadh as well (Marshall, 1988, §.5).

According to a variety of sources, the administration struck an informal agreement with the Saudis to push the AWACS sale in exchange for financial assistance to America's covert operations abroad. The deal has been incorrectly described as a "kickback," similar to the CIA-linked arms sales arranged by Lockheed and other defense contractors and according to one CIA source, the agreement was negotiated at the NSC level as a "back channel" operation to avoid congressional oversight of covert operations. In 1981, Robert Neumann, the US ambassador to Saudi Arabia, stated that the arrangements were informal. He noted that the Saudis "finance all kinds of operations all over the world,"

adding that "we support some, they support some...we talk about it...but it is an individual decision"(Marshall, 1988. §.6).

The Soviet-Afghan War and the US-Saudi Intervention(1979-1989):

The invasion of Afghanistan by the ex-Soviet Union triggered the Soviet-Afghan War ,which lasted from December 1979 to February 1989. Through out the conflict, the US government, in collaboration with allies such as Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, led a massive covert operation in support of the Mujahedin, a guerrilla militia that fought the Soviet military. The funding of the Mujahedin was one of the most costly and time-consuming covert operations ever undertaken by the US government: From 1980 to 1985, US funding was sixty million dollars per year ,rising to 470 million dollars in 1986 and reached 630 million dollars per year from 1987 to 1989 (Coll, 2004. p.151). The war itself was extremely bloody ,killing between 850,000 and 1.5 million civilians and forcing millions of Afghans to flee as refugees (Noor, 1991, p.101-126).

The dominant historical narrative surrounding US support for the Mujahedin propagates the notion that US officials were shocked and appalled by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and thus rushed to the Mujahedin's aid to protect Afghanistan's sovereignty and religious freedom, as well as to prevent Soviet expansion into South Asia and the Middle East. However, in 1996, eight years after the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, former CIA Director Robert Gates

revealed in his memoirs that the US government began funding the Mujahedin in July 1979, "Six months before the Soviets invaded Afghanistan" (Robert MG, 1996, p. 146).

Three years later, in a 1998 interview with the French news paper *Le Nouvel Observateur*, Zbigniew Brzezinski, former National Security Advisor, admitted that the US administration "knowingly increased the probability" (Vincent, 1998, p. 76) that the Soviets would invade Afghanistan with this covert aid to the Mujahedin. Brzezinski defended the decision vehemently, saying, "That secret operation was an excellent idea." It had the effect of luring the Russians into the Afghan trap... We now had the opportunity to give the USSR its Vietnam war (Vincent, 1998, p. 76). Despite these admissions, the narrative that US aid to the Mujahedin began only in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan persists in historical accounts and public memory of the Soviet-Afghan War in the US.

The Coalition War and the US-Saudi involvement (1991-2):

On August 2, 1990, Iraq occupied Kuwait. Iraq's leader, Saddam Hussein, authorized the occupation of Kuwait with the obvious aim of acquiring that nation's large oil reserves, terminating a large debt Iraq owed Kuwait and broadening Iraqi sovereignty in the area. Following that UN Security Council called for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait, and committed various resolutions on

Iraq (History.com Editors, 2009, para 1-2); the following resolutions are excerpted here in:

- ✚ UN Resolution No. 660 of Aug. 2, 1990: It condemned the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait;
- ✚ UN Resolution No. 661 of Aug. 6, 1990: It imposed sanctions against Iraq;
- ✚ UN Resolution No. 662 of Aug. 1990: It declared Iraqi annexation of Kuwait null and void;
- ✚ UN Resolution No. 664 of Aug. 18, 1990: It demanded Iraq release foreigners;
- ✚ UN Resolution No. 665 of Aug. 25, 1990: It allowed the use of force to enforce sanctions;
- ✚ UN Resolution No. 666 of Sept. 14, 1990: It addressed the import of food for humanitarian purposes;
- ✚ UN Resolution No. 667 of Sept. 17, 1990: It condemned Iraq's violation of embassies;
- ✚ UN Resolution No. 670 of Sept. 25, 1990: It imposed an air embargo against Iraq. (Associations of the United States Army, 1990)

After Saddam Hussein's rejection to comply with the UN resolutions, demanding the Iraqi army to withdraw from Kuwait, the UN authorized established coalition forces, which were made up of thirty-four Western and Arab countries and led by the US, to wage a war against Iraq in response to Saddam's invasion and annexation of Kuwait in 1991 (BBC ON THIS DAY, 1991). It is worth recalling that

the US regarded the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait as illegal when George H. W. Bush, the US President, responded to the Iraqi invasion, claiming that 'This will not stand, this aggression against Kuwait' ('Operation Desert Shield', n. d).

Since the Iraqi troops seized Kuwait, Saudi Arabia exhibited its concerns to be the next target of the Iraqi invasion after Kuwait, which threatened the security of Saudi Arabia, its oil resources, and the US interests as well. These threats have played a crucial role in the acceleration of procedures and alliances to protect the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its oil fields, in particular. In this regard, the US and UN have put forward several justifications for involvement in the conflict: the primary justification was Iraq's violation of Kuwait's territorial integrity. In addition, the US has taken several actions to support Saudi Arabia, its ally, because of its great significance in the region, being a major supplier of oil in global markets. Moreover, Saudi Arabia's geopolitical importance in the region played a major role in the US decision support. Shortly after the Iraqi invasion, Dick Cheney, the US Secretary of Defense, visited Saudi Arabia and met with King Fahd Ibn Abd Al Aziz Al Saud, and; accordingly, requested the US to provide the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with military assistance (US Department of Defense, 1992).

During a speech in a special joint session of the US Congress on September 11, 1990, George H. W. Bush, the US President summed up the justifications of involvement in Coalition War with the following notes: "Within three days, 120,000 Iraqi troops with 850 tanks had poured into Kuwait and moved south to threaten

Saudi Arabia. It was; then, that I decided to act to check that aggression" (Historical Speeches TV, 2018).

Operation Desert Shield:

When Iraq invaded Kuwait on Aug. 2, 1990, with four elite Republican Guard heavy divisions, US President George H. W. Bush immediately announced the Iraqi invasion unacceptable. On Aug. 7, 1990, George H. W. Bush ordered the beginning of Operation Desert Shield which was a military response to the Iraqi invasion. The operation was an organized coalition of 35 countries to defend the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and; then, to liberate Kuwait ('Operation Desert Shield', n.d., para. 1-2).

In this context, Bronson (2006) assumed that the Bush administration perceived that the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 posed a direct threat to the security of Saudi Arabia and the US interests of having a stable and influential partner and the provider of oil supplies in the Arab world, but the Saudi regime did not completely share a common view with the U.S. The Saudi royal family has mistrusted the U.S. intentions of establishing military bases on their soil because they were afraid this would just provoke internal Saudi opposition after the U.S. leaves the region, the Saudi regime would be left on their own. They considered that scenario to be a "disturbing possibility" (p. 193).

In succession, the XVIII Airborne Corps and its elite 82nd Airborne Division began to move to Saudi Arabia the next day, constructing a buildup of combat power in

the region with 600,000 US personnel. Meanwhile, the 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized), the 197th Infantry Brigade, and the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) moved to the Gulf. The US Army Reserve began its largest mobilization since the Korean War. By early November, with the addition of the 1st Cavalry Division (Armored), the 2nd Armored Division's 1st Brigade, and the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, a lethal force of over 100,000 soldiers was assembled for the defense of Saudi Arabia. On 8 November 1990, President Bush announced that the U.S. VII Corps would move to the Gulf from its bases in Europe and the United States. This heavy corps, consisting of the 1st Infantry Division (Mechanized), the 1st and 3rd Armored Divisions, and the 2nd ACR, would give the US Central Command (CENTCOM) commander, General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, Jr., to take the offensive ('War in the Persian Gulf: Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm', 2010, p.3).

According to Major Richard E. Matthews (1996), the objective of Operation Desert Shield was as follows:

U.S. military objectives during Operation DESERT SHIELD were to develop a defensive capability in the Gulf region to deter Saddam Hussein from further attacks; Defend Saudi Arabia effectively if deterrence failed; Build a military effective Coalition and integrate Coalition forces into operational plans; and, finally, enforce the economic sanctions prescribed by UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions 661 and 665. These objectives provided planning staff with the necessary direction to develop options and concepts. (p.26)

The US and the coalition forces counted on the substantial use of air power where it was the Coalition's only choice to fulfill the objectives sought for postponing an Iraqi Army invasion of Saudi Arabia or for reacting to Iraqi devastation of oil wells involved the use of airstrikes, considering that airpower was the only force capable of dealing with the Iraqi danger to Saudi Arabia in 1990 (Cohen & Keaney, 1993, pp. 58-60). Operation Desert Shield transitioned to Operation Desert Storm on January 17, 1991, with the start of the air war.

Operation Desert Storm:

The conflict, which is commonly known as the Gulf War, began after the Iraqi forces which had invaded neighboring Kuwait refused to withdraw. In reaction to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait, the US intervened with a coalition of forces to liberate Kuwait. Operation Desert Storm began on Jan. 17, 1991. The war was short, and Desert Storm only lasted forty-three days (Jan. 17- Feb. 28, 1991) ('Operation Desert Storm', 1993, p. 24).

At 03H00 in the morning, Desert Storm started as an air campaign against the Iraqi army, with Operation Senior Surprise, which became known as "Secret Squirrel." Seven B-52G Stratofortresses left Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, and flew 14,000 round-trip miles to, for the first time, launch 35 conventional air-launched cruise missiles at strategic Iraqi targets. It was the longest aircraft combat of its time (Gilster, 1996, p. 10).

During the operation, the Iraqi radar; unfortunately, failed to detect the presence of any aircraft. Within minutes of the attack most of Iraq's Command and Control Communications Center, Air Force Headquarters and Air Defense Operations Center were destroyed. During the next few hours coalition aircraft destroyed the electrical system in Baghdad, most of Iraq's radar defenses and any remaining fighter aircraft (Guemide, 2020).

Realizing that he could not defeat the military forces of the international coalition, Saddam Hussein's only option was to try to divide it. In retaliation, Iraq launched Scud missiles at Israel and Saudi Arabia. Hussein's hope was that Israel would retaliate with military force, which would have transformed the fight into another Arab-Israeli conflict. However, Israel resisted, as the US promised to help protect it. Two days later, President George H. W. Bush

sent two Patriot air defense missile batteries to help strengthen Israeli defense system (Hiro, 1992, p.58).

On Feb. 24, 1991, the ground attack started when US and allied troops crossed the borders into Kuwait. US and allied troops began two ground offensives in the deserts of western Iraq to defeat the Iraq forces in Kuwait. The allied troops advanced further on all fronts. The troops approached Kuwait City, while the western troops began to cut off the Iraqis' ability to leave. The third day of the ground attack witnessed the largest tank battle in history. The US armored forces engaged the tank forces of the Republican Guard, Iraq's elite force. US tanks destroyed completely over 500 Iraqi tanks and other heavy armor without losing a

single tank. During the third day, the Iraqi army began a headlong retreat from Kuwait and southern Iraq in doing so set over 400 Kuwait oil wells on fire. Their retreat being cut off by allied aircraft and with their vehicles being destroyed from the air the Iraqis fled on foot. That night allied troops freed Kuwait City (Guemide,2020).



Map1:DesertStorm:Areaofoperations(Source:WarinthePersianGulf:OperationsDesertshieldandDesertstorm',2010).

In the fourth day ,the last day of the war ,the US and allied troops continued the destruction of much of the Iraqi army. A decision had already been made in Washington to end the warat100hours.It was thought that an assault on

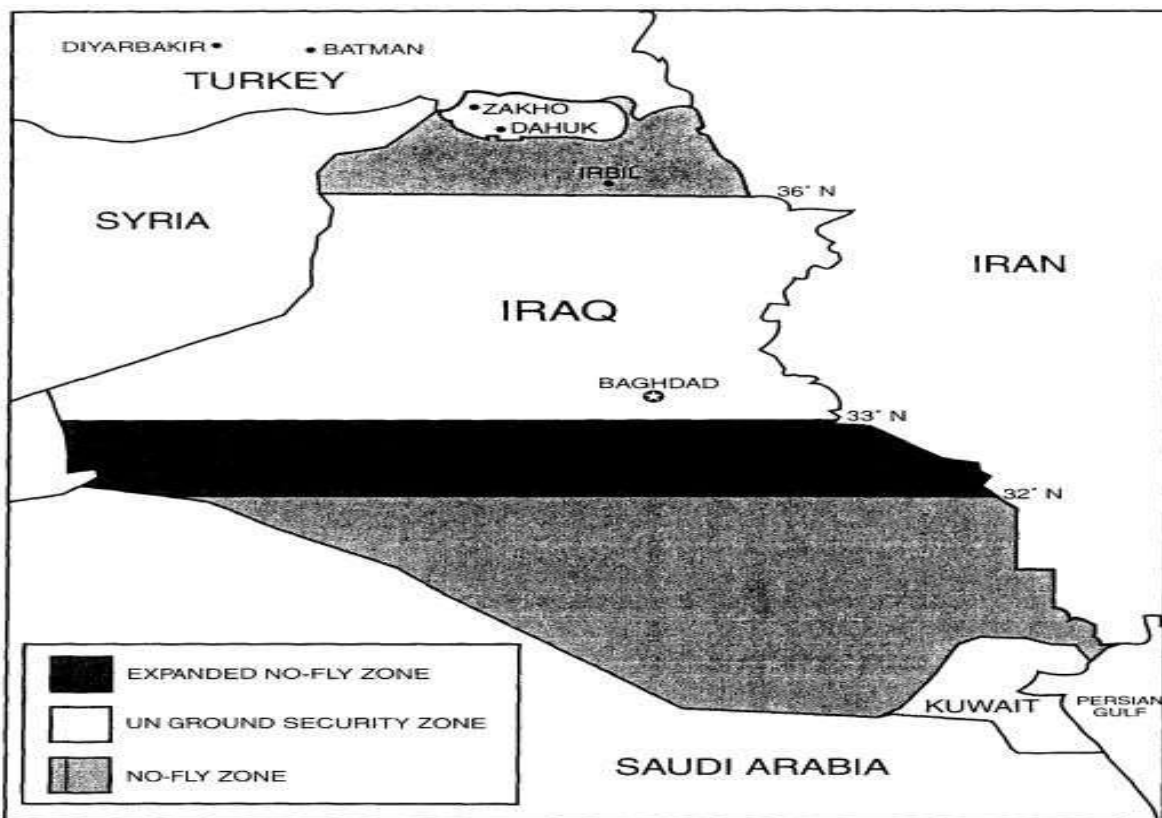
Baghdad was impractical, and the best that could be done was to destroy as much Iraqi equipment as possible. At 8:01 a.m. after 100 hours of battles a conclusion of the war was declared (Guemide, 2020).

Operation Southern Watch:

After the end of Operation Desert Storm and the liberation of Kuwait, US President George H. W. Bush announced a no-fly zone over southern Iraq on Aug. 26, 1992, in support of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 688. Thus, *Operation Southern Watch* began officially, one of the longest deployment operations ever undertaken by the US Air Force (Allen, n.d., p. 189).

Originally, the no-fly zone encompassed all of southern Iraq south of 32° N. It excluded all Iraqi fixed- and rotary-winged aircraft. In the aftermath of an Iraq amassing of troops at the Kuwaiti border in October 1994, the US declared a no-fly, no-drive zone. Under the direction of US Central Command, Air Force, Navy, and Army, as well as coalition forces of Saudi Arabia, Great Britain, France, and later, Kuwait combined to enforce the UN sanctions. Flying activities included fighter sweeps and patrols conducted against would-be targets in southern Iraq, reconnaissance, suppression of enemy air defense, air-to-air refueling, air borne warning and control system support, and other special missions. By February 1997, Operation Southern Watch air crews had flown more than 133,000 operational sorties, with over 86,000 being in southern Iraq. The Iraqi regime complied with the restrictions of the no-fly zone (Allen, n.d., pp. 190-1).

As Operation Southern Watch continued, terrorists bombed the Khobar Towers barracks on Dhahran Airbase in Saudi Arabia, which was being used at the time as accommodations for the coalition forces in charge of Operation Southern Watch. Undeterred by the terrorist attack the USAF continued to support Operation Southern Watch through the 1990s and early 2000s. Operation Southern Watch continued until 2003 when the US began Operation Iraqi Freedom (Allen, n.d., p.193).



Map 2: No-Fly Zones in Iraq during Operation Southern Watch (Source: Allen, n.d.)

US-Saudi relations during the Clinton era (1993-2001):

With the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, the US appeared to be the world's dominant power. In 1992, William Jefferson Clinton, Governor of Arkansas, was elected US President (Paterson, 2018, p.).

Being identified as a Democrat, Clinton's foreign policy was best known as "Democratic Enlargement." It was closely associated with such theories as Fukuyama's "The End of History." Originally, Francis Fukuyama believed that the defeat of communism had resulted in an overwhelming victory of liberal democracy and Western capitalism. Thus, the Western model of democracy, liberalism, and capitalism, represented in the US, had won the struggle of history. Therefore, the role of the US is to assist the continuous advance of liberal democracy: To move from Containment to Enlargement (Guemide, 2020).

It is worth mentioning that democratic enlargement was made as a staple in Clinton's aim to make the new grand strategy for the US foreign policy. In this regard, he claimed that:

Democracy is the heart of our mission. Now, as then, our special role in the world is to defend, enlarge, and strengthen the community of democratic nations.... Democracy in short is the one big thing that we must defend, sustain, and promote wherever possible even as we deal with the many other tasks that face us. (Søndergaard, 2015, p. 536).

Under President Clinton, democratic enlargement required US efforts to promote democracy among developing countries because democracies were perceived to be less likely to cause trouble for the US by upsetting international stability through war, or internal conflict, which could lead to refugee crises (Paterson, 2018, p. 31).

Within this context, Søndergaard, (2015) stated that US President Clinton believed that:

...democracies are less likely than non-democracies to go to war with each other, to persecute their citizens, to unleash tidal waves of refugees, to create environmental catastrophes, or to engage in terrorism. And democracies are more likely to be reliable partners in trade and diplomacy. (p. 540)

With the inauguration of US President Bill Clinton in 1993, US-Saudi relations declined substantially because of some factors that emerged during that era. The end of the Cold War eliminated the shared anti-Communist interests that had helped define US-Saudi security relations since the late 1940s. With the Soviets losing global power and the war in Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia was not of such great importance to the US foreign policy for containing the Soviet Union (Barić, 2009, p. 1).

Continuing interests in preventing conflict from threatening the political status quo in the Persian Gulf region and from interrupting the continued flow of Saudi oil to international markets remained strong. US-Saudi differences over the Arab-

Israeli conflict and of the regional issues also persisted. The Clinton Administration's policy of "dual containment" of both Iraq and Iran played an important role in directing the bi-lateral relationships. Another factor that did not contribute to improving the US- Saudi Arabia's relation was the shift in the Clinton Administration's policy. The new president's preoccupation with Arab-Israeli peacemaking in foreign policy and the focus of strengthening the economy as the main preoccupation in the interior policy. However, US- Saudi relations were re-established on a new basis (Niblock, 2006, pp. 152-3).

Fundamentally, Saudi Arabia's financial decline and the US-Saudi deals in the 1990s reshaped relationships between both countries. It is worth recalling that when the Saudis were flush with petrodollars, they bought whatever they could from the US- warplanes, missiles, jetliners. The purchases generated tens of thousands of jobs for US military and aerospace workers. However, the US made efforts, during the Clinton Administration, to ensure that the Saudis could buy on credit what they once bought with cash. Officials of the Clinton Administration said that they saw the sales as crucial to keeping American arms makers afloat. They were confident the Saudis could afford their pending purchases, which included \$30 billion in American weapons and \$6 billion in airliners. There are some of the signs of the changing relationships between Riyadh and Washington D. C. during the Clinton Administration, which are cited as follows:

- ✚ A decision by the Pentagon to ease the terms of payment when a Saudi cash-flow crisis threatened billions of dollars worth of weapons deals in 1994;
- ✚ Promises by the US Export-Import Bank to guarantee more than \$6 billion in loans for the purchase of airliners by Saudi Arabia. If the deal goes through, the US Government will co-sign huge loans that private banks have deemed too risky to underwrite alone;
- ✚ Debates within the US Government about how seriously the financial troubles of Saudi Arabia affected its creditworthiness. Federal Reserve officials argued unsuccessfully to lower the Saudis' credit rating, which would have damaged the ability of Riyadh to borrow from American banks. (Engelberg, 1993, para. 1-5)

Despite its financial woes, Saudi Arabia remains the best foreign customer of American military contractors. Its arms contracts signed with the Pentagon since June 1990 total \$30 billion (Engelberg, 1993, para. 12).

Al Khobar Towers Bombing: US-Saudi reactions:

The Khobar Towers terrorist bombing in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, on 25 June 1996 was a tragic and costly event. It was an act of war where terrorists detonated a bomb with an estimated likely yield of more than 20,000 pounds of TNT-equivalent explosives outside the fence of the American occupied sector of

Khobar Towers ('The Khobar Towers Bombing Incident', 1996, p. 1). It is worth recalling that towers were used as a residence for the 4404th Fighter Wing of the US Air Force, which is part of USCENTCOM, as well as coalition forces from the UK, France, and Saudi Arabia which participated in Operation Southern Watch.

On June 25 at 21H49 hours, security police sentries posted on the roof-top of Building 131 observed a septic tank truck and a car traveling eastbound in the parking lot outside the north perimeter fence. When the truck was a beam Building 131, it turned left away from the compound. The truck then began to back up into the hedges just outside the fence. Occupants of the truck jumped in the waiting car and sped off. Sentries radioed the situation into the security desk and began alerting building occupants in Building 131 of Khobar Towers. The three security personnel ran door to door, starting from the top floor and working their way down. At 21H55 hours, the bomb detonated. Estimates of the bomb's size vary. One estimate states the bomb was equivalent to 3,000- 8,000 pounds of TNT, but most likely 5,000 pounds. Another estimate puts the bomb size at 20,000- 30,000 pounds of TNT. The explosion killed 19 service members and injured hundreds more. It also injured many Saudi Arabian citizens and third-country nationals and severely damaged or destroyed a significant amount of property (Creamer and Seat, 1998, p.22).

The Saudi authorities did not express any alarm in this regard immediately after the bombing. Whether it is acceptable to treat the bombing as an outlier. In an interview with Perry (1996), Prince Bandar bin Sultan bin Abdul-Aziz, the Saudi

ambassador to the US claimed that "Islamic radicals are very, very small, and looked upon in this country as outcasts ... Islamic extremists are not a threat to the stability of the country" (p.88). Nonetheless, Americans reacted to the incident in quite diverse ways, and the US State Department initiated an assessment of its facilities in Dhahran as well as the security measures in place to safeguard the forces there. General Schwalier directed a variety of actions to strengthen the perimeter protection of the Khobar Towers and issued a Battle Staff Directive instantly raising the Khobar Towers' alert status from "Threatcon Alpha" to "Threatcon Bravo" (See glossary), that threat became more specific. At each level of warning, an installation implemented all of the security measures required at the previous, lower, and additional levels (Crearner and Seat, 1998, p.23).

US support to Saudi Arabia in the fight against terrorism:

The rise of global terrorism which affected Saudi Arabia contributed to the deterioration of US- Saudi relations, which became only worse with the presence of the US troops on Saudi soil. The resentment over the US presence in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia culminated in Riyadh terrorist bombings in November 1995 which killed five, and the Dhahran bombing in June 1996, which killed 19 US soldiers.

Following the terrorist attacks, Saudi Arabia did not fully meet the US expectations for cooperation in apprehending the persons held responsible. One

of them was Osama bin Laden. He was located in Sudan in 1996 and the US made pressure on the Sudan government to expel bin Laden which was supposed to be brought back to Saudi Arabia, but the Saudis did not submit a request for his extradition due to the influence of bin Laden family and he managed to escape to Afghanistan. There he used his wealth and connections obtained in the Soviet-Afghanistan war in the 1980s to sponsor the mujahid activity.

It is worth recalling that a joint US- Saudi intelligence task group was formed shortly after the terrorist strikes in Saudi Arabia to assist in the identification of the culprits. This paved the way for a longer-term bilateral body with a greater mandate. Following that, a delegation of senior US counter-terrorism officials met with their Saudi counterparts and reportedly urged them to stop terrorists from funding money through Saudi organizations and businesses (Blanchard, 2008,).

After the bombing of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in August 1998 for which Al-Qaida and their leader Osama bin Laden, were held responsible, the US and Saudi Arabia joined their effort in catching bin Laden. But due to mutual distrust and lack of information sharing, that effort was badly coordinated and in the end, unsuccessful. At the end of the 1990s, the US perceived its position in Saudi Arabia as "one of protector, while Saudi Arabia no longer warmly welcomed the form American presence had taken" (Aarts and Nonneman, 2005, p.387).

The US- Saudi relations during the Clinton presidency had a controversial repercussion on the future Saudi Arabian position in the Gulf region and its policy. On the one side, it can be argued that "Saudi involvement with the US had itself become an incitement to terrorism, both towards the US and towards Saudi Arabia", but on the other hand, the rise of international terrorism against the US and SA respectively, "increased the regime's sense of vulnerability and hence its inclination to seek protection from the US" (Niblock, 2006, pp. 155-6).

US- Saudi relations during the presidency of George W.

Bush (2001-9):

When George W. Bush was elected president in 2001, it appeared that a new era in US-Saudi Arabian relationships was approaching, particularly because officials of his father's administration had acquired solid personal contacts and experience in dealing with the Saudis (Paterson, 2018,). Included in the Bush Administration of 2001- 9 Dick Cheney, Vice President; Colin Powell, Secretary of State; and Donald H. Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense.

Saudi rulers intended to rebuild once-good relations with the Bush Administration, as they had productively cooperated with during George W. Bush's presidency (1988- 1992). The two countries' relations witnessed an improvement, a decade-long alliance based on "oil for security" was forged. In exchange for Saudi Arabia's commitment to providing inexpensive oil to the US, the US agreed to safeguard Saudi Arabia's security against any internal, or external threats.

Although the Saudi monarchs sought to approach the US and improve their bilateral relations, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the rise of the Intifada in 2000, and the US' constant support to Israel deteriorated the relationships between both countries (Richard, 2020).

It is worth mentioning that the Saudis resented the US for being excluded in the Camp David peace talks, and the US administration was strongly supporting the Israelis. Crown Prince Abdullah pressed the US to exert pressure on Israel to stop the violence. He even declined the invitation to the White House as a protest gesture. Meanwhile, President Bush refused to meet with the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat for a similar reason but directed at the different party in this conflict. Both the US President Bush and the Crown Prince demanded the other participant in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to first stop the violence for the diplomacy to be initiated (Perlez, 2001, p.3).

In the 1990s, the strategically important relevance of Saudi Arabia in the previous decade was attempted to be changed. The US used to rely significantly on Saudi Arabia, but the new administration had a new policy: to stop relying only on one state in the Gulf and now to engage in these rise of close bilateral relations with rather smaller states, participants in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and mostly through military cooperation. In reaction, Saudi Arabia was to seek a new security partner; so, Prince Saud Al-Faisal, Minister of Foreign Affairs, called in December 2004 for a reorganization of GCC by inviting Iran and more closely cooperating with India and China. That was seen as "a reflection of

the declining condition of the US-Saudi strategic partnership” (Knights, 2005, p.13).

The 9/11 terrorist attacks were a shocking event both for the US and Saudi Arabia as well. Not just for the fact that 15 Saudis participated in the 9/11 attacks which brought the Saudi royal family in an uncomfortable position, but also because of the segregations between the two countries in the recent period (Merritt, 2009,).

After the attacks, Saudi Arabia has been in a problematic circumstance. While the royal family was denying any involvement in these events and shared a limited amount of intelligence data in the following months, the Saudi society was the one labeled as problematic as Al-Qaeda was raising money from the rich individuals and transfer it through various charities organizations while the Saudi leaders did nothing in the past to prevent that (Cameron, 2001, pp.69-70).

The terrorist attacks brought one more change: Al-Qaida and similar militant Jihadist organizations did not regard the US as their sole enemy but turned against the Saudi ruling elite as well. The goal of violent Jihadists has now extended to overthrowing the Saudi royal family from the ruling position (Henderson, 2004, Para. 9). One of the reactions of the Saudis was that they started to examine the cases of charities operating in their country in more detail. For example, one of the charities particularly mentioned in the 9/11 Commission Report, the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY) which was spreading Wahhabism through schools and mosques, was struck both by the US

and the Saudi government and their assets have got frozen ('Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the US', 2004, p.372).

In October 2001, the Saudi government announced that it would implement UN Security Council Resolution 1373, which called for the freezing of terrorist and terrorism-related funds and also, they have invited the G-7 Financial Action Task Force (FATF) on Money Laundering to conduct a "mutual evaluation" and passed a new set of banking regulations which should prevent further financing of terrorist networks ('United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373', 2001). On the social level, the Saudis started the series of educational seminars aimed at the prevention of further terrorist drafting, and on the international level, Saudi Arabia hosted a counterterrorism conference at which it was adopted a resolution known as "The Riyadh Declaration" which clearly and openly condemned violence and terrorism ('Counter-Terrorism International Conference: Riyadh Declaration, 2005).

9/11 attacks and the rise of global terrorism:

On September 11, 2001, 19 terrorists on a suicide mission launched a series of terrorist attacks against the US. The event became known as the "9/11 attacks." When four commercial passenger jet airliners were hijacked that morning, two of them crashed into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, one plane into each tower, causing both towers to fall within two hours. The third plane fell in the Pentagon, particularly the Head

Quarters of the Department of Defense. The fourth hijacked plane went down in a field in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, killing everyone on board (McDonnell, 2013,). The assaults killed Around 3,000 people, including the 19 hijackers, many firefighters, and rescue workers (Bergen, 2020,). Due to the obvious quantity of irreplaceable losses and the global impact of the assaults, it can be considered one of the most terrible and tragic terrorist acts in human history.

In 2001, the total cost of rebuilding was measured to \$105 billion (Goodrich, 2001,). These attacks marked the beginning of a new era of terrorism, where as there was an increase in terrorist activity following assaults. Additionally, Al-Qaida played a key role in other terrorist attacks, most notably an attack on synagogue in Tunisia and an explosion in a Bali night club in Indonesia, both occurred in 2002, as did explosives in Madrid train stations in 2004 and London metro stations in 2005. Furthermore, the threat posed by Al-Qaida, a radical Islamic Jihadist organization, has evolved, and the group still exists with only slight philosophical and purpose variations (Byman, 2016,). For the time being, the US has the preparedness and awareness to attacking ISIS, a more powerful and well-funded terrorist organization (Gorka & Gorka, 2015,).

.The Bush Doctrine and the War on Terror:

In response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks, President Bush declared a new foreign policy stance before a joint meeting of Congress on September 20, 2001, and indicated that the US figured any country that upheld terrorist gathering to be an

adverse system. These notes developed into the strategies known as the *Bush Doctrine*, which can be officially followed back to 2002 when the White House discharged the US' National Security Strategy. The doctrine relied primarily on three points: (1) a preventative war, in which the US would attack an enemy nation, or terrorist group before they had an opportunity to attack the US, (2) a unilateral action, in which the US would defend itself, whether inland or overseas, if necessary, and (3) The spread of democracy and liberty was the subject of the third point (Record, 2003, p.7).

In compliance with the Bush Doctrine, the US established the term "War on Terror", whereby the Bush Doctrine outlined the country's approach to combating global terrorism with a variety of possible means; namely, military, economic and media campaigns, which aimed at eliminating terrorism and the countries that support it. This campaign began shortly after the 9/11 attacks, and it became a central focus of US President Bush's policy. This war was a watershed moment on both the domestic and international levels ('National Strategy for Combating Terrorism', 2003).

Since then, the Bush Administration and Western media have used the concept to advocate for a global military, political, legal, and ideological fight against both terrorist organizations and the regimes accused of sustaining them. It was employed with a specific emphasis on nations related to Islamic terrorist organizations such as Al-Qaida and similar groups (US Department of State, n. d.).

Primarily, the Republican Party and Bush both believe that national security is the most essential and precious aspect of the world. Nations should fight for it no matter what the cost is. Intending to analyze the threat of terrorism and radical Islamic ideology, the US activated its intelligence agencies such as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the National Security Agency (NSA) to investigate and protect the country's interests (Gorka & Gorka, 2015).

Attacks against America or any other potential threat should be eliminated, and the US government and population should constantly be informed about the decision-making processes if peace is not reached. US President Bush formed a global coalition and dispatched military forces to supposed terrorist hideouts in the Middle East, at the start of the war on terror. The US was carrying out crucial efforts, regarding the matter, for instance, chasing and destroying Al-Qaida organization shelters as well as disrupting terrorist financing networks ('National Strategy for Combating Terrorism', 2003).

The Saudi response to 9/11 attacks:

9/11 terrorist attacks intensified US criticism of alleged Saudi complicity in terrorism or Saudi laxity in combating terrorist groups. The nonpartisan National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the US ('The 9/11 Commission') presented its final report, which said that the Commission "found no evidence that the Saudi government as an institution funded [Al Qaeda]." However, the report claims that Saudi Arabia "was a place where Al-Qaida raised money directly from individuals

And through charities," and that" charities with strong Saudi government sponsorship "may have redirected money to Al-Qaida. Saudi officials claimed that their anti-terrorist financing operations are comprehensive and do not focus solely on local dangers. Saudi leaders have stated repeatedly in official statements that they are committed to working with the US to combat terrorist financing, citing the fact that Saudi Arabia has been a victim of terrorism and shares the US interest in combating it (**Cordesman, 2016**).

Terrorist attacks associated with Al Qaeda in the US and Saudi Arabia appear to have given the Saudi leadership additional impetus to expand counter-terrorist financing efforts. The Saudi government indicated a month after the September 11 attacks that it would execute UN Security Council Resolution 1373, which called for the freeze of terrorist-related funds (**'United Nations Security Council Resolution 1373', 2001**).

Saudi Arabia's Monetary Agency has released a series of "white papers" outlining the country's efforts to prevent terrorist financing. In subsequent years, the Saudi government has established a joint task force with the US to investigate terrorist financing in Saudi Arabia; closed some charitable organizations suspected of terrorist ties; passed anti-money laundering legislation; prohibited cash collections at mosques; centralized control over some charities; closed unlicensed money exchanges; and investigated clerics who participated in charitable collections. President Bush has proposed ideas for US-Saudi coordination, with a focus on counter-terrorist finance, as mandated by the

Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act and the 9/11 Commission Implementing Recommendations Act (Blanchard, 2008,).

US- Saudi relations during the Obama Presidency (2009-2017): The relationship between the US and Saudi Arabia has been strained and volatile during the Obama Administration, but the two countries have maintained their alliance (Cammack, 2016,).

The tension has been illustrated by several challenges that have surfaced that pose a threat to the US- Saudi alliance; however, the conflicts between Saudi Arabia and the US have had a limited influence on the alliance; the partnership's endurance was seen in Obama's policy. Challenging issues including human rights violations and freedom of expression have remained a controversial topic in the bilateral relationships between the two countries. The US has chastised Saudi Arabia in particular for violations of women's rights and religious freedoms, as documented annually by the US State Department's reports, which have designated Saudi Arabia as "a country of particular concern" for religious freedoms since 2004 and has repeated this designation in subsequent years. For example, the Obama Administration backed Saudi citizens' right to freedom of assembly and speech, while Saudi leaders criticized the US government's stance, calling it "unacceptable foreign interference" in the country's domestic

affairs. Furthermore, US authorities urged Riyadh to follow procedures and allow peaceful protests (Blanchard, 2014, p. 1).

In addition, the Iranian nuclear issue has also been part of US-Saudi relations. Iran has long been considered by Saudi leaders as a danger and source of instability in the Gulf area. As a result, Saudi authorities were not pleased with Obama's opening to Iran, fearing that any cooperation between Iran and the Obama Administration would weaken Riyadh-Washington relations, and enhance Iran's power and influence in the Middle East and Gulf region (Friedman, 2013).

Thus, the conclusion of the Joint Comprehensive Action Plan (JCPA) on Iran's nuclear program in July 2015 became a point of contention between Saudi Arabia and the US. Riyadh, in particular, was left out of the preliminary negotiations, which took place secretly in Oman in 2013 (Gause, 2014).

During his visits to Riyadh between March 2014 and January 2015, Obama attempted to de-escalate tensions between the two countries and reassure Saudi authorities about the future of US-Iran relations. However, the two countries' disagreements continued. Obama's most recent visit to Riyadh, in April 2016, failed to restore trust in the bilateral relationship (Black, 2016).

Saudi Arabia and the Obama Administration have been increasingly tense as a consequence of Obama's stance on the tensions between Saudi Arabia and Iran, as well as Saudi Arabia's decision to break all diplomatic ties with Iran in 2016. US President Obama suggested that Saudi Arabia and Iran share the

The region in an interview with the Atlantic Magazine (Goldberg, 2016,). On the other hand, the approach between the two sides had appeared on various aspects, so in terms of military collaboration, Arms sales have bolstered the two countries' military ties and defense cooperation. Both countries view weapon sales as a symbolic promise to work together during periods of regional upheaval (Defense Security Cooperation Agency, 2017,).

During the Obama Administration, the US increased its arms sales to Saudi Arabia. Between 2009 and 2016, Saudi Arabia became the first country in the Middle East to purchase US arms worth more than \$115 billion in 42 separate deals. In October 2010, four deals totaling more than \$60 billion were concluded (Blanchard, 2016, pp. 41-2). As a result, Saudi Arabia has become the US's largest customer for foreign military sales (Fleurent et al., 2017, p.).

Accordingly, military relations and arms sales were not affected by disagreements between the two countries but instead strengthened their alliance bonds. Economically, the US and Saudi Arabia have strong ties. In terms of oil, Saudi Arabia has maintained its position as a major supplier of oil to the US. For instance, in 2015, Saudi Arabia was the second-largest crude oil exporter to the US, after Canada (Blanchard, 2017, p. 37).

In terms of education, Saudi students enrolled in American colleges contributed \$1.7 billion to the US economy in 2014. Saudi students enrolled in American universities totaled 59,945 in 2015 and 56,900 in 2016, accounting for nearly 6 %

Of all international students in the US ('International Trade Administration', 2016, p.25).

1.7.1. The War on Terror and the Saudi contribution:

Obama has often emphasized the two countries' close security ties, considering Saudi Arabia as a significant ally in the fight against global terrorism (**The White House, 2014, p.**). Furthermore, the US Department of State has lauded Saudi Arabia in its annual reports for maintaining powerful relationships with the US in combating terrorism (Blanchard, 2016, p.18), as well as the exchange of information in order to prevent any potential terrorist attacks. In addition, the US administration has praised Saudi Arabia's efforts to prevent terrorism and extremism financing (**US Department of State, August 2011, p.**). Moreover, Saudi Arabia improved the legislative framework to combat terrorism (**US Department of State, 2015, p.**), and amended its schools' curricula to educate its citizens well within the framework of preventing the spread of extremist ideologies in light of the Middle East's dramatic increase in terrorist activity since 2011 (**US Department of State, 2012, p.**).

Conclusion:

the diplomatic ties were established in 1933, after recognizing Saudi Arabia in 1931. The two countries' relations developed to the alliance whereby the Saudi regime was viewed as an ally and a bulwark against the spread of communism

by the previous US administrations. The alliance was characterized by intertwining and increasing economic, military, and security interests. Following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, Bush considered the invasion as a direct threat to Saudi Arabia, he ordered numerous US troops to the country to defend it. Despite the fact that their relations were strained in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks, which were carried out by terrorists, including Saudi nationals, the two countries have weathered the crisis and improved their Security ties. In which president George w. bush praised Saudi Arabia's effort in combating terrorism as well as bilateral security cooperation. Under the Obama administration, the military, economic, and security relationships have been continued. However, a number of challenges have surfaced the Saudi-US partnership.

Chapter two: The election of Trump :A new era of building the US

foreign policy:

Introduction:

The US presidential election casts a shadow over all world events once every four years. Its process and facts dominate the various media outlets, and newspapers, magazines, and satellite channels create spaces for them that indicate the magnitude of the event and its importance on both the internal and external levels of the Americans. The new president's personality, orientation, and party affiliation played a major role in influencing many of the United States' international relations and its presence abroad, from concluding peace and cooperation agreements and resolving disputes to waging wars. Many Americans think that the new president has solutions to their problems in improving their life level, helping them create new job opportunities, and is willing to ensure their security.

The recent US elections are characterized by a high-caliber surprise that brought the Republican candidate Donald Trump as president at the expense of his Democratic opponent, Hillary Clinton, the most fortunate. In addition to Trump being a controversial figure par excellence, he forced many prominent figures in his party to abandon him, as he was presented to the White House from outside the political establishment. He has never held an executive, legislative, or judicial

position. His name rose as one of the major dealers in real estate and other businesses in New York. This paradox constitutes a precedent in American history for breaking the deeply rooted American political norms and traditions for more than two centuries.

The foreign policy pursued by the Trump administration was unexpected, inconsistent, tense, and sometimes hostile in relations with the US allies, and it differed from its predecessor, but it reflects deep political developments that played an important role in the relationship between the United States of America and the world, which was manifested in reclaiming America's Greatness. The present chapter provides an overview of the 2017 US presidential election. It explains how Trump's election has altered US foreign policy and highlights key decisions taken since he inaugurated the presidency.

US 2016 presidential Elections:

The 2016 US presidential election was held on Tuesday, November 8, 2016, which determined the 45th President of the US and the 48th Vice President (Presidential Election of 2016, n.d.).

Between February and June 2016, presidential primaries and caucuses were held in Washington, DC, and across the United States. Whereby the nomination process was conducted by indirect party elections, in which voters within a party cast ballots to elect a slate of delegates to represent their votes at the party's nomination conference, which then chooses the party's presidential candidate.

There are plenty of other additional third-party presidential candidates to choose from. Gary Johnson of the Libertarian Party received 3.28 percent of the vote, while Green Party's Jill Stein received 1.07 percent. After defeating Texas Senator Ted Cruz, Ohio Governor John Kasich, Florida Senator Marco Rubio, and other candidates in the Republican primaries, businessman Donald Trump was named the Republican presidential nominee on July 19, 2016. Trump selected Mike Pence as Vice President after earning the nomination. Meanwhile, on July 26, 2016, former US Secretary of State and former New York State Senator Hillary Clinton defeated Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders to become the Democratic Party's presidential nominee. She selected Tim Kaine as Vice President after getting the nomination. In the final results of the election process, Trump received 304 votes to Clinton's 227 (History.com Editors, 2019, para 2).

The inauguration of Donald Trump as 45th US President:

Donald Trump, the Republican Party's 45th President of the United States, has been inaugurated. Mr. Trump was sworn in, and in his inaugural address, he promised the American people that he would return power to the people (History.com Editors, 2021, para 1).

Trump went on to discuss his vision for an "America First" administration, in which trade, taxation, immigration, and foreign policy decisions will be made in the best interests of Americans, and he will deepen relationships and strive to combat terrorism. Most House Democrats refused to attend the ceremony, however,

former Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Jimmy Carter were among the guests (Four Years Ago: What Happened on Donald Trump's Inauguration Day in 2017, 2021, para 4).

2.3 Trump's foreign policy: "The Trump Doctrine":

The Trump doctrine, which is a new principle in the field of international relations that explains the nature of the international system during the rule of US President Donald Trump. The most prominent characteristics and features of this principle are that foreign policy in Trump's era has been characterized by an economic character and that it will be considerably governed by economic deals and commercial deals, in as much as Trump is a business man, not a politician, who wants to access to the political deal of an economic nature as soon as possible, as he did during the Islamic American Summit in Riyadh (Renshon & Suedfeld, 2020, p 270-272).

Trump glorifies the nation-state and considers it the basis for action in his policy and that national interests are above all considerations (Grevi, 2016, p 7). In his foreign policy, Trump adopts the principle of "America First" as the general goal of his foreign policy, which states that America should not secure the interests of others or take them into consideration, with the necessity prioritizing to commitments to American interests and deal with them on the basis that they are the primary motive for any move at the foreign policy level. America is not

Obligated to protect or defend other countries gratis (Renshon & Suedfeld, 2020, p40-41).

2.4. The Determinants of Donald Trump's foreign policy:

During the campaign of Donald Trump, he has vowed major changes to the United States' foreign policy. With his ascension to authority on January 20, 2017, his most important orientations began to transcend the period of decline and decrease, which cast a shadow over the US role and management of a range of international and regional issues during Obama's presidency, in terms economic he pledged to solve (TPP) trade agreement issues and reconsidering The North American Free Trade Agreement, as to serve the US interests. after taking office he withdrawal from TPP and revisiting NAFTA by creating a new deal called USMCA, in addition, he leaves the Paris agreement (Duncombe, 2020, para.2-3). On the other hand, Trump also issued an executive order banning and barring citizens from Muslim-majority nations from entering the United States. He shed the light on serious issues, including files related to the East, such as the terrorism file, Where it was one of his main campaign promises to his public to combat ISIS and stop the spread of extremist ideology (Felter, 2017, para.4-5).

The US withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP):

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is a planned free trade agreement between 12 Asia-Pacific countries that the US considers to be economically and

strategically important. On February 4, 2016, the TPP countries signed the final accord. The TPP aims to liberalize trade and investment while also establishing new norms and disciplines in the region (Chow & McGuire, 2018, p44).

The FTA is intended to be a dynamic document that might pave the way for a larger Asia-Pacific free trade zone. It's also a response by the US to the region's rapidly growing economic and geopolitical ties, and it's become the economic cornerstone of the administration's rebalancing efforts. Indeed, the US has existing FTAs with six of the TPP's member countries. The anticipated impact of the agreement is viewed differently, whereby, proponents argue that the TPP will boost economic growth and jobs by expanding trade and investment with countries that currently account for 37 percent of total US trade, as well as deepening US trade and investment integration in what many see as the region with the world's greatest economic chances (Office of the United States Trade Representative, 2015).

In addition, they claim that the pact allows the US to invest in the region and demonstrate its strategic engagement and economic leadership in that area. In contrast, Opponents are concerned about competition in industries that are vulnerable to imports. They also worry that the proposed TPP will restrict the US government's power to regulate in various areas. Certain components of the TPP agreement have been contentious during the discussions, particularly in respect to markets, intellectual property protection, environmental protection, and worker rights, corporations, access to government procurement, and the potential inclusion of laws on currency valuation and exchange rates are among them. It is worth recalling that former President Barack Obama negotiated the TPP, but Congress never approved it (Trump executive order pulls out of TPP trade deal, 2017, para 1).

Trump claimed during his presidential campaign that the TPP was detrimental for American manufacturers and the US workers in that industry. Following Trump's inauguration, he signed an executive order withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiating process (Trump executive order pulls out of TPP trade deal, 2017, para 3).

The executive move was part of the Trump administration's efforts to draw attention to its ambitions to drastically overhaul US trade policies, delivering on a key campaign promise and revealing the administration's economic national is tuned belly (What executive actions has Trump taken?, 2017, para 1). This withdrawal has shocked Asian countries who had based their economic expectations on the agreement (Chow & McGuire, 2018, p 74).

Despite the negative consequences of the decision, the US insisted on withdrawing. As a result of the US withdrawal, China has gained a major strategic advantage in Asia through its own rival free trade agreement, and will now be able to write the rules for trade in Asia and possibly beyond; in addition, the TPP would have resulted insignificant economic gains for the US (Strategic Consequences of U.S. Withdrawal from TPP, 2017).

Travel Ban:

Travel bans; also called the Muslim ban, indicated a series of executive actions were set since Trump took the chair of the US in 2017. Trump has started enacting them, including reducing the refugee system, banning all immigration and visitors from many majority-Muslim nations, and putting new restrictions on all visas (Pierce & Meissner, 2017, p 14).

On statutory and constitutional grounds, several federal district courts authorized the implementation of the first two executive orders establishing the Travel Ban (referred to here as "EO-1" and "EO-2"). These executive orders imposed

limitations on foreign citizens from specific nations traveling to the US, as well as foreigners seeking asylum in the US. The federal government petitioned the Supreme Court for reconsideration after the US Courts of Appeals issued nationwide injunctions against EO-2, which contained measures prohibiting the immigration of nationals of six Muslim-majority countries and suspending refugee entry. The Court issued certiorari to consider the prohibitions on EO-2 and temporarily suspended their effects awaiting a combined review of Circuit rulings by the Court. President Trump submitted a presidential proclamation, the most recent of three "Travel Ban" decrees, while those cases were pending before the Supreme Court. In brief, the proclamation amended the context and duration of travel restrictions imposed on foreign nationals from five countries previously covered by earlier versions of the Travel Ban (Iran, Libya, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen), and introduced additional travel restrictions on certain aliens from three additional countries (Chad, North Korea, and Venezuela). Following that, in April of 2018, the Trump administration relaxed the restrictions on Chadian immigrants (Addicott, 2019, p515-9).

Engagement in Syria:

In 2011, the country was torn apart by civil war. The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terrorist group added to the complexity of the conflict. Other factions involved in the fighting included Hezbollah and Kurdish fighters, in addition to ISIS, Assad's administration, and anti-Assad rebels. The Assad regime was backed by Russia and Iran, whereas the Syrian opposition was supported by the US (Syria: The story of the conflict, 2016). President Donald Trump has stated that the United States' involvement in Syria should be centered on combating ISIS rather than overthrowing Assad (New American, n. d.). US interference in the Syria civil war has passed several events shown below:

The New York Times reported on March 9, 2017, that the US was roughly increasing the number of troops in Syria. A team of Army Rangers and a Marine artillery battalion were among the 400 soldiers being transferred to Syria (Gordon, 2017, para. 1).

On April 4, 2017, hundreds of Syrian civilians were injured or killed in a chemical attack in the area of Khan Shaykhun. Trump associated the attack with the Assad regime (Death by Chemicals, 2020, para. 2).

Trump authorized a cruise missile strike against a Syrian airport in western Syria, where the chemical attack on civilians in Khan Shaykhun occurred, on April 6, 2017, targeting fighter jets, military equipment, and fuel storage locations (Gordon et al., 2017).

On May 9, 2017, the Pentagon reported that President Donald Trump has confirmed a proposal to arm the Syrian Democratic Forces, which are led by Kurdish fighters (SDF) (Stewart, 2017).

Later on, On June 6, 2017, American troops launched an operation to assist the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) in retaking Raqqa from the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) (Cruickshank, 2017, p).

On July 7, 2017, the US and Russia announced a ceasefire in southern Syria. De-escalation zones would be established in the region under the agreement, while the US and Jordan worked with Syrian rebels and Russia with the Assad administration to bring the violence to a halt (Bendix, 2017). On April 4, 2018, President Donald Trump pledged to remain US forces in Syria until the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) terror organization is completely defeated (Schwartz et al., 2018, para. 1).

On April 8, 2018, more than 40 people were killed and hundreds more were sickened by a suspected chemical attack in Syria. The Syrian government was accused of carrying out the attack (Syria war: What we know about Douma 'chemical attack', 2018, para 3).

The strike was blamed on Russian President Vladimir Putin, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, and the Iranian dictatorship by President Donald Trump. Syria and Russia both denied any role in the strike (Hubbard, 2021).

Members of Congress called on the Trump Administration and world leaders to respond to the attack. On April 10, 2018, the US, France, the United Kingdom,

and Saudi Arabia, prepared to respond to the chemical attack waged by Syrian President Bashar al-Assad on April 8. U.S. and French warships armed with cruise missiles were positioned within firing distance of Syrian targets (Crerar, 2018, para 1-2).

President Donald Trump has informed Russia that a strike on Syria for using chemical weapons against its citizens is likely. The US Congress, on the other hand, will not vote to authorize military attacks on Syria, but in response to a suspected chemical weapons assault in Syria, President Donald Trump, France, and the United Kingdom ordered precise strikes on Syria on April 13, 2018. More than 100 missiles were launched at three Syrian chemical weapons facilities (Liptak, 2018).

After that Trump announced the withdrawal of all American troops from Syria on December 19, 2018, ending the country's military participation. Initially, the administration stated that troops would be leaving (Kube et al., 2018, Para 1-2). However, National Security Adviser John Bolton stated on January 6, 2019, that forces would continue in Syria until ISIS was eliminated (**Trump Adviser Bolton Says U.S. Withdrawal from Syria Is Conditional on Defeat of ISIS, 2019**)

Revisiting NAFTA:

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was signed by Bush H.W. in 1992 to establish a free trade zone between the United States, Mexico, and

Canada. Congress ratified it in 1993, and it became effective in 1994 (Service, Congressional Research, 2017a).

NAFTA allowed increased imports from Mexico into the US market, resulting in one of the world's largest single markets. Tariff and non-tariff trade liberalization, rules of origin, services trade, foreign investment, intellectual property rights protection, government procurement, and dispute resolution were among the key NAFTA provisions. Separate NAFTA side agreements included labor and environmental provision (Service, Congressional Research, 2017b).

President Trump declared throughout his election campaign that he intended to renegotiate NAFTA and that once in office, he would look into the consequences of exiting the deal (Audley et al., 2021a). Trump declared: "Nafta was the worst straight trade deal ever made" (Trump : NAFTA was worst trade deal ever made, 2018).

Following Trump's inauguration, The Trump administration informed Congress of its intention to start NAFTA renegotiation negotiations with Canada. In addition, the administration began talking with members of Congress on the scope of the talks. Alternatively, Trump has threatened to pull out of the pact if it does not produce adequate outcomes and if Canada and Mexico refused to renegotiate. He might want to think about the effects of renegotiating or withdrawing from NAFTA on the US economy and foreign ties with Mexico and Canada (Audley et al., 2021b).

As a renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The countries signed a new agreement called USMCA. The agreement was a key part of President Trump's economic strategy ;He aimed to reduce the trade gap between the US and Mexico. Donald Trump signed the USMCA on January 29,2020,with bipartisan backing. The USMCA needs to be ratified by all three nations before it could take effect. In June 2019, Mexico became the first country to approve the pact. On March13,2020,Canada authorized it(Chatzky,2020).

Leaving the Paris Agreement:

The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international climate change treaty. It was adopted on December 4, 2015, by 196 countries at COP 21 in Paris, and it went into effect on November 4, 2016. Its goals are to keep global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius, preferably 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels. Countries aimed to achieve this long-term temperature goal by peaking global green house gas emissions as soon as possible in order to achieve a climate neutral world by mid-century(Zhang,2020,p.221).

On June 1, 2017, US President Donald Trump announced that the US would withdraw from the Paris Agreement and immediately ceased to implement the agreement, including the Nationally Determined Contributions(NDCs)and financial contributions. Trump's decision to withdraw has sparked outrage both at home and abroad, with world leaders, international organizations, civil societies, and them edit expressing disappointment and outrage .On August4,2017,the

US State Department formally informed the United Nations that the US would be withdrawing from the agreement, prompting three questions about the decision. On the campaign trail in 2016, US President Donald Trump expressed skepticism about, if not outright denial of, climate change, and vowed to withdraw from the Paris Agreement if elected (Zhang, 2020, p. 221).

Following his election, Trump softened his stance, stating that he had a "open mind" about climate change. He postponed deciding what to do with the Paris Agreement, indicating that he was well aware that exiting would be met with harsh criticism both at home and abroad. Despite being on the fence for a while, Trump eventually chose to withdraw from the agreement for the following reasons:

- ✚ First, the Trump Administration is inextricably linked to fossil fuel industry, and interest groups are a key feature in US policy-making. Once the US withdrew from the Paris Agreement, the Trump Administration would seek to repeal climate regulations in order to benefit energy companies such as Koch Industries;
- ✚ Second, current political and social polarization emboldens Trump's decision to withdraw; the partisanship, social tension, and ideological antagonism that defined US politics;
- ✚ Third, Trump is skeptical of climate change and refuses to recognize the fundamental principle of shared but differentiated responsibilities in global climate cooperation. Trump stated that "the Paris Accord is

very unfair at the highest level to the US," and compared China and India's mitigation obligations with the US, ignoring the principle of shared but differentiated responsibility;

✚ Fourth, Trump's overemphasis on the slogan of *America First* is a significant departure from Obama's foreign policy. Unlike Obama, Trump believed that the Paris Agreement undermined the US competitive edge and harms both employment and traditional energy industries;

✚ Fifth, Trump harbored personal animosity towards Obama and his political legacy. He took an anti-Obama stance and decided to reverse most of Obama's policies after taking office, including signing on to the Paris agreement, one of Obama's strongest political legacies. (Zhang, 2020, pp. 221-2)

In summary, Trump's withdrawal decision was primarily motivated by domestic politics in the United States and his personal preferences, rather than any burdens imposed by the Paris Agreement. The President, Congress, and the Supreme Courts are the authority to make climate policies under America's tripartite system, and as clean energy has become more profitable and public pressure has grown, politicians have been forced to take action on climate change.

A War of words with Northern Korea over nuclear capabilities:

The first year of Donald Trump's presidency coincided with significant progress in North Korea's nuclear program. North Korean leader Kim Jong-un declared in his New Year's address that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has "entered the final stage of preparation for the test launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile" (Kim, 2017). US Donald Trump assured that "it won't happen!" (Trump, 2017). A few months later, North Korean media announced that a successful test of a ballistic missile capable of "reaching anywhere in the world" had taken place. This; however, was not the start of the recent Korean crisis, but rather the result of rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula. One of the major reasons for the increase in tensions in 2017 was none other than Donald Trump's verbal war with North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un (Beczowska, 2019, p. 104).

The issue of North Korea's nuclear and missile arsenals may be one of Trump's most pressing foreign policy challenges. US President had repeatedly promised to "clean up the mess" left by his predecessors. Nevertheless, Donald Trump was far from resolving the issue of DPRK denuclearization at the negotiating table in 2017: his threatening policy devolved into a war of words that could easily escalate into armed conflict. The tensions between Washington and Pyongyang also limited the options available to South Korean President Moon Jae-In, who replaced the conservative Park Geun-hye government with the liberal Democratic Party. The new South Korean administration faced the difficult task of balancing

international community expectations, the alliance with Washington, and the desire to improve inter-Korean relations. Because of their unpredictability, the leading figures in the Korean crisis – Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un – have raised concerns among the international community. Despite the fact that the American president blamed only the North Korean side for the conflict's escalation (Beczowska, 2019, p. 104).

Donald Trump's rise to power coincided with the son of Kim Jong-Il's final state of consolidation of power. Trump, like Kim Jong-Un, appeared to be an unpredictable politician. Despite the tightening of sanctions and the threat of US military intervention, North Korea conducted additional rocket and nuclear tests. However, the rapid development of the nuclear program and the purges of party elites were crucial for Kim's internal policy: he needed to solidify his position as the undisputed leader. In some ways, Trump faced a similar challenge: he needed to demonstrate his greatness as a president. The solution could be to address the issue that previous US leaders failed to address (Beczowska, 2019, pp. 106-7).

Following his election, Donald Trump declared the end of "strategic patience." Unlike his predecessors, he declared that he would resolve the North Korean issue once and for all. Instead of presenting a coherent strategy, Trump engaged in a verbal spat with North Korea's leader, and his associates were forced to repeatedly assure the international community that the conflict should be resolved peacefully first. In April 2017, tensions between Washington and Pyongyang

heightened. North Korea fired a medium-range ballistic missile into the Sea of Japan. Trump demonstrated his strength two days later by launching a missile attack in Syria. The aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson was then directed towards the Korean Peninsula. This was allegedly due to a communication breakdown. The commemoration of the 85 anniversary of the founding of the Korean People's Army, which was accompanied by military maneuvers, also added to the tension. Furthermore, the US missile defense system THAAD was installed in South Korea. In response, North Korea conducted an intercontinental ballistic missile test in July, after which it threatened to attack the American military base on the island of Guam. Threats were frequently exchanged between the leaders of both countries at the time (Beczowska, 2019, p. 107).

The situation appeared to be dangerous. When George W. Bush insulted Kim Jong- Il, the North Korean leader did not respond with an insult of his own. Kim Jong-un, on the other hand, was not unconcerned about Donald Trump's threats. It was feared that if North Korea's young leader was provoked, he would resort to nuclear weapons. Before launching an intercontinental missile, Kim told the Korean Central News Agency that "American bastards" would not be pleased with such a gift on July 4th (McCurry, 2017, p. 12).

The UN Security Council imposed new sanctions on Pyongyang in August. Sanctions imposed by the UN on this isolated country's economy pose a significant challenge to the regime. Kim had no choice but to respond, and his target was once again the United States, with the goal of making it "pay for its

crimes." The escalation of the war of words occurred during Donald Trump's aggressive speech at the United Nations General Assembly meeting. Then Donald Trump declared that he would "completely destroy North Korea" (Trump, 2017). Although this statement could have been interpreted as a declaration of war, the North Korean regime decided to stick to its strategy of threatening and withdrawing when the situation became too dangerous. Kim Jong-un announced that he would not make the promised attack on Guam, but instead wait to see the Yankees' "foolish and stupid behavior" (Lee, 2017).

The US bears full responsibility for any further escalation of the Korean crisis. The North Korean leader, whom Trump referred to as a "madman," was to advise the US to "think rationally and make a precise decision to avoid humiliation" (Lee, 2017).

Donald Trump's rhetoric is surprising in this war of words. Using social media, the US President made numerous statements that were far from diplomatically correct. In response to the threat of an attack on Guam, the media reported that the next provocations would be met with "fire and fury like the world has never seen." These words, while delivered in the manner of the North Korean regime, were delivered by Donald Trump (Bedminister, N.J. 2017). Those words may ring a bell, as the DPRK has repeatedly threatened to turn South Korea into a "sea of fire." The US President's subsequent tweets about increasing the nuclear arsenal and declaring that "the freewill never be a time when wear enot the most powerful

Nation in the world!!" Also sounds like something out of a North Korean propaganda speech (Trump, 2017).

The tone of both leaders' statements was strikingly similar. What is typical of the North Korean regime ; however , is seen as a failure of American diplomacy. Donald Trump lowered himself to his opponent's "level," thus losing the initial skirmish with him. When Donald Trump referred to Kim as a "rocket man on a suicide mission" and threatened to completely destroy North Korea if forced to do so (Trump, 2017), Pyongyang responded by saying, "a scared dog barks louder" (The Independent, 2017). Kim Jong-un realized that the tougher Trump's rhetoric, the less of a threat he posed. Donald Trump's words could also be used against the US, implying that Trump, not Kim , is the greater threat to peace on the Korean Peninsula (Beczowska, 2019, p. 108).

US withdrawal from their union nuclear deal:

Iran and the six powers (the US, UK, France, Russia, China, and Germany—collectively known as the P5+1) that had been negotiating about its nuclear program since 2006 finalized a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on July 14, 2015. (JCPOA). In exchange for a broad lifting of US, European Union (EU), and United Nations (UN) sanctions on Iran, the JCPOA required constraints aimed at ensuring that Iran's nuclear program can be used for purely peaceful purposes (Paul & Katzman, 2018, p. 1).

The agreement superseded the Joint Plan of Action (JPA), an interim nuclear agreement that was in effect from 2014 to 2016. The Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act (P.L. 114-17) required Congress to pass a resolution of disapproval of the JCPOA by September 17, 2015; the JCPOA went into effect on "Adoption Day" (October 18, 2015). On January 16, 2016, the P5+1 declared "Implementation Day," symbolizing the completion of Iran's nuclear requirements; the entry into force of U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231, which endorsed the JCPOA, as well as the start of sanctions relief specified in the agreement. Officials from both the Barack Obama and Donald Trump administrations have certified that Iran has met its obligations under the JCPOA (Paul & Katzman, 2018, p. 1). Top Trump Administration officials have argued that the JCPOA did not adequately serve US interests because the extensive sanctions relief provided by the agreement provides Iran with additional resources to conduct "malign activities" in the region and does not limit Iran's development of ballistic missiles. Resolution 2231, passed in July 2015, prohibits arms transfers to or from Iran for five years and includes a voluntary restriction on Iran's development of nuclear-capable ballistic missiles for up to eight years (Paul & Katzman, 2018, p. 1).

On May 8, 2018, President Trump announced that the US would withdraw from the JCPOA and re-impose sanctions that had been suspended under the agreement. The other powers that negotiated the agreement with Iran—Russia, China, France, the United Kingdom, and Germany—opposed the US decision and have met with Iranian officials to continue implementing the JCPOA. Iran's

President Hassan Rouhani has pledged to continue implementing the agreement as long as Iran continues to reap economic benefits from it (Paul & Katzman, 2018, p.1).

Legislation has been introduced in the 114th and 115th Congresses with the stated goal of redressing the deal's alleged flaws, or preventing any additional US sanctions relief beyond what is explicitly promised in the JCPOA. The Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (P.L. 115-44) imposes sanctions on Iran for proliferation, human rights violations, and terrorist support (Paul & Katzman, 2018, p.1).

On May 8, 2018, President Trump announced that, because the two sides were unable to reach an agreement, the US would withdraw from the JCPOA and re-impose sanctions that had been suspended under the JCPOA. President Trump directed Secretary of State Pompeo to "take all appropriate steps to discontinue the United States' participation in the JCPOA," and to immediately "begin taking step store-impose all US sanctions lifted or waived in connection" with the agreement, along with Steven Mnuchin, Secretary of the Treasury (Paul & Katzman, 2018, p.24).

The US has informed the other P5+1 countries that it will no longer attend meetings of the joint commission, the working group on the Arak reactor, and the procurement working group. During a May 21, 2018 speech, Secretary Pompeo detailed a new US approach to Iran, including applying "unprecedented financial pressure on the Iranian regime," working "with the Department of Defense and

our regional allies to deter Iranian aggression,” and advocating “tirelessly for the Iranian people.” He claimed that in exchange for “major changes” in Iran's behavior, the US is “prepared to end the main components of all of our sanctions against the regime..., re-establish full diplomatic and commercial relationships with Iran..., [and] support the modernization and reintegration of the Iranian economy into the international economic system” (Paul & Katzman, 2018, p. 24).

Mike Pompeo, US Secretary of State, outlined the following critical components for any new agreement:

- ✚ Iran must declare to the IAEA a full account of its prior military dimensions of its nuclear program, and permanently and verifiably abandon such work in perpetuity;
- ✚ Iran must cease enrichment and never pursue plutonium reprocessing. This includes shutting down its heavy water reactor;
- ✚ Iran must grant the IAEA unrestricted access to all sites throughout the country. Iran must also stop the proliferation of ballistic missiles and halt the launch or development of nuclear-capable missile systems;
- ✚ Iran must release all US citizens, as well as citizens of our partners and allies, who are being held on false charges;
- ✚ Iran must stop funding Middle Eastern terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in Gaza, and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad;

- ✚ Iran must respect the sovereignty of the Iraqi government and allow Shia militias to disarm, demobilize, and reintegrate, as well as end its military support for the Houthi militia and work toward a peaceful political settlement in Yemen;
- ✚ Iran must withdraw all forces under its command throughout Syria, as well as end its support for the Taliban and other terrorists in Afghanistan and the region, as well as stop harboring senior Al-Qaida leaders;
- ✚ Iran, too, must end its IRGC [Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps] Al Qods Regiment's support for terrorists and militant partners around the world, as well as its threatening behavior toward its neighbors, many of whom are US allies. This undoubtedly includes its threats to destroy Israel as well as its missile launches into Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates .It also includes international shipping threats and destructive...cyber-attacks”(Paul&Katzman,2018,pp.24-5).

On May 21, 2018, Hook, US State Department Director for Policy Planning, stated that "the plan is to continue working with our allies, as we have in the last few months, to create a new security architecture." During a press conference on July 2, 2018, Hook stated that ,in response to Trump's announcement on May 8 ,2018, Secretaries Pompeo and Mnuchin

"decided to create joint teams of senior officials to visit every region of the world." These teams were formed on June 4th. " Hook stated that the US is putting "severe economic pressure on Iran until the regime changes its destabilizing policies." Although Hook stated that the administration's policy "is not about changing the regime, it is about changing the behavior of the leadership in Iran," most observers believe that the current regime in Iran would be unable to change its behavior to meet the requirements outlined by Secretary Pompeo. During a June 22 television interview, Pompeo stated that if Iran continues to "ratchet up" its nuclear program, "the wrath of the entire world will fall upon" the government, explaining that "wrath" referred to "moral opprobrium and economic power," rather than military action (Paul & Katzman, 2018, p.25).

US-China trade war:

Following the re-establishment of diplomatic relations in January 1979, the two countries signed a bilateral trade agreement in July 1979, and began providing mutual most favored nation (MFN) treatment in 1980. In that year (shortly after China's economic reforms began), total US-China trade (exports plus imports) was around \$4 billion. In 2017, total US merchandise trade with China was \$636 billion, making China the US' largest trading partner (Man Gen Pk, 2018, p.4).

For years, US President Donald Trump has accused the Chinese government of unfair trade practices that put US businesses at a disadvantage. Many other world leaders have agreed that China unfairly subsidizes its businesses and has devalued its currency to boost exports. However, most countries have favored a multilateral approach to putting pressure on Beijing (ManGenPk, 2018, p. 11).

On March 8, 2018, US President Donald Trump announced new tariffs on Chinese steel and aluminum exports to the US. On March 22, 2018, President Trump announced plans to impose sanctions against China for its intellectual property rights (IPR) policies that harm US stakeholders. Tariffs on selected Chinese products valued at \$50 billion to \$60 billion were raised by twenty-five per cent as part of these sanctions. On April 1, China announced that it had retaliated against the US action by raising tariffs on a variety of American products, including pork. On April 3, the US administration unveiled a list of 1,333 products worth \$50 billion in trade to which it intended to levy a 25% tariff. These Chinese goods are in strategic sectors like information technology, robotics, advanced rail and shipping, new energy vehicles, and high-tech medicine and health care. A few hours later, China announced its proportional response: 25% tariffs on 106 products worth \$50 billion in trade (ManGenPk, 2018, p. 3).

As a result, China and the US are engaging in tit-for-tat warfare. The Trump Administration's plan to tax \$50 billion in Chinese imports were met with

China has threatened to retaliate with tariffs on US automobiles, chemicals, and other goods. The 106 items, many of which are manufactured in areas of the country that have backed President Trump, were chosen to send a message that a protracted standoff would harm American workers and consumers (ManGenPk, 2018, p.3).

According to World Trade Organization (WTO) rules, a developing country has a limited right to use non-market practices to stimulate economic development. Since it has overtaken the US as the world's second-largest economy, developed countries expect China to adhere to the same rules and responsibilities as a market economy. So far, China's government has reacted to the Trump administration's new tariff actions with relatively restrained words and promises of proportional responses to the American government's actions. The true motivation behind the Trump administration's recent anti-China moves extends beyond rhetoric. It has two components: forcing Beijing to open its market further to US goods and services and providing more favorable investment conditions to US companies. Putting a stop to the state-backed high-tech sectors that are at the heart of Beijing's "Made in China 2025" strategy (ManGenPk, 2018, p.4).

The world's two largest economies are the United States and China. A trade war would have far-reaching consequences around the world. It has

the potential to derail the current global economic expansion and cripple American businesses that rely on trade with China. It could also complicate geopolitical priorities, given that the Trump administration has enlisted Chinese assistance in resolving the North Korean crisis (Man Gen Pk, 2018, p.4).

US constant support for Israel:

The US and Israel have maintained strong bilateral relations for a variety of reasons, including strong domestic US support for Israel and its security; shared strategic goals in the Middle East; a mutual commitment to democratic values; and historical ties dating back to US support for Israel's creation in 1948. Foreign aid from the US has played a significant role in cementing and reinforcing these ties. US officials and many lawmakers have long regarded Israel as a critical partner in the region, and US aid packages for Israel have reflected this assessment. While some US citizens have worked to cultivate US support for Israel since its inception in 1948, advocates for Israel have engaged in organized, broad-based domestic efforts in the years since the 1973 Yom Kippur War to foster bipartisan support in Congress for the bilateral relationship, including US aid to Israel (Jeremy, 2020, p.1).

However, in recent years, strong domestic support for Israel has become a source of contention. Some Democrats from the party's progressive wing

have become more vocal about conditioning, repurposing, or even cutting foreign aid to Israel. When Israel considered annexing a portion of the West Bank in 2020, a number of Democratic lawmakers took various approaches to signaling their opposition to annexation. Some Members cautioned in broad terms that annexation would impact US-Israeli relations, while others were more specific, warning that if Israel went ahead with the annexation, they might introduce legislation that would either cut aid or prohibit its use or application in annexed territories (Jeremy, 2020, p.1).

The 2020 Abraham Accords between Israel, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Bahrain, which normalized diplomatic relations between Israel and two Gulf Arab monarchies, could presage requests to Congress for significant increases in US foreign aid and military sales to Israel in the coming years. Although it is not an official part of Israel's agreement with the UAE, the US has proposed selling the UAE the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, the most advanced fighter aircraft ever built. To maintain Israel's technological superiority in arms over its neighbors, Israel and the US are negotiating a package of offset sales and foreign aid to Israel (Jeremy, 2020, p.1).

As of October 2020, the Trump Administration was considering hastening the delivery of some of the remaining \$26.4 billion in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) grants to Israel (out of a total of \$33 billion) pledged in the 2016 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to Israel, subject to

congressional approval. The US may also approve additional F-35 sales to Israel and expedite the delivery of KC-46A refueling and transport aircraft to Israel (Jeremy, 2020, p. 1).

Almost all of the US current aid to Israel is in the form of military assistance. Military aid from the US has helped Israel's armed forces become one of the most technologically advanced militaries in the world. Military aid has also aided Israel in developing its domestic defense industry, which is now one of the world's top exporters of arms. Israeli defense firms such as Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI), Rafael, and Elbit Systems export nearly 70% of their products to other countries (Jeremy, 2020, p. 2).

Israel exports missile defense systems, unmanned aerial vehicles, cyber-security products, radar, and electronic communications systems to countries such as India, Azerbaijan, Vietnam, Thailand, South Korea, Singapore, the Philippines, Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Greece, Russia, Brazil, and the US, among others. In addition to Iron Dome, the US has purchased the following Israeli defense items: Trophy active protection systems for M1 Abrams tanks, F-35 fighter pilot helmets, and an electronic fence along the US-Mexico border (Jeremy, 2020, p. 2).

Since 1999, the US has outlined its overall assistance to Israel in 10-year government-to-government Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs). MOUs, unlike treaties, are not legally binding and thus do not require Senate

ratification. In addition, Congress may accept or change Israel's annual assistance levels, as well as provide supplemental appropriations. Nonetheless, previous MOUs have had a significant impact on the terms of US aid to Israel; Congress has appropriated foreign aid to Israel largely in accordance with the terms of the MOU in place at the time (Jeremy, 2020, p.5).

US support for authoritarian regimes in the Middle East:

After September 11, 2001, evidence of the US opposition to democracy in the Middle East was on display on several occasions. The terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., which killed 3,000 people, traumatized the US and became the defining issue for the current generation of US citizens. As a result, it compelled a rethinking of US policy toward the Muslim world in general, and the Arab Middle East in particular. The US citizens, as well as key members of the US President Bush, reflecting on past US policy toward the region in a famous speech in November 2003, drew a direct link between US support for dictatorial regimes, violence, and the question of democracy: Sixty years of Western nations excusing and accommodating the lack of freedom in the Middle East did nothing to make us safe—because stability cannot be purchased at the expense of liberty in

the long run. As long as freedom does not flourish in the Middle East, it will be a source of stagnation, resentment, and violence for export (Hashemi, 2020, p. 33).

The phrase "stability cannot be purchased at the expense of liberty" is an indirect way of acknowledging two important facts: (1) that the US has been supporting authoritarian regimes in the Middle East for the past 60 years, and (2) that this policy has come back to haunt the US. Accordingly, it was stated in the 9/11 Commission Report: one of the long Cold War's lessons as those short-term gains in cooperating with the most repressive and brutal governments were all too often outweighed by long-term setbacks for America's stature and interests. The ostensible political stability that accompanied this policy was no longer guaranteed, necessitating a new grand strategy toward the Muslim world, which President Bush described as "a forward strategy of freedom in the Middle East" (Hashemi, 2020, p. 33). A second eye-opening event occurred in May 2003, exposing the tensions and contradictions between US values and interests in the Middle East. A close examination of what happened helps explain why the US has previously preferred authoritarian regimes in the Middle East to democratic ones, and why any US administration will find it difficult to transition to a new policy following the Arab Spring (Hashemi, 2020, p. 34).

In summary, democracy was acceptable from the standpoint of US foreign policy as long as the results favored securing US strategic interests in the region; if not, democracy will be a problem.

The issue of counter terrorism in Trump's

agenda:

The Trump Administration's track record on counterterrorism is mixed. To its credit, the administration picked up where Obama left off, leading an international coalition that resulted in the battlefield defeat of the Islamic State's so-called caliphate and the assassination of IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi just a few months later. Persistent pressure on Huras al-Din and other al-Qaeda-affiliated elements in Syria's Idlib province, as well as ongoing campaign star getting the far-flung provinces and affiliates of both Islamic State and al-Qaeda, kept those groups largely at bay (Levitt, 2020, p. 1).

In addition, efforts to address Iran's state sponsorship of terrorism, including the activities of Tehran's growing stable of proxies; such as, Lebanese Hezbollah and its affiliates in Iraq, have yielded positive results. On the other hand, the president's "Muslim ban" and uneasy unwillingness to unconditionally condemn white supremacist groups run counter to the administration's stated goal of working with communities to prevent terrorism (Levitt, 2020, p. 1).

Meanwhile, inconsistency marred the US efforts to work “by, with, and through” allies in Syria, and counterterrorism budget cuts undermined efforts to effectively address Africa's growing terrorist threat. One key reason for the semis-aligned policy goals were the administration's haphazard interagency decision-making process, which resulted in the production of three critically important but largely unaligned national strategy documents, addressing the overall national security strategy of the US, defense strategy, and counterterrorism strategy (Levitt, 2020, p. 1).

Midway through Trump's presidency, in November 2018, the Washington Institute launched its latest series of counterterrorism lectures, continuing a series that began in December 2007. At this inaugural event, US State Department counterterrorism coordinator Ambassador Nathan Sales assessed Iran's support for terrorism and announced a series of sanctions targeting operatives affiliated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), Hezbollah, and other Iranian proxy groups. Contending with Iran and its terrorist proxies has been a theme of the Trump administration, and rightly so, given Tehran's nearly \$1 billion annual budget for terrorism support. Yet, while the lectures began on a favorable topic for the administration, they quickly shifted to less favorable, if not uncomfortable, ground (Levitt, 2020, pp. 1-2).

The US experienced two domestic terrorist attacks just days before this lecture round began, with the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting by a white

supremacist anti-Semite in late October 2018 and the Tallahassee yoga studio shooting by a gunman identifying with the involuntary celibate (“incel”) community in early November 2018. Finally, the lectures would cover the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's strategic framework for countering terrorism and targeted violence, including threats from Racially and Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremists (REMVE). However, the rise of domestic terrorist threats unrelated to jihadist extremism—particularly from white supremacists and rightwing extremist movements—proved to be a contentious issue within the Trump administration, even as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Homeland Security Department, and non-governmental organizations; such as, the Anti-Defamation League emphasized the immediate threat posed by domestic terrorism. Furthermore, during this two-year period, the United States would emerge as a hotspot of right-wing extremism and an exporter of ideologies that inspired perpetrators of mass violence attacks in countries ranging from Germany to New Zealand (Levitt, 2020, p.2).

The increasingly transnational nature of what was previously perceived as a domestic threat added a new dimension to this phenomenon. Domestic violent extremism is now referred to by US law enforcement as violent extremism by people who act without direction or inspiration from a foreign terrorist group or another foreign power (DVE). Nonetheless, even these domestic (often lone) offenders are increasingly exhibiting trans national

characteristics. Aside from the DVE threat, the nature of homegrown violent extremism in general has shifted in perilous directions. A homegrown violent extremist is defined by US law enforcement as a US-based individual of any citizenship who "advocates, is engaged in, or is preparing to engage in ideologically-motivated terrorist activities, including providing support to terrorism, in furtherance of political or social objectives promoted by a foreign terrorist organization (FTO), but is acting independently" (Levitt, 2020, p.2).

Presenters in this lecture series emphasized the variety of ideological justifications that home grown violent extremists used for resorting to terrorism and political violence. Today, law enforcement officials report that they no longer see homegrown violent extremists as simply being drawn to a particular ideology and then being mobilized to violence based on those ideas over time. Instead, they report a concerning ideological fluidity among domestic violent extremists, who bounce from one ideology to the next, sometimes mixing disparate ideologies together, in search of ideas that justify a preexisting proclivity to act violently (Levitt, 2020, p.2).

While the FBI and Homeland Security Department see domestic and home grown violent extremists as the most serious terrorist threats to the US, they emphasize that organized terrorist groups; such as, ISIS and Al-Qaeda remain dangerous. Despite President Trump's insistence that the Islamic State has been defeated, counterterrorism officials are concerned

that both this jihadist group and al-Qaeda have demonstrated resilience in the face of severe counterterrorism operations, adopting a more decentralized structure and operational model" (Levitt, 2020, p.2).

On one level, this is a measure of operational success: Al-Qaeda and affiliated groups were once recentralized and capable of carrying out spectacular, even catastrophic, attacks like those on September 11, but after nearly two decades, they have been forced to operate more diffusely. Although there are more terrorists today than there were on 9/11, counterterrorism officials say they are less organized and less capable of carrying out mass-casualty attacks. Nonetheless, they continue to pose significant threats to the US and its allies. Returning foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs)—IS members and operatives from displaced persons and detention camps in Syria; such as, Al-Hawl—could inspire and direct attacks abroad, as well as carry out terrorist and insurgent operations in Syria, Iraq, and elsewhere (Levitt, 2020, p.2).

One of the reasons such groups continue to be dangerous is their continued access to funding. According to the UN Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team Concerning the Islamic State, Al-Qaeda, and the Taliban, while IS lost significant income streams as a result of territorial defeat, the group still has millions of dollars in financial reserves. Terrorist groups are increasingly relying on more creative, and often local,

means of raising funds in response to increasingly effective global efforts to combat terrorism financing (Levitt, 2020, p.3).

The US Treasury Department designated Hezbollah-affiliated companies in West Africa, such as those engaged in fishing, car rental, food processing, and pig farming. Groups like Hezbollah, which receive state funding, rely on such ties for financial gain as well. While the US "maximum pressure" policy reduced some Iranian funding for its proxy groups, Tehran continued to pour nearly a billion dollars into the coffers of its proxies, according to the State Department (Levitt, 2020, p.4).

Terrorist organizations have supplemented their traditional revenue streams with proceeds from criminal activities, such as Hezbollah's narcotic trafficking and money laundering. According to the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Iranian embassies and diplomatic pouches were used to transport narcotics in some cases. (Levitt, 2020, p.4).

During Trump's presidency, there were numerous developments in the worlds of terrorism and counterterrorism. The earlier-mentioned rise of transnational white supremacist and far-right extremism as part of a

domestic violent extremist threat, the persistent homegrown violent extremist threat, and the challenges these two developments posed more broadly for countering violent extremism were among the most significant. Meanwhile, Al-Qaeda, Hezbollah, and other elements of the so-called Iran Threat Network continued to pose a diverse set of international terrorist threats. At the same time, given the Islamic State's territorial defeat and the significant increase in counterterrorism capabilities over the last three decades, counterterrorism was appropriately demoted from the top of the national security priority list to one of several priorities, resulting in a reduction in funding and a general instruction from policymakers to do more with less (Levitt, 2020, p.4).

Together, these aspects formed the Trump administration's strategy to counterterrorism, which appeared to lack an overarching framework for coordinating and harmonizing efforts across departments and agencies due to a lack of alignment among various national security strategies (Levitt, 2020, p.4).

Conclusion:

The US has promoted its diplomatic relationship with foreign countries through political and economic collaboration, in addition to conducting peace negotiations and attempting to make peace around the world, whether through involvement in decision-making at the UN level or through

the use of its foreign policy's protocols. Unlike his predecessors, President Donald Trump has accomplished a great deal on both domestic and international levels. His term witnessed many events, leading the majority of Americans to describe it as a complex period that could lead the country in to a chaotic situation.

Chapter three: US- Saudi relations in the Trump era:

Introduction:

The US- Saudi bi-lateral relationships have been improved during the Trump Administration. Being aware of the strategic position and the geopolitical role of Saudi Arabia, Donald Trump, the US President, has positioned the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, during his presidency, at the heart of his foreign policy towards the Middle East; owing to Saudi Arabia's position, where it was considered as a powerhouse of the Arab and Muslim world.

Saudi Arabia had unlimited support from the US. For instance, the US President applauded a Saudi crackdown on hundreds of elite businessmen, politicians, and members of the royal family in Riyadh in November 2017. Even when the CIA decided that Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman ordered the gruesome murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, a Washington Post columnist, in Istanbul in October 2018, Trump stood with the Saudi side. However, the US- Saudi Arabia absolute monarchy's alliance has always been based on pragmatic grounds.

The present chapter sheds the light on the nature of the US-Saudi relations during Donald Trump's Presidency. The chapter illustrates the consequences of key issues on the US-Saudi alliance.

The US-Saudi Arabia relations :Political sphere:

The War in Yemen and its impacts on US-Saudi relations:

Saudi Arabia has long played a significant role in Yemen, attempting to mitigate various threats to the kingdom through liaison relationships and security interventions. Over the course of 2014, Saudi officials expressed growing concern about developments in Yemen, as the Saudi- and GCC-backed transition process there stalled. An alliance formed between the northern Yemen-based Zaydi Shi'a movement known as the Houthis/Ansar Allah and forces loyal to the now-deceased former president Ali Abdullah Saleh became more aggressive in their efforts to core transitional authorities (Blanchard, 2020, p.38).

Pro-Saleh and Houthi forces took control of Yemen's capital, Sana'a, in mid-2014, and continued military operations in September 2014, in violation of an agreed-upon power-sharing arrangement with the Hadi government. The refusal of Houthi forces to leave the capital, as well as unilateral moves by Houthi leaders and Saleh supporters to undermine Hadi's authority, triggered a crisis that culminated in the outbreak of renewed conflict and Hadi's resignation and de facto house arrest in January 2015. In February 2015, Houthi leaders announced a new governance plan, and in March, they launched an offensive against pro-Hadi forces in central and southern Yemen (Blanchard, 2020, p.38).

In response, the Saudi Foreign Minister condemned what he called a "serious escalation...carried out by an Al Houthi militia coup against constitutional

legitimacy." Days later, as Houthi forces advanced on the southern city of Aden, Saudi Arabia and coalition members launched airstrikes in response to President Hadi's specific request. Since March 2015, Saudi Arabia has led a military coalition of mostly Arab states in efforts to restore the Hadi government (Blanchard, 2020, p.38).

Saudi Arabia and the Obama administration shared the same vision for Yemen. As a result, they backed Yemen's government, led by Abd rabbuh Mansour Hadi. With the cessation of power transfer and the Houthis' overthrow of Hadi, the Saudi government and its allies launched the "Decisive Storm Operation" in March 2015 to confront the Houthis and keep Hadi in power (Horton, 2016, p.23). The Obama administration supported Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen not only to assist and protect Riyadh in the region but also to protect its own interests in the region and to deal with the threat posed by the Al-Qaeda Organization in Yemen (Heistein, 2017, p.8).

Since 2015, the Obama Administration has focused on combating Al-Qaeda in Yemen and providing intelligence and logistical support to the Saudi-led air campaign. It sent a US advisory mission to Saudi Arabia's operations headquarters and sold arms and ammunition to the country. It also announced new arms deals with the Kingdom in 2015 and 2016 (Hartung, 2015, p.9) in order to replenish the stockpile used in the Yemen war. Obama intended to do so in order to improve relations with Riyadh following the completion of the nuclear deal with Iran (Gause, 2016, para.6). Yet, as a schism has emerged between the US

and the Saudi regime in recent months as a result of the suspension of sales of precision-guided missiles to Saudi Arabia due to the deterioration of humanitarian conditions in Yemen. Nevertheless, the Obama administration continued to provide logistical and intelligence support to the Kingdom, as well as protect the Saudi border from any threat (Ryan, 2016, para. 3).

Furthermore, the Trump Administration confirmed its support for Saudi Arabia's operations in Yemen to contain Iranian influence in the region and end the conflict in Yemen, both of which are priorities for US national security (Blanchard, 2018, pp. 33-4). The Trump administration has also evolved in its support for coalition forces' military operations in Yemen. This assistance included intelligence exchange, logistical support, the presence of US military advisers providing military advice, improved border security and defense operations against ballistic missiles, and anti-terrorism operations in Yemen (Blanchard, 2018, pp. 22-3).

However, the deterioration of Yemen's humanitarian situation prompted the Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense to urge all parties to the conflict to expedite the cessation of hostilities and the cessation of military operations carried out by coalition forces in Yemeni populated areas. They also urged all parties to support the UN's effort to establish a negotiated political path toward a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Yemen and to alleviate the humanitarian crisis (Browne, 2018, p. 7).

The impacts of Khashoggi assassination on US-Saudi relations:

Jamal Khashoggi was a well-known Saudi journalist who worked for a number of Saudi news outlets, covering headlines. Khashoggi was loyal to the Saudi Royal Family for decades and also acted as a Vermont consultant (**Jamal Khashoggi: All you need to know about Saudi journalist's death, 2021, para 2**).

He slammed US President Donald Trump's Middle East policies, as well as the Saudi regime. After that, Khashoggi's relationship with the Saudi authorities deteriorated, with the latter prohibiting him from writing or tweeting for a period of time before deciding to flee to the United States. Taking advantage of his new circumstances, he began penning pieces for the Washington Post, condemning the Kingdom's policy of suppressing and detaining anyone with dissenting views (Haltiwanger, 2018, Para 1-4). The Saudi government assassinated him due to his statements of freedom of expression in Saudi Arabia after Mohammed Bin Salman became Crown Prince (House, 2018, para. 6-7).

The assassination of Jamal Khashoggi, at the Saudi Embassy in Istanbul on October 2, 2018, heightened tensions between the US and Saudi Arabia. The aftermath of Khashoggi's assassination, according to Trump, was one of his presidency's major foreign policy challenges (Haberma et al., 2018, Para 1). The Trump Administration took a mixed stance on the issue. On the one hand, Trump put pressure on Saudi Arabia's authorities to investigate the incident and punish

Those responsible. He also, stated that if Saudi Arabia was discovered to be implicated in the crime, the US will apply severe sanctions. On the other hand, Trump; however, supported the US- Saudi relationships, emphasizing the importance of arms deals, trade links, and investment, as well as Saudi Arabia's clout in the global oil market (Collins, 2018). Despite Trump's promise to impose harsh sanctions on Saudi Arabia with the condition that it is found to be involved in the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, he has repeatedly stated that any US sanctions should not include the cancellation of billion-dollar arms' deals with the Saudis (**Dallas Morning News Editorial, 2019**). Trump expressed his intentions in Saudi authorities; fact that, on October 20, 2018, they acknowledged that Saudi officials' participation in Khashoggi's death. A month later that year, Trump stated and announced his unconditional support for Crown Prince Mohamed Bin Salman, defying Americans who preferred to committals her penalties against the country (Ken Bredemeier, 2018, para 4-5).

The Khashoggi issue is unlikely to result in a major rupture or reevaluation of the US-Saudi relationship, but it is also unlikely to have no impact or be disregarded as a freak occurrence (Haberma et al., 2018, Para 3-5). The US Congress has the power to act on its own, and the US Administration may be forced to take a harsher stance than it likes due to congressional and media pressure (Editorial Board, 2020, para 2-4). Furthermore, the reputation of the Crown Prince, including Saudi Arabia as well, will be badly harmed, in case Americans believe

That Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman ordered or enabled Khashoggi's murder (Frankovic, 2018, para 1-4).

A significant amount of time, effort, and money spent in the United States to build goodwill for the Saudi government, especially the crown prince, and the substantial social and economic changes that happened in Saudi Arabia would be severely harmed, with serious consequences for relations. Riyadh will find US good will in general much more difficult to come by, to the point where it will be much more difficult for Americans to talk favorably about the Saudi regime after Khashoggi's case without encountering considerable resistance' (Feldstein, 2018, para 1-2).

Iran and Turkey's role in the Middle East: A threat to US-Saudi relations:

Iran and Saudi Arabia are major competitors for regional influence in both the Gulf and Middle East regions, a status which has been heightened by the Arab Spring and the wars in countries like Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. Iran and Saudi Arabia are fierce rivals for regional clout, both seeking to expand their influence; particularly in Syria, Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, and Yemen. It is worth mentioning that the Iranian forces; particularly Al Quds Regiment which were commanded by ex- Gen. Qassim Suleimani (Mar. 3, 1957- Jan. 3, 2020) had entered Syria shortly after the beginning of the civil war conflict in order to support the regular army of President Bashar Al Assad. On the other

hand, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates (UAE) supported rebel groups. However, they were largely crushed by the Iranian forces. Saudi Arabia's involvement in the Syrian conflicts how sits intention to frantically restrict Iran's growing influence in the region (Marcus, 2019a).

Yemen; also, witnessed another land ground for regional competition between Iran and Saudi Arabia. Having strong ties with the Houthis in Yemen, Iran had already had unconditional support for the Houthis. It had provided weapons, technology, training, and advisers for the Houthis, who; in their turn, had launched assaults against Saudi Arabia and UAE's land-based targets; Saudi airports, and ARAMCO facilities inside the Saudi territory (Coats, 2019, p.30). Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia has been fighting fiercely against the Houthis; partly to counter perceived Iranian influence in the country (Marcus, 2019b).

Furthermore, Hezbollah, a Shiite paramilitary group in Lebanon and Iran's partner, heads a politically influential bloc and commands a massive, heavily armed battle force with Iranian support (Levitt, 2021, p.5). It is worth noting that Iran backs Hizballah, by providing him with advanced weaponry, in this respect, Hezbollah is said to have 40,000 rockets and missiles in its arsenal (Hokayem, 2010, para 8). Moreover, Iran's operational and financial support help shape Hezbollah into a powerful militia and a significant deterrent to Israel. The symbolic and strategic victories of the Lebanese Shiite militia have elevated Iran to a central role in Middle East politics, broadening Iran's appeal throughout the

Arab world. (Hokayem, 2010, Para 2) thus, threat to the interests and stature of Saudi Arabia (Marcus, 2019, para 17).

Tensions between Iran and the US have raised concerns about the threat to important infrastructure in the Persian Gulf, as Iran is more likely to target US allies; such as Saudi Arabia than to attack the US directly. The US should concentrate on preventing additional Iranian escalation, refraining from measures that endanger the regime's survival, and providing a political exit for Iran (Jones & Bermudes Jr., 2019, para. 6-7).

Moreover, Following the Syrian civil war, the US regarded ISIS as a regional security threat and began to militarily push back. So, the US allied with Kurdish forces, which were known as the People's Protection Units (YPG), before they joined with other fighters and became the amorphous Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF). However, when the Trump Administration helped the acquire a part of northern Syria, which constitutes Turkish borders in the South, this move angered Turkey because it was considered as a rapprochement between the US and the YPG, which will best lengthened by partnership deals in the future. Turkey; therefore, complained that the Syrian Kurds had close ties to the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which is listed as a terrorist organization, and constitutes a security threat for Turkey (Turkey's PKK Conflict: A Visual Explainer, 2021).

Turkey has been so concerned about the YPG's foot hold in northern Syria; thus, Erdoğan responded by sending Turkish troops into Syria, that it has launched large military incursions to achieve the is goal and attacked US allies in northern Syria, throwing the US-led anti-ISIS campaign in jeopardy **(Turkey v Syria's Kurds: The short, medium and long story, 2019, para. 2-6).**

Saudi Arabia, on the other hand, is seeking and strengthening ties with the same YPG and has enlisted the help of its staunchest regional friends in doing so (Baskan, 2019, para 1).

The critical watershed moment came following Erdoğan 's Gulf tour in February 2017, during which he visited Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Bahrain, relations between Ankara and Riyadh started to swiftly deteriorate as a result of the Qatar crisis, which erupted in June 2017 (Qatar crisis: Turkey's Erdogan calls for swift end to Gulf dispute, 2017c) Saudi Arabia and the UAE presented Qatar with a 13-point list of demands, one of which was the closure of the Turkish military installation and the suspension of cooperative military operations within Qatar **(Al Jazeera, 2017, para 2-6).**

As a result, Turkey strengthened its relations with Qatar by expanding military and economy (Yüksel & Tekineş, 2021, p. 11). Since then, Saudi Arabia and UAE have begun to publicly criticize the Justice and Development Party (AKP)-headed by President Erdoğan, the ruling party in Turkey, to have strong ties with the Muslim Brotherhood which accessed to power in Egypt. Thus, portraying Turkey as a regional threat (Staff, 2018, para. 1-3). Moreover, it is

worth to recall that the assassination of Khashoggi's in the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul has exacerbated tension, with Turkey alleging that the assassination and murdered were planned at the highest levels in Saudi Arabia (Gall&Pérez-Peña,2018,para1-2).

In this backdrop, Ankara is concerned about the Trump Administration's tight ties to the Saudi- UAE axis (**Bakeer, 2019a**). In this light, the US proposal for a Middle East Strategic Alliance, dubbed "Arab NATO, "was viewed (Miller,2018,para.1). The AKP government has likewise been objected to such partnerships targeted at turkey 's interest with Iran(**Bakeer, 2019b**).

Pushing Saudi Arabia to normalize its relationships with Israel:

President Trump attempted to press Saudi Arabia in the matter of the normalization of the relations with Israel; however, Mohammad Bin Salman refused to normalize currently, though he has secret relations with Israel in numerous fields like cyber security and military cooperation, and more. In this regard, the kingdom agreed to open its airspace to planes between Israel and the UAE (Oruç, 2020a). The kingdom, according to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, would not maintain normalization with Israel until there is peace between Palestine and Israel (**Oruç, 2020b**), and until it submits the 2002 Saudi-led Arab Peace Initiative (Brumberg,2021,para.1).

Another reason for Saudi's tardiness is that MBS is concerned about the religious institutions at home and the strongly disapproving reactions of the religious leaders inasmuch as the religious position of Saudi Arabia (Brumberg, 2021, para. 7-8).

Furthermore, the normalization benefits the US's interests, so it may witness increased strategic cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Israel as a positive development that helps the US achieve its goals of reducing US military commitments in the region and transforming the US into the Middle East "off shore balancer" (Walt, 2013, para. 5-7).

As a matter of fact, it is worth mentioning that the Saudi- Israeli connections through very secret channels aim to bolster the kingdom's deterrence against Iran's influence in both the Middle East and the Gulf regions. Despite the fact that Saudi Arabia is interested in reaching strategic cooperation with Israel; however, this aim is not highly motivated by the expectation of concluding a mutual defense commitment against Iran, but by the fact that Israel hopes to assist Saudi Arabia in improving its defense capabilities. Moreover, the Saudi Crown Prince views Israel as a crucial partner in the Middle East and the Gulf in their rivalry and fight against Iranian influence and its project in the region, too. Therefore, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been more interested in cooperating with Israel in crucial defense areas, since the Houthis', Iran' allies attacks on Saudi oil installations, as well as in economic areas, whereby the normalization agreements between Saudi Arabia and Israel serve Saudi Arabia's interests, and these relations with Israel

are required for Saudi Arabia to complete several projects, including MBS' project Neom, a futuristic planned city in Saudi Arabia's Tabuk province, which is intended to be a self-contained economic zone with its legal system in view of its geographical location which is close to international markets (Kutlu, 2020).

Saudi Arabia highlights Neom as a venue for U.S.-Saudi cooperation and investment because of the futuristic and neoliberal principles at its foundation. As a result, Neom is crucial to Mohammed bin Salman's foreign policy. Saudi Arabia is also planning a bridge across the Tiran Strait to connect Egypt and Neom in this manner. However, constructing a Saudi-Egypt bridge necessitates negotiations with Israel. The project is dependent on Israel's permission because the 1979 peace deal between Egypt and Israel guarantees free Israeli shipping across the Tiran Straits. Neom will not be able to thrive unless a deal with Israel is reached. (Dogan, 2021, para. 2-5).

The role of the Israeli lobby in directing the US-Saudi relations:

The "Israel lobby", known as the informal alliance of individuals and groups that actively attempted to change US foreign policy in a pro-Israel direction. The lobby is comprised of individuals who are prominent members; such as, Malcolm Hoenlein, the executive vice-chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations; such as, the Zionist Organization of

America (ZOA). It is worth mentioning that the Israeli lobby is more powerful within the US congress and the White House. In addition, it influences and directs the US foreign policy, with a particular emphasis on the Middle East. Because of the Israeli lobby inside US policy making, the US Administration holds unconditional support for Israel (Mearsheimer & Walt, 2007, pp. 113-5). The lobby played a critical role in shaping US policy toward Saudi Arabia reflected in Trump's pressure continually on Saudi Arabia to normalize its relation to Israel (Farouk, 2020, para 1) thus, all that is in the interests of Israel security (Barron, 2020, para 5-7).

US accusations of Saudi human rights violations and women's rights:

Saudi legislation does not guarantee freedom of assembly, expression, religion, the press, or association, according to the 2018 US State Department report on human rights in Saudi Arabia; rather, the government restricts each of these. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is still ruled by an absolute monarchy, and Saudi citizens do not have a say in who governs them. Political parties, as well as any groups believed to be in opposition to the government, are forbidden (Saudi Arabia, 2020a).

Several religious and tribal figures have been detained, according to the news reports, who are suspected of being critical of the government or its recent social changes, and who, in some cases, are accused by Saudi authorities of

having to the Muslim Brotherhood which was considered a terrorist organization by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and some of its regional allies (Hubbard, 2017, para. 3-5).

In a report released in February 2017, Human Rights Watch examined a "stepped up" assault against campaigners, including Saudi women's rights activists. Furthermore, the women's position in Saudi Arabia has long been subjected to severe limitations on travel, work, and independent interaction with governmental agencies. Some legal restrictions have been lifted as a result of recent political reforms. However, in other regions, male guardianship norms still remain, and informally, societal and family practices continue to limit some women's social and personal independence (Doaiji, 2017, pp. 6-8). Some of these prohibitions were eased by a series of royal decrees signed by King Salman in 2017 (**The Economist, 2019, para 3-6**).

Moreover, a report on the status of human rights in Saudi Arabia which was released by the US Department of State in 2018 showed that the differences in status between men and women in political life are due to the specific laws of guardianship. As a matter of fact, these laws (1) force a male guardian's permission for several legal decisions, (2) impose several restrictions on women candidates' contact with male voters during the 2015 elections, and (3) prohibit women to drive cars (**Saudi Arabia, 2020b**).

It is worth to mention that international non-governmental organizations urged the Saudi Government to issue particular reforms on human rights; a

matter which was dismissed by the Saudi authorities. In fact, those reforms urged by international non-governmental organizations were considered as attempts of sabotage which were intended to weaken the Kingdom's judicial processes (**'Specialized Criminal Court in Saudi Arabia as Political Tool to Muzzle Critical Voices', 2020**).

The US-Saudi Arabia relations:

Economic Sphere:

Trade relations: Energy and Oil:

Economically, the US and Saudi Arabia have strong ties. In terms of trade, Saudi Arabia has long been one of the US most important Middle Eastern trading partners. For example, Saudi exports to the US totaled around \$16.9 billion in 2016, while US exports to Saudi Arabia totaled around \$18 billion (Blanchard, 2017, p. 36), accounting for almost 15% of Saudi Arabia's total imports from all nations

In the same year. (Saudi General Authority for Statistics, 2016, p. 90).

In 2017, Saudi Arabia was also the United States' largest trading partner in the Middle East. The value of Saudi exports to the United States is estimated to be more than \$18.8 billion, while the value of US exports to the Kingdom is estimated to be more than \$16.3 billion (Blanchard, 2018, p. 23). In contrast, in terms of oil and energy, Saudi Arabia has maintained its position as one of the major suppliers of oil to the United States. For example, in 2015 (**Blanchard,**

2016, p. 30), 2016, (Blanchard, 2017, p. 37), 2017, (US Energy Information Administration, 2019.p.5), and 2018, Saudi Arabia was the second largest crude oil exporter to the United States after Canada (Blanchard, 2018, p. 24). It should be noted that the two countries' oil relations are dependent not only on Saudi oil exports to the United States, but also on Saudi Arabia's influence in the global oil market. This power stems from the fact that it holds one-fifth of the world's oil reserves (JODI-Oil World Database, 2019.p.3) for 75 years and can produce oil at a rate of 12,5 million barrels per day (Annual Statistical Report, 2016, p.10).

This enables it to act as “swing suppliers” to mitigate the effects of power outages in any region, as well as to play an important role in balancing the price of oil in the global market by increasing and decreasing oil production (Bahgat, 2003, p.447). As a result, Riyadh has played an important role in the global economy, and Washington has encouraged this role (Barone, 2018, p.4).

3.2.2: ARAMCO:

Saudi Aramco, also known as Saudi Arabian Oil Company, is the world's largest oil producer and is primarily owned by the Saudi government. Its headquarters are in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, and its reserves are estimated to be worth 270 billion barrels. It is by far the most profitable company on the planet, outperforming even tech titans like Apple Inc. (AAPL) and Alphabet Inc. (GOOGL). This was revealed in April 2019, when rating agencies made financial

information about the long-

secretive company public ahead of its first international bond sale, which raised \$12 billion. When Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman announced plans to list 5% of Aramco at a valuation of approximately \$2 trillion in what became the largest initial public offering (IPO) ever, the company drew a lot of attention from investors (Delventhal, 2020, para. 1).

Aramco went public in 2019, raising a record \$25 billion through the sale of three billion shares. This was only 1.5 percent of the company's value, which is significantly less than what most businesses distribute. Apple, Alphabet, and Amazon (AMZN), for example, each have more than 84 percent of their shares held by the general public. As the funds from the IPO are key to the Saudi's strategy to diversify the oil behemoth, this permits Saudi Arabia to retain control of the corporation. Because of the "green shoe" option, more shares are available for purchase. The corporation was valued at \$1.7 trillion at the time of its IPO (Delventhal, 2020, para. 2).

Previously, plans for the company's public debut were said to have delayed because some market experts felt that the company's true value was significantly lower than the crown prince's projections. Furthermore, it was uncertain how negative publicity surrounding suspicion that Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman was a crucial figure in the alleged murder of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi would affect investor interest in a Saudi Aramco IPO (Delventhal, 2020, para. 3).

In 1933, the Saudi Arabian government and the Standard Oil Company of California (SO CAL) signed a Concession Agreement, which resulted in the formation of Saudi Aramco. Aramco began drilling operations shortly after, with commercial oil production beginning in 1938. The company rapidly expanded across Saudi Arabia over the next decade, reaching crude oil production of 500,000 barrels per day in 1949. To keep up with production, the company expanded its distribution pipeline and built the world's longest pipeline, the Trans-Arabian Pipeline. The Saudi Arabian government bought a 25% stake in Aramco in 1973, and gradually increased its stake to 100% by the late 1970s (Delventhal, 2020, para.4).

The Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco) was established in the late 1980s. Aramco formed a joint venture with Texaco in the United States in 1989 to transform itself from an oil-producing and exporting company to an integrated petroleum enterprise. By 2017, the Saudi oil behemoth had acquired sole ownership of Port Arthur, Texas, which houses North America's largest single-site crude oil refinery (Delventhal, 2020, para.5).

Throughout the 1990s, it continued to form global alliances and partnership agreements. The company has been working hard to diversify its business in recent years, investing heavily in research and development (R&D) to expand into non-metallic and crude-to-chemicals products. Amin H. Nasser, Saudi Aramco's president and CEO, is currently in charge. The company's Chair is Yasir Al-Rumayyan. Saudi Arabia has a significant take in Aramco. It is primarily

a state-

owned corporation from which Saudi Arabia's government derives a significant portion of its wealth. The oil company pays the Saudi Arabian government a hefty tax rate of 50%. Previously, the tax rate was set at 85 percent. Aramco's ties to the Saudi government have earned it a lower rating than one might expect for a company of its size (Delventhal, 2020, para. 6).

Saudi Aramco controls the country's oil and gas production and distribution networks, owns 72 percent of the country's eight refineries, and has 2.4 million barrels per day of refining capacity in Japan, China, South Korea, the United States, and Indonesia through equity and joint ventures. Despite a 15% drop in revenue from crude oil exports in 2014, refined product exports climbed by 22%. The 'Empty Quarter' has been opened to private exploration investment as part of efforts to encourage competition and investment in natural gas development; nonetheless, poor exploration results have led to foreign businesses ceasing operations in the country (Delventhal, 2020, para. 7).

US investments in Saudi Arabia:

According to the US Department of Commerce's Office of Economic Analysis, the volume of US direct investment in Saudi Arabia in 2017 increased to \$11.1 billion, a 4.7% increase from 2016 (US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2019b, p. 13).

In terms of overall value, Saudi Arabia was the US second largest trading partner in the Middle East in 2019. According to the United States International Trade

Administration, US imports from Saudi Arabia totaled \$13.4 billion in 2019 (down from \$24.1 billion in 2018). US exports to Saudi Arabia totaled \$14.3 billion in 2019 (up from more than \$13.6 billion in 2018). The high value of US-Saudi trade is largely determined by US imports of hydrocarbons from Saudi Arabia and US exports of commercially sold weapons, machinery, and vehicles to Saudi Arabia (Blanchard, 2020, p.28). In recent years, fluctuations in the volume and value of US-Saudi oil trade have accounted for corresponding changes in the value of US imports from Saudi Arabia. The value of American exports to Saudi Arabia has fluctuated less. Global oil price declines from 2014 to 2017 and increases in domestic oil production in the United States reduced the value of Saudi

Arabian imports to the United States. Price increases in 2018 accounted for relative increases in import value (Blanchard, 2020, p.28). According to the US Energy Information Administration (EIA), as of January 2020, Saudi Arabia was the third-largest source of U.S. crude oil imports, accounting for 368 thousand barrels per day (mbd) of the 6.57 million barrels per day (mbd) in gross U.S. crude oil imports, trailing only Canada and Mexico (Blanchard, 2020, p.28).

Saudi Arabia investments in the US:

According to the US Department of Commerce's Office of Economic Analysis, direct Saudi investment in 2016 totaled \$9.8 billion, a 1.6% increase over 2015. (US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2019a, p.9). In terms of the volume of Saudi investment in US treasury bills, US treasury bonds in

Saudi Arabia reached \$116.8 billion in March 2016 (US Department of the Treasury), a 6% decrease from January 2016, ranking Saudi Arabia 14th globally (Sheffield, 2016, p.7) and first among OPEC countries. By the end of 2016, the total value of these bonds had reached \$102.2 billion (US Department of the Treasury, 2019a, 2019b, p).

According to the same source, the volume of Saudi investment in US Treasury bills and bonds increased dramatically during the Trump administration, reaching approximately \$169.5 billion in August 2018. (US Department of the Treasury, 2019c). As a result, Saudi Arabia ranked 10th globally and first in the Arab world in terms of investment in US Treasuries. The increase in Saudi holdings of US Treasury bonds demonstrates Saudi Arabia's desire to strengthen economic ties with Washington (Andrew, 2017, p.21).

The US-Saudi Arabia relations: Military Sphere:

US Arms Sale to Saudi Arabia (2011-2020):

On military cooperation, Saudi Arabia has been one of the largest purchasers of US arms in terms of both value and volume, despite the fact that decades of US-Saudi weapon transactions have occasionally been accompanied by public outrage and heated congressional debate. From 2009 to the present, the Obama and Trump administrations have notified Congress of proposed arms sales totaling more than \$120 billion, reflecting Saudi Arabia's ostensible importance to US Middle East strategy. The technologically advanced and frequently historic

amounts of arms transfers reflect and reinforce US-Saudi ties (Blanchard, 2020, p. 1).

In terms of military collaboration, arms purchases have bolstered the two countries' military ties and defense cooperation. Both countries' authorities see military sales as a symbolic vow to work together during times of regional upheaval (Defense Security Cooperation Agency 2017a, p. 10).

During the Obama administration, US arms sales to Saudi Arabia increased. Between 2009 and 2016, Saudi Arabia became the first country in the Middle East to buy US arms worth more than \$115 billion in 42 separate deals. Four deals worth more than \$60 billion were completed in October 2010 (Blanchard, 2016, pp. 41-42), surpassing any deal made by any US administration since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries and representing the largest value of arms sales to one country in US history.

As a result, Saudi Arabia became the United States' largest customer for foreign military sales (Fleurant et al., 2017, p. 16). Arms sales have continued to strengthen the two countries' ties. On May 19, 2017, Trump formally informed Congress of his intention to complete three proposed precision guided ammunition deals with Saudi Arabia, which had been postponed by the Obama administration. President Trump and King Salman signed a proposed deal worth \$350 billion over ten years (Thomas, 2017, p. 22); to support Saudi defense needs on May 20, 2017.

Furthermore, the Trump Administration formally notified Congress on May 24, 2019, of immediate foreign military sales and direct commercial sales of training,

equipment, and weapons with a potential value of more than \$8 billion, including sales of precision guided munitions (PGMs) to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), as well as the UAE's gift transfer of PGMs to Jordan. F-15 engines and support for Saudi Arabia, as well as AH-64 equipment, Javelin anti-tank missiles, and Patriot Guidance Enhanced Missiles for the UAE, are among the other notified sales. These arms sales to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Jordan come amid rising US-Iran tensions and new Houthi attacks on Saudi infrastructure (Blanchard, 2020, p.2).

Even though historic differences such as official Saudi animosity toward Israel (which has waned somewhat) have strained the relationship, more recent tensions include US concerns about Saudi domestic governance, international terrorism, and the kingdom's regional power projection; such as, the war in Yemen (Blanchard, 2020, p.3).

3.3.2: Pensacola shooting and its aftermath:

At Naval Air Station Pensacola in Florida, Saudi Air Force Second Lieutenant Mohammed Saeed Alshamrani killed three US Navy sailors and injured eight others on December 6, 2019. Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) claimed responsibility for the attack in early February 2020. It's unclear whether the group played a direct role in the shooting, but if it did, the shooting would be the first deadly terrorist attack on American soil since 9/11 that was carried out by a foreign terrorist organization. In a social media post just before the attack,

Alshamrani repurposed the words of Osama bin Laden and Anwar al-

Awlaki, demonstrating the al-

Qaeda propaganda's enduring influence (Clarke, 2020, p. 16). According to FBI Deputy Director David Bowdich, "during the attack, the shooter fired shots at pictures of the current and former presidents, and a witness at the scene recounted that he made statements critical of American military action overseas." Alshamrani, a native of Al-Hasa in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province, was killed by one of two local sheriff's deputies who arrived as first responders. Two unarmed Marines and a Navy airman who was shot five times also confronted him. It took about 15 minutes to complete the shoot. The shooting was declared a terrorist act by US Attorney General William Barr in mid-

January 2020. Alshamrani was discovered to be a follower of al-

Qaeda propaganda after the shooting (Clarke, 2020, p. 16).

Anwar al-Awlaki, a propagandist for al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), gave a lecture. Alshamrani posted an anti-American message on his Twitter account just before the attack, repurposing al- and Awlaki's long-time al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden's words. The attacker openly denounced the policies of the United States and Israel in the posting. He also retweeted articles about Israel's harsh treatment of Palestinians and a tweet about the Trump administration's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital before the attack (Clarke, 2020, p. 16).

On February 2, 2020, nearly two months after the attack, al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula released a video claiming "adoption" of the attack. According to a

White House statement, the video includes a message from beyond the grave from Qassim al-Rimi, the AQAP emir who was killed in a US drone strike in Yemen in January 2020. "Alshamrani carried out his martyrdom operation on one of the dens of evil... the US Naval Air Station Pensacola," al-Rimi said on the tape. However; The nature of the connection between Alshamrani and AQAP was not explicitly stated in the video (Clarke, 2020, p. 16).

One possible avenue of inquiry for the FBI in probing the connection between the attacker and AQAP has been determining the authenticity of these documents and whether they existed in the public domain prior to AQAP's release of the video. The totality of what AQAP showed in the video appears to point to at least some connectivity between AQAP and the attacker, though this author is unable to confirm the authenticity of the documents and photos used in the video. It's worth noting that, if this attack was directed rather than inspired by AQAP, it would be the first successful directed attack on American soil by a foreign terrorist group since 9/11 (Clarke, 2020, p. 16).

Alshamrani arrived in the United States on an A-2 Visa for military training in August 2017. He began his military career at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, where he received English language training. Alshamrani went on to aviation training in Pensacola after Lackland, and then advanced strike fighter training in the fall of 2019. Despite the fact that Alshamrani filed a formal complaint against one of his instructors for repeatedly mocking him with the nickname "Porn Stash," which enraged him, investigators believe the attack was

premeditated and not the result of this incident, as evidenced by the US government's terrorism designation (Clarke, 2020, p. 16). Alshamrani had been planning the attack for years and scouting various targets, according to AQAP. As early as 2015, Alshamrani was interested in extremist videos, literature, and social media posts.

In July 2019, while in the United States for training, Alshamrani legally purchased a 9mm Glock 45 handgun using a hunting license. Alshamrani and three other Saudi military trainees visited New York City a week before the attack, visiting several museums and Rockefeller Center. Alshamrani also paid a visit to the September 11th Memorial in New York City during his trip. On September 11, 2019, Alshamrani posted a cryptic message on the internet, stating that "the count down has begun" (Clarke, 2020, p. 17).

Alshamrani hosted a dinner party the night before the attack, where he showed videos of mass shootings. Attorney General William Barr later clarified that while several other Saudi Air Force officers at the training facility recorded the aftermath of the attack, reports that they filmed the attack as it happened were false, and that they had fully cooperated with investigators. At least one of the guests at the dinner party was one of the people who filmed the attack's aftermath (Clarke, 2020, p. 17).

The Alshamrani attack has had little impact on the US-Saudi relationship thus far, and it is unlikely to do so during Trump's presidency. The year following the murder of Jamal Khashoggi and the numerous revelations that influential Saudi

government officials were aware of his assassination, ties between Washington and Riyadh have clearly overcome more turbulent periods, including the immediate aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks, as well as the year following the Khashoggi murder and the numerous revelations that influential Saudi government officials were aware of his assassination (Clarke, 2020, p.20). More stringent vetting procedures, such as the personnel vetting transformation initiative, which will eventually be applied to the more than 5,000 foreign military students in the United States, will inevitably have an impact on working 'by, with, and through' partner nations and continuing programs to train, advise, and assist US allies in counter-terrorism. The current coronavirus (COVID-19) challenge will be another big impediment to student interchange and training (Clarke, 2020, p.21).

Foreign military students from nations with CDC alert level category 2 and above for COVID-

19 will not be allowed to participate in US scheduled exercises, exchanges, or visits, according to US Army regulations (Clarke, 2020, p.21).

The Pensacola incident shows that there were a number of flaws in the security cooperation vetting procedure. While every effort should be taken to manage and mitigate the risk, security cooperation is only one component of a larger relationship between the US and Saudi Arabia, and strengthening partner capacity programs benefit both Washington and Riyadh. Especially in anti-terrorist operations.

As the Alshamrani's attack indicates, the threat can be lessened by stronger and more comprehensive vetting requirements, but it can never be completely eradicated, and it persists as a tradeoff in the broader sphere of US foreign and security policy (Clarke, 2020, p.21).

Conclusion:

The US-

Saudi Arabia relationship has witnessed several challenges over decades on both regional and bilateral levels such as: The Arab Spring, the Iranian nuclear deal and the civil war in Syria and Yemen. However this coalition between the two countries proved to be strong and tactical to overcome these challenges, the US-Saudi mutual aid continues to be historic due to the precedent successes as a crucial point to defend additional corporations.

General conclusion

After the outbreak of the revolutions of the Arab Spring at the end of 2010 in the Middle East, a state of tension and disagreement prevailed in the bilateral relations between the US and the kingdom of Saudi Arabia, especially during Obama's administration. With regard to the vision towards the pending issues in the Middle East, whereby Obama adopted support for freedoms, human rights, and political reform.

In Contrary to the vision of the Gulf countries, led by Saudi Arabia, where the acerbity of the disagreements between Saudi Arabia and the Obama Administration have aggravated until the emergence of the new US administration, which showed a sufficient of avoiding from engaging in issues of change, political reform, civil liberties, and human rights. However, this tension dissipated at a time when Saudi circles were optimistic when Donald Trump was elected as a new US President, and; therefore, the relations between the US and the Gulf countries began to be restored, the US maintained its position and role in the region, after the US foreign policy witnessed a noticeable retreat and "withdrawal" from hot spot issues in the last years of Obama's Presidency.

Since Donald Trump campaigned under the slogan 'Make America Great Again', he soon adopted the slogan 'America First' when reached the White House, which prompted his administration to focus first on its domestic issues and interests rather than foreign issues and to work more on building

partnerships with particular countries that ensure the achievement of Washington's vital interests. With Trump's election, issues related to US foreign policy began to back to normalcy in the Middle East at an accelerated pace, while the file of the return of US-Saudi relations to its traditional form as a reliable ally transferred to the forefront of the interests of that policy. Trump targeted the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as the first step on his international visits after taking office in May 2017, indicating that the new US administration places a high value on the country's ties with Saudi Arabia. This visit resulted in signing several contracts with Saudi Arabia in US arms deals. These business deals were concluded within the framework of combating global terrorism from "terrorist" organizations; such as, ISIS and Al-Qaeda, and Iran which exerts influence in the Middle East to maintain its position in the Gulf and the Middle East, too.

The present study focused on analyzing , economic, and social impacts of the Trump Administration's foreign policy on US-Saudi relations. Examination and analysis of the main topic revealed that the US foreign policy, under US President Donald Trump, based its Middle East strategies on bilateral investments in relations with rich countries; particularly Saudi Arabia, where Trump's foreign policy aimed to exploit the financial capabilities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in order to strengthen the US economy and restore the US role in the region after its decline during the Obama administration. US President Donald Trump was trying to build a deep partnership with Saudi Arabia; so, Donald Trump has shown endless support for the Saudi Crown Prince, Mohammed Bin

Salman, who holds several strategic files and issues of common interests; such as, security, intelligence, and economy.

A noteworthy rapprochement was part of the US strategy, which aimed at re-establishing the great Middle East by pressure, exploitation, and influence on one of the significant powerful countries in the Middle East; namely, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. According to US policymaking, this influence, undoubtedly, serves best the US interests because it (1) restores the US position and hegemony in the Middle East, (2) protects Israel from unexpected threats from its neighboring Arab countries, and (3) strengthens Israel in the Middle East through normalization processes. It is, in fact, a unified US-Israeli goal carried out by the Arabs.

The limitation of the study:

Due to the status quo and the new legislation and the protocol created by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research we were unable to expand and elaborate some information in the current research.

Glossary

Gulf war: a war waged by coalition forces from 35 nations led by the United States against Iraq in response to Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait

No-fly zone: an area over which aircraft are forbidden to fly, especially during a conflict

9/11 attacks: were a series of four coordinated terrorist attacks by the militant Islamist terrorist group al-Qaeda against the United States of America on the morning of Tuesday, September 11, 2001.

Al Qaeda: Al-Qaeda is a militant Sunni Islamist multi-national organization, which is widely regarded as a terrorist group. It was founded in 1988 by Osama bin Laden, Abdullah Azzam, and several other Arab volunteers during the Soviet-Afghan War. Al-Qaeda operates as a network of Islamic extremists and Salafist jihadists

Zionism: A movement for [originally] the re-establishment of Jewish nationhood in Palestine, and [since 1948] the development of the State of Israel

Threatcon ALPHA: Applies when there is a general threat of possible terrorist activity against personnel and facilities, the nature and extent of which are unpredictable, and circumstances do not justify the full implementation of THREATCON BRAVO measures. However, it may be necessary to implement certain measures from higher THREATCONs resulting from intelligence received or as a deterrent. The measures in this THREATCON must be capable of being maintained indefinitely.

Threatcon Bravo: Applies when an increased and more predictable threat of terrorist activity exists. The measure in this THREATCON must be capable of being maintained for weeks without causing undue hardship, affecting operational capability, or aggravating relations with local authorities.

G-7: The Group of Seven is an intergovernmental organization made up of the world's largest developed economies: France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada

Dual containment: Dual containment was an official US foreign policy aimed at containing both Iraq and Revolutionary Iran....It represented a continuation of US foreign policy toward Iran and Iraq during the Cold War and Bill Clinton's attempt to revise a Persian Gulf strategy after the Gulf War

The Israel lobby: are individuals and groups seeking to influence the United States government to better serve Israel's interests.

The Arab NATO: would be a military and security alliance dedicated to the defense and insulated from economic, diplomatic, or political disputes.

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المخلص :

تناولت هذه الأطروحة أولاً وقبل كل شيء العلاقات الأمريكية السعودية على مدار الوقت مركزة بشكل محوري على

تأثير إدارة ترامب على علاقات الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية مع المملكة العربية السعودية؛ وذلك من خلال تحليل

الجوانب السياسية والاقتصادية والعسكرية رغم وجود اختلاف في الأنظمة السياسية ووجهات النظر العالمية والثقافات بين البلدين. لقد أثارت الانقسامات الواضحة في الشراكة حول الاتفاق النووي الإيراني ومكافحة التطرف في الشرق الأوسط مخاوف كثيرة بشأن قدرتهم المستقبلية للمحافظة على الشراكة. رغم إن زيارة دونا لد ترامب إلى الرياض في ماي

2017 أظهرت صلابه العلاقات بينهم. وتبحث هذه الأطروحة أيضاً في الخصائص الفريدة للعلاقات بين الولايات المتحدة والسعودية التي ضمنت الاستقرار في ظل هذه الانقسامات. حيث تم ذلك بمراجعة تاريخ موجز لكلا البلدين من أجل فهم العلاقات أفضل. بالإضافة تناول هذا البحث تأثير هذه العلاقات على انتخاب الرئيس الأمريكي دونا لد ترامب؛ كما يحدد الدوافع الرئيسية للشراكة الأمريكية السعودية في المجالات السياسية والاقتصادية والعسكرية والأمنية. باستخدام منهج تحليلي وصفي؛ يسعى الباحثون إلى تحديد كيف أن العلاقات بين البلدين ظلت متشابكة من خلال المصالح المشتركة.

الكلمات المفتاحية :

الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية - المملكة العربية السعودية - الاتفاق النووي - مكافحة التطرف - الشرق الأوسط - دونا لد ترامب .

résumé:

cette thèse aborde d'abord et avant tout la mascarade complexe des relations américaines avec le royaume d'Arabie saoudite au fil du temps, en mettant l'accent sur l'impact de l'administration Trump sur les relations américano-saoudiennes en analysant les aspects politiques, économiques et les aspects militaires. Les vastes systèmes politiques différents, les visions du monde et les cultures ont été remis en question à plusieurs reprises. Récemment, des fissures visibles dans le partenariat sur l'accord nucléaire iranien et la lutte contre l'extrémisme au Moyen-Orient ont suscité des inquiétudes quant à sa capacité future. Néanmoins, comme en témoigne lors de la visite du président américain Donald Trump à Riyad en mai 2017, les relations semblent être aussi solides que jamais. Le présent document examine les caractéristiques uniques des relations américano-saoudiennes qui ont assuré la stabilité face à des divisions claires. Il est accompli en passant en revue une brève histoire des deux pays afin de mieux comprendre les relations américano-saoudiennes. En outre, cette recherche examine l'impact des relations sur l'élection du président américain Donald Trump. Elle identifie également les principaux moteurs du partenariat américano-saoudien dans les domaines politique, économique, militaire et sécuritaire. À l'aide d'une approche descriptive, les chercheurs cherchent à déterminer comment les relations entre les deux pays, aux valeurs opposées, sont restées liées par des intérêts communs.

Les mots clés:

Les Etats- Unis d'Amérique, Le Royaume d' Arabie Saoudite , Accord sur le nucléaire Iranien, Contre-extrémisme, Moyen-Orient, Donald Trump.