

Arming the Sentry

The Argument for Maintaining Arms Transfers to Saudi Arabia

Sebastian J. Veneziano

School of Government and Public Policy, University of Arizona

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Dr. Nicholas Thorne

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Introduction

The stability and security of the Middle East, Persian Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula is vital to U.S. interests and foreign policy in the region and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been a strategic partner to this U.S. endeavor. The arms trade between the two states since the beginning of the 21st century has been an important part of securing the Saudi Kingdom and helping the Saudi military achieve the mission of the United States. The arms trade has been the most important – the United States is indisputably the top exporter of military arms to the Kingdom during that time span. But this special relationship is now at a crossroads; despite the relationship enjoyed by the two countries, there have been a number of differences that at have times caused rifts in the relationship and now more recently there have been growing calls of ceasing shipments of arms to the Saudi state as a means of applying political leverage to change Saudi behavior in not only in its foreign policy but also domestically. Does Saudi leadership *have* to play by American rules to obtain weapons? Could they find an alternate supplier in the growing global arms marketplace? Will imposing such policy leverage on a vital partner in the Middle East cause a further rift in the strained U.S. – Saudi relationship which if broken can have the U.S. on the outside looking in on the region and the introduction of a new power like Russia or China call the shots with Saudi Arabia in the region? What are the implications if the U.S. cuts off the supply of arms to Saudi Arabia? This brief will seek to show that it is in the best interest of the United States to maintain arm shipments to Saudi Arabia while at the same time provide recommendations on to how to bolster the Saudi state as a responsible, reliable partner in the region and maintain the delicate balance in keeping an almost century long relationship on good terms while at the same time allowing the U.S. to remain as an influential presence that can further apply its foreign policy in the region.

U.S. – Saudi relations

The relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia dates back to 1931 when the United States formally recognized Saudi Arabia as a sovereign state (U.S. Department of State, 2022) which followed nine years later with full diplomatic relations (U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Saudi Arabia, n.d.). Since that time a strong relationship formed where both states “share a common concern for regional security, oil exports and imports, and sustainable development” (U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Saudi Arabia, n.d.). Beyond their common concerns in the Middle East, both states share rich technological and educational exchanges where many Saudi families send their children to colleges and universities across the United States to return with a valued “western-influenced” education while still being able to maintain cultural ties to their rich past.

The trade relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia also helps to further bond this strong relationship between the two states as the U.S. is the Kingdom’s largest trading partner in a variety of sectors (U.S. Embassy & Consulates in Saudi Arabia, n.d.). The Office of the United

States Trade Representative reports that in 2019 trade between the two countries totaled \$38.7 bn where U.S. exports exceeded imports between the two, \$23.9 bn to 14.9 bn, respectively. The top export sectors were aircraft, vehicles, machinery, arms and ammunition, and electrical machinery; in addition, agricultural exports for 2019 was over \$1 bn, making it the U.S.'s 22th largest agricultural export market (Office of the United States Trade Representative, n.d.). Imports of Saudi products to the U.S. in 2019 overwhelmingly was petroleum products valued at \$12 bn followed by smaller import values of aluminum, fertilizers, and organic chemicals ((Office of the United States Trade Representative, n.d.)

As it pertains to military sales, “Saudi Arabia is the United States’ largest foreign military sales (FMS) customer, with more than \$100 billion in active FMS cases.” (U.S. Department of State, 2022), underscoring the common interests in security in the region and their enduring relationship. In addition to mere trade, the two countries also invest in mutual joint ventures where there exists over 300 such arrangements making the U.S. the “largest group of foreign investors in the Kingdom” (The Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, n.d.)

The continuance of this valued relationship is part of the Kingdom’s Vision 2030 initiative that seeks to enhance Saudi Arabia’s standing on the global stage in government effectiveness, social responsibility, growing and diversifying the economy while adding jobs, and strengthening both national and Islamic identity that will ultimately lead to the last initiative of offering all Saudi citizens a healthy and fulfilling life (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, 2022). The Saudi government notes that the relationship between the two “is stronger than ever” (The Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, n.d.) and that the relationship underpins a shared commitment of security in the region and economic advantages for both. It is these common interests and enduring respect the two states have for each other that has cemented the relationship and allowed the two states to “(weather) many storms, including numerous regional and global conflicts and crises” (The Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, n.d.)

Strategic Importance of the U.S. – Saudi Relationship

The value of the U.S. – Saudi relationship cannot be overstated. Saudi Arabia is an influencer in the Middle East, especially in the Arabian Peninsula and to those states that also practice the majority Sunni Islam branch of the faith but also holds sway throughout the Muslim world as having within its borders the two holiest sites in Islam, Mecca and Medina where devout Muslims worldwide journey to make their obligatory pilgrimages. Beyond cultural influence, Saudi Arabia also has the distinction of possessing the 2nd largest known reserves of petroleum in the world giving it much leverage in the way of the global consumption of oil and individual states’ economies that would otherwise suffer with an insufficient supply of it. This Saudi leverage is channeled through its participation in the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), a cartel of 13 petroleum producing states that can influence the global supply and price of oil. Since the organization’s establishment in 1961, the U.S. has

witnessed, and felt, the effects of decisions made by OPEC; in 1973 in response to U.S. support of Israel in the Yom Kippur War against other Arab states, Saudi Arabia embargoed sales of petroleum to the U.S. Nearly 10 years later in the 1980s, the cartel seeking to ward off competition from non-OPEC members manipulated oil prices through supply that weakened competitors that could not otherwise compete due to low prices (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018). The Kingdom was able to withstand this price drop due to its immense reserves; to put it in perspective the Saudi state in 2021 was able to, on average, produce 10.84 million bbl of oil per day, accounting for 11% of the world total for the year (U.S. Energy Information Administration, n.d.). It is slightly more than Russia's output for the same year, more than double China's output and over three times the amount produced daily in the same year by its regional rival Iran. While the United States outpaced (and currently outpaces) all oil producing states in 2021, having both a direct and indirect influence of nearly a third of the world's oil output compared to 20% of the U.S. main global rivals of Russia, China, and Iran provides for immense leverage in international relations and diplomacy. Fontenrose (2021) notes that singularly, "Saudi Arabia is the only nation with any leverage over Russian oil policy and output at the moment" and as such can, if it so chooses, to affect the Russian war machine in its efforts in its invasion of Ukraine. Thus, since WWII, U.S. interests in Saudi Arabia and in the Middle East "has been a 'cornerstone' of its foreign policy for decades" (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018).

Apart from petroleum interests in the region, the Middle East has since the 1970s been a hotbed for radicalized terrorism that had been directed toward the West and in particular the United States. Having a valuable relationship in Saudi Arabia allows for the United States to establish a latent footprint in the region to address matters of terrorism in the region, being able to extend its forward presence to prevent terrorist attacks on U.S. soil. With the Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's Iranian monarchy overthrown in 1979, the U.S. lost a valuable ally turned enemy in the Islamic State of Iran. This left Saudi Arabia as the primary (Muslim) ally in the region for nearly four decades" (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018). Since that time, the alliance between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia has witnessed and endured challenges in the region like the 1979 overthrow of the Shah, the Russian invasion of Afghanistan where the two states worked together to arm and fund the Mujahideen fighters that put up staunch resistance to the Soviets, the First Gulf War in which the Kingdom permitted the Western Coalition to establish a foothold on the peninsula to launch its campaign against Saddam Hussein, and most notoriously for the United States, the 9/11 attacks that in some sense nearly and irreparably fractured the relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia as fifteen of the nineteen hijackers involved in the attacks were Saudi Nationals and as a result deep mistrust among the American public toward Saudi Arabia had put extreme pressure on American politicians and decisions makers to question, review, and reconsider the relationship to the Saudi state.

Challenges and calls for dissolution aside, the relationship between the U.S. and the Saudi State has endured to the point where the U.S. Department of State (2022) has declared that

“The United States and Saudi Arabia have a common interest in preserving the stability, security, and prosperity of the Gulf region and consult closely on a wide range of regional and global issues. Saudi Arabia plays an important role in working toward a peaceful and prosperous future for the region and is a strong partner in security and counterterrorism efforts and in military, diplomatic, and financial cooperation. Its forces work closely with U.S. military and law enforcement bodies to safeguard both countries’ national security interests.”

Such a declaration of confidence of the relationship in Saudi Arabia and its relations with the U.S. has led to what Saab (2023) has identified as “one of Washington’s most important priorities and challenges in Saudi Arabia is to help the kingdom provide for its own security” (p. 4). The origins of this endeavor came shortly after Iran’s turn against the West and the U.S. when President Jimmy Carter in his 1980 State of the Union Address established the “Carter Doctrine” where “the United States would use its military resources to defend American interests in the Middle East if necessary” (Saab, 2023). Three years later, the Carter Doctrine gave rise to the formation of the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) (previously known as the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force) (Saab, 2023). CENTCOM was crucial to the Gulf War, the 2003 war in Iraq and the war in Afghanistan and continues to be a vital element for U.S. presence in the Middle East today whose main mission is to deter Iranian aggression and countering violent extremist organizations and their activities (U.S. Central Command, n.d.). With U.S. military presence greatly reduced due to the withdrawals in Afghanistan and Iraq, an uneasiness has developed among the Saudi elite that the U.S. may not have the willingness to protect Saudi interests when it is most desperately needed against an aggressive Iran (Saab, 2023). As it stands, a third mission of CENTCOM addresses this concern, to “compete strategically (through regional constructs (and through) Integrated Air and Missile Defense/ Counter Unmanned Aerial systems” (U.S. Central Command, n.d.) To reiterate Saab’s (2023) statement above, “One of Washington’s most important priorities and challenges in Saudi Arabia is to help the kingdom provide for its own security”; this comes through the ability to trade arms so that it can for itself deter Iranian aggression when the time arises. This “arming the sentry” attitude allows for the U.S. to remain confident that its strategic partner in the Middle East can effectively monitor and police the region along the same interests both states have for the region while the U.S. can transfer more of its military resources...to the Indo-Pacific and/or Europe, where they’re needed the most” (Saab, p. 19) in order to address and counter a growing and menacing presence of Russia in Eastern Europe and China in Asia.

Roadblocks and Detours

Despite the “confident” relations on the surface shown toward both governments, under the surface a magma chamber exists that could cause instability and rifts that neither state wants. Critics in both governments have voiced their concerns about the efficacy and endurance of the relationship between them as well as whether both states have good intentions in keeping the relationship alive. Throughout the past three U.S. presidential administrations, each president

has affected Saudi attitudes toward the United States in various ways, in return, Saudi domestic and foreign policy has influenced these presidential stances. The Obama Administration generally cultivated a mood of distrust because of its foreign policy decisions in the Arab world “despite whopping arms sales, joint military exercises with Gulf Arab states and a strong U.S. military presence in the region” (Batrawy 2023). Much of the distrust stemmed from the support Obama gave toward the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), or the Iran nuclear deal that seemed to provide concessions to Iran, a state that Saudi Arabia eventually cut diplomatic ties with in 2016 (Fontenrose, 2022). The Trump Administration, to the apparent approval of the Riyadh elite, scrapped the JCPOA and continued to support the Saudi regime by inking arms deals that according to some would total nearly \$350 bn over ten years (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018). The Trump Administration also supported Saudi activities in Yemen despite the apparent crisis to non-combatant civilians and soft targets Saudi military strikes were inflicting through the alleged use of American produced arms. The administration was more focused on the Saudi military keeping in check the Iranian-backed Houthi rebels which then-Secretary of State Mike Pompeo felt confident that it would result in a Saudi victory. Yet, the situation on the ground in Yemen to this day has remained unchanged and is seemingly grinding to a stalemate. The signing of the Abraham accords during the last half of 2020 with the UAE, Morocco, Bahrain, and Sudan signing declarations of peace with Israel revived U.S. commitment in establishing peace and stability in the region and greater Muslim world and helped warm U.S.-Saudi relations further.

With a another political party change in the Oval Office, the Saudi regime feared for a return of the Obama years, however, under the current Administration, President Biden has generally continued generally on the same course as his Republican party predecessor and has continued the arms flow to the Kingdom despite early on in his tenure he had taken a stance to cut off sales to Saudi Arabia “because of its actions in Yemen” (Lee, 2022). This stance was later changed to permitting the flow of weapons to the Kingdom for defensive weapons only (Stone and Zengerle, 2021). This resulted in an arm sale to both Saudi Arabia and the UAE that amounted to \$5 bn in total (Batrawy 2023), (Lee, 2022) for the upgrade in air defenses toward a potentially more hostile Iranian regime and in the case of Saudi Arabia attacks made upon them by Houthi rebel attacks with Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and missile attacks along the Saudi-Yemen border. Much of the arms shipment consisted of PATRIOT GEM-T missiles used for these defensive purposes. This sale came on the heels of a 2021 sale of “280 air-to-air missiles valued at up to \$650 million” (Stone and Zengerle, 2021) that also was approved by the Biden Administration. Despite the withdrawal decision and moves by both Trump and Biden from Afghanistan and Iraq, the Saudi government could nonetheless feel comforted that shipments of arms coming to their country from the United States was once again resuming contributing to good feelings about the relationship. Add to Biden’s reassurances on a recent Gulf visit in 2022 regarding U.S. commitments in the region (Batrawy 2023) and it would appear that the U.S.-Saudi relationship is, what the Saudi Embassy describes “as strong as ever”; but still, differences exist.

There are six main points of contention that currently and saliently exist between the United States and Saudi Arabia that affects their relations and creates dissention and disagreement in Congress about the continuing arms trade between the two states. While the relationship is not broken, these fractures if not mitigated or mended can cause further stress on the surface and can in due time can become irreparably broken. These issues are in no order of importance and are as follows:

The 9/11 Attacks

It's not surprising that after it was discovered that fifteen of the nineteen hijackers on the four commercial aircraft that hit the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and Flight 93 which crashed in a rural field in Pennsylvania were Saudi nationals, anti-Saudi sentiment among the American people spread relatively unabated throughout society. Seeking relief and addressing their grievances to the American government, lawmakers drafted and passed the Justice Against Sponsors of Terrorism Act on September 28, 2016, overriding a veto by then-President Obama and even contradictorily dismissing the 9/11 Commission's clearance of the Saudi government of any culpability in the attacks. Such legislation brought the ire of the Saudis and as a result strained diplomatic relations. Through the passing of the law there has been, on average about 20-30 filed suits a year against the Saudi government peaking in 2018 at 100 (Hoover, 2023). On the scale of severity, this lingering situation is not as great anymore as there are other greater issues causing disagreement between the two states. At the same time there also is a sizeable number of politicians, policy makers and U.S. citizens feel that the Saudi government was not complicit in the attacks in any way and know the importance of the relationship with Saudi Arabia, yet the events of 9/11 still are vivid in the minds of many Americans, especially those affected and the lawmakers that hear their calls. Over time it is hoped that such memories and images are remembered in such a way that our collective self as a nation can restore diplomatic relations with states such as we have with Germany and Japan in the years after WWII.

Iran

During the Obama administration, the president sought several avenues in the middle ground to find a way for rival states in the Middle East to settle their differences. When President Obama presented the JCPOA to Iran, Saudi Arabia felt cheated and betrayed in that the Saudi government felt that the U.S. was laying the foundations for eventually transferring its major strategic alliance in the Gulf from Saudi Arabia to Iran (Gardner, 2016) and this agreement was the cornerstone of that new foundation. The U.S. approach to Iran's nuclear ambitions shifted during President Trump's time in office who scrapped the JCPOA deal which was a welcome relief to Saudi Arabia and moving forward worked together to counter Iranian efforts and ambitions in the region" (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018).

The Iranian threat is real, not only to U.S. interests but also more pointedly to Saudi interests in the region and its security within its borders. Their rivalry has been on multiple levels; in Yemen, the Saudi military has been actively engaged against Iranian-backed Houthi

rebels where border clashes on the Saudi-Yemeni line have continued for years (Guzansky and Barak, 2021). The clashes are not just restricted to the border, Rocket attacks and Iranian UAVs used by the rebels to attack infrastructure and towns well within Saudi Arabia have taken place Lee (2022). Additionally, Iran has been brazen enough to act on its own accord and struck Saudi oil facilities and oil tankers in the Persian Gulf (Guzansky and Barak, 2021), most notably the 2019 attack on Saudi oil facilities in Abqaiq and Khurais where multiple missiles and drones strikes revealed the ability of Iranians to carry out such attacks before anyone could discover Iranian intentions (Saab, 2023). A further shock to the Saudis was the relatively muted response made by the Americans to the attack that concerned the Saudis to an extent to wonder if the inaction was a “hint that Washington is over the Carter Doctrine of protecting Gulf countries against external threats” (Fontenrose, 2022). Further abroad and which may play into Saudi international policy is the seemingly growing relationship between Iran and Russia in arms trade and military cooperation “that can create implications...for stability and security in the Middle East.” (Lopez, 2023). While Russia is currently embroiled in Russia for the time being, it could soon turn its head toward the broader Middle East where it currently has a role in Syria in backing an Assad regime that also has less than cordial relations with the Saudis as the Saudis have backed Syrian rebels looking to wrest Assad from power.

Syria

To transition and further focus on the Syrian problem, there has been a mood of disappointment and regret for Obama’s handling and involvement during the Syrian Civil War. Again, seeing a lack of inaction, this time through President Obama’s restraint on responding with air strikes on the Syrian military after alleged use of chemical weapons on Syrian civilians in 2013, and further reinforcing the belief that the U.S.’s Carter Doctrine were quickly becoming empty words, Saudi Arabia’s King Salman acted unilaterally and forged an alliance with Turkey to counter the Assad regime (Gardner, 2016). With its involvement in Syria, it now shares the chessboard with both Russia and Iran who back the Assad regime with the U.S. for the most part sitting on the sidelines.

Yemen

To its south, Saudi Arabia also faces a threat within Yemen where Iranian-backed Houthi rebels seek to overthrow the legitimate Yemeni government. Intervention into Yemen was launched by current Prime Minister and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in 2015 when he was the Saudi defense minister at the time. The Obama Administration at first supported the assertive posture of the Saudis beyond their border to maintain security in the region by providing the Saudis with not only arms but intelligence and military logistics to quell the Houthi uprising (Gardner, 2016). As the civil war has dragged on for now nearly a decade it has put a noticeable strain on Saudi defense spending and has made the American position of Saudi Arabia’s involvement shift from one of support to discomforting. The civil war and ongoing strife are now considered one of the world’s worst humanitarian crises of our day with an

“estimated 233,000 deaths, including 131,000 from indirect causes such as lack of food, health services and infrastructure” according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (2020). As a result, lawmakers have “sought to block portions of arms sales and U.S. participation in the war” (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018) and successive presidents have supported the move. Some have attached U.S. sales of arms to Saudi Arabia from 2015 to 2019 as acts complicit to the approval of Saudi Arabia’s use of these weapons in the conflict and have now assigned the Yemeni civil war as being America’s war, too (Riedel, 2021). President Obama also had opponents to Saudi involvement in the civil war when then-CENTCOM Commander Lloyd Austin predicted the move by Saudi Arabia getting involved would end up being a disastrous situation in which U.S. arms sales to Saudi Arabia would have the appearance of complicity. Indeed, Saudi Arabia is too far involved to simply remove itself. Its attacks on Houthi targets have resulted in a “response-in-kind” engagement by Houthi rebels backed by Iran who are only too happy to provide the means necessary to conduct retaliatory attack as far as the Saudi capital of Riyadh and on infrastructure targets like “airports, oil facilities and symbols of government” (Guzansky and Barak, 2021). The main threat is not Houthi troop movement into Saudi Territory, but rather aerial threats provided for by Iran in which Saudi Arabia is now seeking arms to counter these attacks but have up until recently have been having a difficult time acquiring from the United States. As a result, Riedel (2021) has claimed that as a result, “Iran is the big winner in the war” because of the costs involved and the limited supplies sold to the Saudi state by its primary supplier; thus, Iran may feel content to continue supplying the Houthis at the Saudi’s expense.

Oil

The attacks on Saudi petroleum infrastructure (its literal primary source for its wealth) as well as the trickling availability of U.S. arms shipments in response to Saudi Arabia’s involvement and management of the civil war in Yemen has caused another fault in the U.S.-Saudi relationship – the use of Saudi oil as political and foreign policy leverage. As stated previously, Saudi Arabia’s membership and largest petroleum producer in OPEC allows the Kingdom to hold much leverage in the dictating production output and global supply of oil which in turn affects price and can in some ways affect nations’ economies. Such decisions can come at any moment and for any reason and this was exhibited just before the U.S. 2022 midterm elections when Saudi Arabia opted to cut production that sent gas prices soaring (Fontenrose, 2022). In what looked like a sympathetic move towards Russia in the midst of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, the Saudi-influenced OPEC cartel “has stuck to a pandemic-era pact with Russia to curb production and keep oil prices up (which seemingly) has helped Russia retain some of its spending power despite Western sanctions in response to the war in Ukraine” (Batrawy 2023) and negatively affects the intent of those sanctions to dry up Russia’s coffers and slow the war in Ukraine. This gives the uneasy feeling in Washington that Riyadh has begun to favor Moscow (Fontenrose, 2022). The cut in Saudi oil production and the slight the United States feels that it was directed toward them has “resulted in renewed calls and proposed

legislation for at least a temporary ban on American arms sales to the kingdom.” (Iddon, 2022). As the relationship is getting more fractured and strained, it appears that “Saudi Arabia’s approach to the United States has become purely transactional” (Fontenrose, 2022). The Saudis know that heavy U.S. dependency on its petroleum is a thing of the past which in effect has removed a valuable foreign policy lever the Kingdom could once use against the United States to keep them on somewhat equal footing. The only remaining option to maintain that equal footing has been to manipulate production output to either keep gas consumers angry with higher prices at the pump or make competing U.S. energy companies suffer due to low prices that Saudi Arabia can weather better. Either way it further strains the relationship despite Saudi attempts to get the equal footing it desires with the U.S.

Saudi manipulation of production and export of petroleum is indeed a right that the Saudis have concerning their oil reserves, but it also is a thorn in the side of the United States. While the U.S. produces more than Saudi Arabia, it consumes more than it produces which makes its relationship with Saudi Arabia – and its petroleum – all the more important to maintain its economy domestically and standing and position internationally. As Fontenrose (2022) notes, “Saudi Arabia is the only nation with any leverage over Russian oil policy and output at the moment, so it is in a good position to help with this—and Washington should insist that it do so,” especially when the U.S. and other Western states have imposed embargoes on Russian goods and resources, notably petroleum and gas. To be sure, the United States does not want to be on the opposite side of this equation where Saudi Arabia has any type of leverage over it.

Human Rights

An enduring concern that has existed for some time in U.S.-Saudi relations is the allegations of human rights abuses made or condoned by the Saudi regime both domestically and in Yemen as described previously. Authoritarian, monarchical rule as well as a legal system that has Sharia law as its foundation makes for an oppressive culture for some segments in Saudi society. Upon his appointment as Saudi Prime Minister, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman launched a crackdown on Saudi elites suspected of corruption arresting scores of people (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018). Those critical of the Crown Prince’s policies similarly were silenced and given prison terms for speaking out on social media (Batrawy 2023). Human rights watchdogs in the U.S. also sounded the alarm of the unprecedented number of convicted criminals who were executed under these extreme and authoritarian conditions. (Gardner, 2016), (Batrawy 2023).

Even the royal household has not escaped suspicion. Many in international circles believe the Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman, is involved the killing of Saudi journalist, Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi embassy in Istanbul, Türkiye in 2018. Despite bin Salman’s denial of any wrongdoing or knowledge of the murder, the incident has caused further strains on the U.S.-Saudi relationship that further cemented American negative perceptions of Saudi Arabia’s human rights record and had consequences elsewhere in the relationship where the U.S.

Treasury Department levied sanctions on seventeen Saudis believed to be involved or have knowledge of the Kashoggi's murder. At the same time however to the Kingdom's benefit, President Trump rejected calls to cut arms sales to Saudi Arabia in response to the CIA's findings of Saudi government involvement in the murder (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018).

But despite Saudi Arabia's own misgivings on its human rights record, the Saudi government has sought to be a mediator in other global matters most recently in the recent Russia-Ukraine war where it succeeded in prisoner swaps between Russia and states that have backed Ukraine's defense as well as having an influence in the release of U.S. citizen and WNBA star Brittney Greiner (Batrawy 2023). In addition, despite Saudi Arabia's less than stellar record on many matters that stem over the country's extreme conservatism, authoritarian government and human rights abuses, many states still maintain bilateral ties with the state primarily because of oil and for the larger powers, its strategic place in the Middle East (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018).

A Potential Shift in Posture?

The strains and stresses in the U.S.-Saudi relationship as well as the current landscape in the Middle East, especially in the Arabian Peninsula, may cause a shift in how the Saudis view their relationship with the United States. Both states have distinct domestic and foreign policy paths they pursue and often they are not aligned with each other. Saudi Arabia values its nearly century long relationship with the United States and sees it as a valuable partner in establishing peace and security in the Middle East, thus it desires American arms to achieve that goal and uses when it can its petroleum reserves as a lever to get what it wants. On the other side of the coin, the United States sees the value of maintaining a relationship with Saudi Arabia due to its geographical position in the Middle East sandwiched in between the two important shipping lanes of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf as well as having a valued partner that produces 11% of the world's petroleum production year over year. The U.S. however often seeks to distance itself whenever Saudi Arabia's actions runs counter to U.S. positions and values as which was described previously. Often the punishment levied toward Saudi Arabis as been lack of access to valued American weapons and military technology. While this strategy in keeping American arms out of Saudi hands worked in the past, the climate in the arms trade has begun to change and the U.S. needs to take note of these changes or else they may find themselves without a valued Muslim partner in the region and additionally find themselves on the outside looking in.

Ottaway (2021) points out that "The main glue of the relationship remains massive U.S. arms sales to the Saudi kingdom and covert cooperation in combating terrorism." These arms sales have resulted in Saudi Arabia being the biggest purchaser of American made armaments that results in billions of dollars of revenue and has the potential to continue to do so in the future. Currently the Biden Administration has continued to commit to providing Saudi Arabia arms but has limited the availability to "defensive" arms (Ottaway, 2021) especially in its

involvement in the Syrian civil war. Further influencing Washington's decision in providing the Saudis with arms is the Kingdom's decision to cut oil production that has caused a spike in oil prices that have contributed to the ill effects of the American economy in last year. Calls to counter with a temporary ban on arms sales have been heard from both sides of the aisle in Congress to pressure the Saudis to ramp up oil production (Iddon, 2022)

Just as oil production is a lever in which the Saudis can manipulate to have the United States acquiesce in some parts of their complicated relationship, the United States can counter with their own lever of arms availability (Fontenrose, 2022). But while there are a very limited number of states that have the capability to produce voluminous quantities of petroleum, the arms trade possesses a marketplace where there are a number of sellers that could in theory replace the United States and divert Saudi petrodollars toward them, notably Russia, China, and France. This has not been lost on American lawmakers when considering delivering or restricting the delivery of arms to Saudi Arabia. In addition, Saudi Arabia, it appears, has already implemented some of its contingency plans in acquiring weapons that the U.S. has held back on. Guzansky and Barak (2021) note that "Riyadh is not hesitant about engaging in military discourse and also acquiring weapons (as long as there is no possible alternative in the Western market) from other problematic actors, including North Korea." Indeed, even Iddon (2022) noted that Ryna Bohl, a MENA analyst at RANE, pointed out that even in the face of an U.S. embargo of arms to Saudi Arabia, the U.S. would not likely prevent the Saudis from acquiring weapons elsewhere because of Saudi Arabia's vital importance in the region, but as long the arms are supplied from an American ally. But at the same time, Iddon (2022) notes that "Washington would react very differently if Riyadh turns to either Moscow or Beijing for its military hardware." This is precisely what the Saudis are gravitating to because of a perceived lack of U.S. commitment to security in the Middle East and the blocking of sales of U.S. arms that Saudi Arabia desires. Since the end of the Cold War and an expansion of the global arms marketplace, Middle Eastern nations don't feel the need to be tied to one power or another if the need to does not exist. Keeping their options open can provide opportunities for new doors to open while others have shut on them. In the case of arms acquisition, Saudi Arabia may have found one such door open.

As it concerns ballistic missile possession and technology, the U.S. has repeatedly in the past refused to sell such arms to the Saudis citing the need to control of the spread of such arms to other states as well as remaining within the parameters of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). But, as mentioned before, where one door closes another may open. As Saudi Arabia is seeking to level up on its missile capabilities to mount a more effective campaign in Yemen, it has started to look east, towards China to make that desire a reality (Masterson, 2022). China in its efforts to obtain more partners to its west has eyed Saudi Arabia as an attractive partner due to the same reasons the U.S. values its relationship with the Kingdom. While it is known that China has entered the Saudi market with the sale of some missiles it is also believed that China now has shared its technology with the Saudis to produce them domestically

(Masterson, 2022) to put up a show toward Iran that they are not the only Muslim regime in the Middle East with such capabilities. The supplier/recipient relationship appears to not end there; in 2017 the Saudis purchased 300 Wing Loong II drones as part of a \$65 bn arms trade contract; additionally in a bigger move towards a fostering relationship between the Saudis and Chinese, the two states also inked a deal for the licensing of production of drones in Saudi Arabia using Chinese technology (Gulf International Forum, 2022). In 2022 Saudi Arabia additionally has purchased \$4 bn in Chinese arms making the sales of such arms appear more like a shift to the east that some analysts are saying is Saudi Arabia's way to fill the security vacuum left by the U.S. and China is all too happy to fill which also appears to satisfy both countries foreign policy initiatives.

The other elephant in the room that has the potential to steer Saudi Arabia away from American arms shipments is Russia, the 2nd largest arms dealer globally for the past ten years (SIPRI, 2022). What has been a double-edged sword for the U.S. is Russia's incursion into Ukraine that has thus far, diverted much of its existing arms as well as new production of domestic arms to the conflict, keeping exports lower than normally seen by Russia. At the same time, the U.S. is supplying its own arms and money to counter Russian aggression in Ukraine. By comparison, our government does not seem to have a problem in supplying arms to Ukraine in order not to put any of its own troops on the ground in the country. But when Russian arms exports do begin to diffuse out in the arms market once again, will the Saudis look to Russia as a supplier to get substitute arms otherwise not available through American suppliers because of the U.S. government's blockage of such arms purchases? Additionally, if the Saudis purchase arms from either Russia or China would that cause the Biden Administration or future administrations or Congress to use the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act to prevent such transfers from occurring and try to steer Saudi Arabia's arms purchases to U.S. allies? It would appear that at the end of the day the U.S. would be trying to dictate who Saudi Arabia buys from or not which only raises the chagrin of the Saudi government and possibly result in a complete break from the U.S. and a permanent turn toward Russia or China which also goes with it Saudi oil; this is something the United States does not want to risk.

Ultimately the questions boils down to whether arms transfers should continue between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia and how that would further benefit or harm U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. As it currently stands now, observers like Guzansky and Barak (2021) and Ottaway (2021) note that Saudi Arabia's biggest challenge is its ability to defend its oil infrastructure and other strategic targets from missile and drone strikes, most often launched by Iranian-backed Houthi Rebels in Yemen but also by Iran as well as evidenced by the 2019 drone strike on Saudi oil facilities in Abqaiq. This is due to its underdeveloped air defense capabilities. Despite the high-end military hardware that the Saudi kingdom has the ability to buy through petrodollars the ability to use such advanced armaments by its military is something left to be desired. Guzansky and Barak (2021) in their assessment of the Saudi military and the threats and weaknesses facing it note, "despite the large amount of money invested in Saudi defense

systems, in particular the acquisition of the most advanced Western technology (PAC-3 Patriot batteries, THAAD systems), Riyadh has had difficulty coping with heavy barrages and would certainly have difficulty thwarting a simultaneous large-scale attack from several fronts” the most menacing of which is Iran who possesses the largest arsenal in the region. Another limitation seen in the Saudi military machine is its naval capabilities. The importance of Saudi Arabia to be able to protect and defend the shipping lanes in the Persian Gulf and especially in the areas around the Strait of Hormuz is vital to the Kingdom’s oil economy on which it heavily relies on. It’s naval ability however cannot compete with that of Iran who possesses a much larger navy. The Saudi army also needs to be mentioned in its deficiencies; its enlisted numbers are small, lacks poor leadership, technology infrastructure, and has fragile command capabilities (Guzansky and Barak, 2021), again no match for a much larger Iranian land force. Given these poor assessments by observers its not difficult but nevertheless perplexing to conclude that the Saudi military’s “limitations are in stark contrast with the enormous amount of resources that the kingdom invests in its defense” (Guzansky and Barak, 2021). It is also not surprising that a number of lawmakers in Congress openly question why then the U.S. is approving such advanced and high-tech arms transfers if it cannot be effectively used by a military that does not know how to use it and accuse those allowing the trade to happen that the transfers are merely transactional rather than strategic and in the U.S.’s best interests. Saab (2023) has rephrased the legitimacy question of U.S.-Saudi arms transfers to address the strategic rationales behind the relationship and provides a thought-provoking response and solution to bolster the efficacy of arms transfers between the two states. Saab argues that arms transfers between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia does not make the Saudis more “capable and secure...because the very concept that governs the U.S.-Saudi security relationship is flawed” (p. 9). Saab argues that the U.S. still acts as the guardian of the region and *not* Saudi Arabia. In his view there are two required abilities that Saudi Arabia must have in order for the Saudis to be a capable presence and reliable partner in the region, in short it must have “an ability to domestically generate credible and sustainable combat power in peace time (and) an ability to respond effectively, alone or as part of a coalition, to various military contingencies. Saudi Arabia has been able to do neither, at least not sufficiently and effectively” (p. 10) to provide a counter to Iran. It has however, incrementally improved its military capabilities due to the relationship forged between the two states due to arms and technology transfers. Yet the current state and capabilities of the Saudi military can be seen in its involvement in Yemen. Saab (2023) notes that despite its small successes on the battlefield it also faces “considerable challenges (as) they have failed to reverse the territorial and strategic advances of the Iran-backed Houthis, while worsening Yemen’s humanitarian catastrophe” (p. 10) It is no secret that Saudi Arabia needs the United States diplomatic, military and logistical support to face aggressive Iranian foreign policy in the region but the U.S. is complicit in Saudi military and security deficiencies as the U.S. “fails to embrace, leverage, and operationalize the element of security partnership with Saudi Arabia” (Saab, p. 9). When the next conflict erupts in the region, it will be a conflict that requires support from other Arab states and not just diplomatically. A reliable partner on the battlefield will be required. They don’t

merely need a host country for launching operations from and a cheerleader on the sidelines, they need the abilities to assist the U.S. in these situations and that comes with arming the Saudi military as the U.S. has done within the past 20 years and to provide those battlefield capabilities to become that formidable force in the region. Saab (2023) notes that in 2018 the Pentagon began to advise the Saudi military on how to meet those capabilities yet with underlying tensions in the U.S.-Saudi relationship as well as the consideration of blocking arms transfers to the kingdom, the full potential of what can be accomplished in U.S.-Saudi military collaborations has yet to be fully realized.

The recent 2021 and 2022 contract sale of missiles considered by the Biden Administration (Stone and Zengerle, 2021), (Perez, 2022) is a 180-degree shift of the stance some U.S. lawmakers and Biden himself first established a position on the transfer of such armaments to Saudi Arabia. Seeing it from a diplomatic standpoint, the reconsideration of the sale comes after "an increase in cross-border attacks against Saudi Arabia over the past year" (Stone and Zengerle, 2021) (Perez, 2022) as well as replenishing a dwindling stockpile of the Saudi arsenal (Perez, 2022). Waiting for such attacks to justify the transfer and sale of weapons to valuable partner in the Middle East is a dangerous position to take given the importance of the partnership in respect to U.S. foreign policy in the region. Having this "wait-and-see" conduct should be seriously shelved for a more progressive approach.

Forging a New Diplomatic and Security Relationship

Saab (2023) notes that the high watermark of U.S.-Saudi relations culminated in the success of Operation Desert Storm in 1990-1991. Between then and now, U.S. foreign policy has gone through changes and "U.S. interests in the region have changed considerably" (Saab, p. 19) as well and the opportunities and threats have also shifted. Recent American sentiment of military operations overseas, especially in the Muslim world reflects a war-weary government that echoes the sentiments of American society. But U.S. interests in the Middle East should not also become weary as well. The region is vitally important to American interests and those interests *must* remain intact for the U.S. to remain as a top global power. At the same time, Saab also notes that "it's doubtful that the United States would elevate its security relationship with Saudi Arabia to an alliance" (p. 8), Saudi domestic and foreign policy does not always align with U.S. values, ideology, and interests – but it does align with the overarching security and peace initiative for the region. So, where to find middle ground to build the foundations of a new mission to establish peace and security in the Middle East? A commitment on both sides that establishes trust begins with strengthening Saudi security and military capabilities in a responsible way that involves U.S. armaments. Martin Indyk, a former U.S. Ambassador to Israel and Steven Cook, an expert on U.S.-Middle East policy and a senior fellow for Middle East and Africa studies at the Council for Foreign Relations (Saab, 2023) argues for United States (commitment) to boosting defense ties with Saudi Arabia (short of extending a formal

security guarantee) and, in return, the kingdom commits to cooperating on domestic reform, human rights, oil policy, the war in Yemen, and normalization with Israel” (p. 9) (Saab 2023). They also note that a “more flexible” policy in arms shipments to the Saudis would be invaluable. The transfer of arms to the Saudi kingdom has benefitted, to varying degrees, both exporter and importer in this delicate relationship. From 2017 to 2021 Saudi Arabia was responsible for purchasing 23% of all U.S. weapons sold (Wezeman, Kuimova, and Wezeman, 2022) and on the import side, American arms accounted for 82% of its arms purchases in the same period. The Saudi armory is for the most part, literally American made. To cut off armaments and hardware would be crippling to the Saudi state as vital equipment would not be otherwise easily repaired, replaced, or compatible with other weapons systems that are more effective when networked together. Dana Stroul, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East in the U.S. Department of Defense, notes that the “prospect for meaningful integration is more real than today” because of three things, the new emerging threats in the Middle East, the fast-paced emerging technology seen in armament systems and the “culture of innovation that Centcom [U.S. Central Command] is fostering together with its partners.” (Lopez, 2023) Blocking the sale of Patriot missiles, for instance, for their SAM defenses would render these defenses useless to potential Iranian and Houthi attacks from the air. It would be inconceivable to abandon such a vital partner in the Middle East for underlying reasons that are important for U.S. foreign policy but not as important for the overall security in the region.

It is understandable of the concerns of many lawmakers in Congress and presidential administrations that these issues have strained the U.S.-Saudi relationship and as a second part of this equation, the Saudis should address these concerns themselves which run counter to U.S. foreign policy concerning human rights both domestically and in Yemen, their attraction towards China as a possible security partner and its control on the production, and manipulation of global prices on petroleum. At the same time the U.S. needs to bring a stronger commitment to the security of the Middle East and ease Saudi concerns that the U.S. is not much in the game anymore let alone wanting to team up with them to address these concerns. These concerns are driving the Saudis to seek partners – and arms – elsewhere. This cannot happen lest the U.S. will lose influence in the region. Transactional foreign policy needs to reinvent itself to meaningful, committed and trusted foreign policy by establishing stronger bonds with Saudi Arabia *and that starts with the continued transfers of arms* to bolster Saudi Arabia’s standing in the Middle East and its defense and military capabilities to be that strengthened partner the U.S. needs in the region.

Conclusion

The withdrawal of U.S. forces and their allies in both Iraq and Afghanistan is not a sign of victory in the Muslim world; it is a sign of a war-weary American government and society who opted to pull back and reassess the situation from another perspective and from an

perspective that puts our biggest Arab partner in an uneasy situation. With the American presence largely absent in the Middle East a new paradigm has been constructed in the region. Saudi Arabia's adversaries, particularly Iran, has become more emboldened in its activities while at the same time Saudi Arabia now feels that it has to go it alone and has acted unilaterally in maintaining security in the Middle East, and in particular on the Arabian Peninsula, often to the chagrin of its biggest arms supplier, the United States. These unilateral moves often spur calls for halting arms shipments because of the perceived irresponsibility of the Saudi military in using such American arms on non-combatant populations. With the echoes of 9/11 still never fully removed from the American landscape, conservative Muslim fundamentalism in Saudi Arabia has kept the view in many Americans' eyes that the Saudi state is not a good partner for the United States in its endeavors of maintaining security in the region. But this is a distorted view. The Saudis are a valuable and vital partner for the United States. Despite underlying differences the two states have that other dyad relationships also have elsewhere, the decision to cut shipments of arms to Saudi Arabia in the goal of applying diplomatic leverage to review and revise domestic and foreign policy and strategy is a move not worth taking for the United States, especially if the U.S. plans not to get involved in conflict areas like Yemen. While the United States should adhere to its own ideals in determining foreign policy and decisions of whom to sell arms to, it should also be noted that U.S. foreign policy as it concerns Saudi Arabia, and the greater Middle East has also contributed to the current state the region finds itself in as well as the role the Saudis have played in the relationship to contribute to that strain. The Saudis are dependent on U.S. arms because over the years we have persuaded the Saudis to be our security partners, but the reality is, they never have been. Sure, they have bought our arms in the appearance of bolstering their military, but they never had a say-so in how to construct security in the region. The pullback of our presence in the region has provided the Saudi state to now have that opportunity to do the job the U.S. would otherwise do from afar yet Congress and the Executive branch chastises Saudi Arabia in their decisions on how that will look like often by threatening or actually shutting the arms tap to the Saudis. To continue shutting off the tap will cause Saudi Arabia to look elsewhere to find a partner to not only sell arms to them but also help establish a new influence in the Middle East, and U.S. rivals such as China and Russia may only be too eager to help. With Russia's existing presence in Syria and China's ambition to divert oil east through its Belt and Road Initiative, the U.S. could find themselves out in the cold with Arab states which risks its ability to project influence and forward presence in the Middle East. Thus, it is in the best interest to continue arms sales to Saudi Arabia to maintain a vital partnership and presence in the Middle East while urging the Saudis to responsibly use these weapons in a manner consistent with U.S. foreign policy, and at the same time bolstering Saudi military capabilities so that if, or when the time comes, the U.S. will have a strong partner to maintain peace and security in the region. It would be a win-win for both parties.

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Appendix 1: U.S. Arms to Saudi Arabia

Transfers of major weapons: Deals with deliveries or orders made for 2000 to 2021

Note: The ‘No. delivered’ and the ‘Year(s) of deliveries’ columns refer to all deliveries since the beginning of the contract. The ‘Comments’ column includes publicly reported information on the value of the deal. Information on the sources and methods used in the collection of the data, and explanations of the conventions, abbreviations and acronyms, can be found at URL <<http://www.sipri.org/contents/armstrad/sources-and-methods>>.

Source: SIPRI Arms Transfers Database

Information generated: 27 February 2023

Supplier/ recipient (R)	No. ordered	No. designation	Weapon description	Year(s) Weapon of order	Year delivery	of delivered	No. Comments
United States							
R: Saudi Arabia	(6)	CF6/F-103	turbofan	2008	2011-2012	(6)	For 3 A-330 MRTT tanker/transport aircraft from France
	(6)	CF6/F-103	turbofan	2009	2014-2015	(6)	For 3 A-330 MRTT tanker/transport aircraft from France
	(1748)	6V-53	diesel engine	(1990)	1991-2004	(1748)	6V-53T version for 1748 Piranha (LAV) APC from Canada and Switzerland
	523	M-113A3	APC	1997	2003-2006	(523)	\$413 m deal; Saudi M-113 rebuilt to M-113A3
	(2)	RE-3	SIGINT aircraft	(1998)	2004	(2)	Saudi KE-3A tanker aircraft rebuilt to RE-3 ELINT/SIGINT aircraft
	500	AIM-120C AMRAAM	BVRAAM	2000	2003-2006	(500)	\$475 m deal; for F-15 combat aircraft
	1827	BGM-71 TOW	anti-tank missile	2000	2001-2002	(1827)	Part of \$416 m deal; BGM-71E TOW-2A version; for National Guard
	27	M-60A3 Patton-2	tank	(2000)	2001	27	Second-hand
	105	AGM-65 Maverick	ASM	2001	2002-2003	(105)	\$21 m deal; 98 AGM-65D and 7 AGM-65G version
	(16)	Bell-412	helicopter	2001	2002-2003	(16)	Bell-412SA or Bell-412RSAF version; from Canadian production line
	(562)	BGM-71 TOW	anti-tank missile	2001	2002-2003	(562)	BGM-71E TOW-2A version
	(48)	M-109A5 155mm	self-propelled gun	(2001)	2002-2004	(48)	Probably Second-hand

(64)	6V-53	diesel engine	2004	2005-2006	(64)	6V-53T version for 64 M-113A300 (M-113A4) APC from Turkey
1	RE-3	SIGINT aircraft	(2004)	2007	1	Second-hand E-8B AGS aircraft rebuilt to RE-3
(64)	6V-53	diesel engine	(2005)	2007	(64)	6V-53T version for 64 M-113A300 (M-113A4) APC from Turkey
(75)	AIM-9M Sidewinder	SRAAM	2005	2006	(75)	Part of \$17 m deal
(75)	AIM-9M Sidewinder	SRAAM	2005	2007	(75)	Part of \$17 m deal
4	Citation-2	light transport ac	(2005)	2005-2006	4	
(132)	6V-53	diesel engine	2006	2006-2009	(132)	6V-53T version for 132 Piranha (LAV) APC from Canada
(10)	6V-53	diesel engine	2006	2007	10	6V-53T version for 10 ACV-S APC from Turkey
(14)	AIM-120C AMRAAM	BVRAAM	2006	2008	(14)	AIM-120C-5 version
(100)	LAV-25 turret	IFV turret	2006	2006-2009	(100)	For Piranha (LAV-25) IFV from Canada
65	F110	turbofan	2007	2008-2009	(65)	\$300 m deal; F-110-GE-129C version; for modernization of F-15S combat aircraft
16	S-92	transport helicopter	2007	2008-2010	(16)	For police; incl for civilian police use
(350)	6V-53	diesel engine	2008	2008-2010	(350)	6V-53T version for 320 M-113A300 (M-113A4) APC from Turkey
12	AH-64D Apache	combat helicopter	2008	2011	(12)	Incl 11 Saudi AH-64A rebuilt to AH-64D version
91	F110	turbofan	2008	2009-2010	(91)	Part of \$750 m deal; F-110-GE-129C version; for modernization of F-15S combat aircraft
900	JDAM	guided bomb	2008	2010-2011	(900)	
(59)	M-1A2S	tank	2008	2012-2014	(59)	Second-hand but rebuilt to M-1A2S before delivery
22	S-70/UH-60L	helicopter	2008	2010-2011	(22)	\$286 m deal
(724)	6V-53	diesel engine	2009	2011-2015	(724)	6V-53T version for 724 Piranha (LAV) APC from Canada
14	AAQ-33 Sniper	aircraft EO system	2009	2010	(14)	\$40 m deal; for F-15S combat aircraft
12	AH-64E Apache	combat helicopter	(2009)	2014-2015	(12)	
(150)	AIM-9X Sidewinder	BVRAAM	2009	2010	(150)	
72	ETS	anti-tank AV turret	(2009)	2011-2013	(72)	ETS Mk-2 version; for 72 Piranha (LAV-AT) tank destroyers from Canada
2	King Air-350 ISR	AGS aircraft	(2009)	2011	2	
264	LAV-25 turret	IFV turret	(2009)	2011-2015	(264)	For 264 Piranha (LAV-25) IFV from Canada
(90)	M-198 155mm	towed gun	(2009)	2010-2013	90	Second-hand
(314)	M-1A2S	tank	2009	2012-2017	(314)	Saudi M-1A1 rebuilt to M-1A2S version
100	Paveway	guided bomb	(2009)	2010-2011	(100)	GBU-10 and GBU-12 Paveway-2 versions
9	Schweizer-330	light helicopter	2009	2009	(9)	S-434 version
19	Schweizer-330	light helicopter	(2009)	2010	(19)	S-333 version
(312)	6V-53	diesel engine	2010	2010-2013	(312)	6V-53T version for 312 M-113A300 (M-113A4) APC from Turkey
(21)	AAQ-33 Sniper	aircraft EO system	2010	2011-2012	(21)	\$40-42 m deal
(37)	APG-78 Longbow	combat heli radar	(2010)	2014-2016	(37)	For 37 AH-64D Longbow combat helicopters

(2742)	BGM-71 TOW	anti-tank missile	(2010)	2011-2013	(2742)	\$177 m deal; BGM-71E TOW-2A version; for National Guard
13	S-70/UH-60L	helicopter	2010	2012-2013	(13)	Saudi UH-60A rebuilt to UH-60L
3	S-70/UH-60L	helicopter	2010	2011	3	S-70i version; from Polish production line; for police
(670)	6V-53	diesel engine	2011	2013-2017	(670)	6V-53T version for 670 M-113A300 (M-113A4) APC from Turkey
(155)	6V-53	diesel engine	2011	2015	(155)	6V-53T version for 155 Piranha (LAV) APC from Canada
(193)	AAQ-13 LANTIRN	combat ac radar	(2011)	2016-2021	(154)	For F-15SA combat aircraft
(2592)	AGM-114L HELLFIRE	anti-tank missile	(2011)	2013-2014	(2592)	AGM-114R version; for AH-64 combat helicopters; for National Guard
(600)	AGM-88 HARM	ARM	(2011)	2018-2021	(400)	AGM-88B version
(24)	AH-64E Apache	combat helicopter	(2011)	2015-2016	(24)	
(300)	AIM-9X Sidewinder	BVRAAM	(2011)	2012-2019	(300)	AIM-9X Block-2 version
84	F-15 Advanced Eagle	FGA aircraft	2011	2016-2020	(84)	Part of \$29 b deal; F-15SA version
68	F-15 Advanced Eagle	FGA aircraft	2011	2016-2021	(17)	Part of \$29 b deal; Saudi F-15S rebuilt to F-15SA; delivery planned 2016-2026
21	Patriot Configuration-3	SAM/ABM system	2011	2014-2017	(21)	\$1.7 b deal; Saudi Patriot SAM systems rebuilt to Patriot-3 version
(3100)	Paveway	guided bomb	(2011)	2013-2016	(3100)	Incl 1100 GBU-24 Paveway-3 and 2000 Dual Mode Paveway
2	S-70/UH-60L	helicopter	2011	2012	2	\$27 m deal
12	S-70/UH-60L	helicopter	2011	2013-2014	(12)	Saudi UH-60A rebuilt to UH-60L version
(158)	AAQ-33 Sniper	aircraft EO system	2012	2016-2021	(92)	For F-15SA combat aircraft
12	AH-64E Apache	combat helicopter	(2012)	2015	(12)	For National Guard
(10)	DB-110	aircraft recce system	2012	2014-2016	(10)	\$183 m deal; for F-15SA combat aircraft
(25)	F110	turbofan	(2012)	2017-2019	(25)	Spare engines for F-15SA combat aircraft
(400)	Harpoon Block-2	anti-ship missile/SSM	(2012)	2016-2020	(400)	AGM-84L version; for F-15SA combat aircraft
600	JDAM	guided bomb	2012	2016	(600)	GBU-31B version
(63)	K-6 120mm	mortar	(2012)	2013	63	Probably second-hand; M-120A1 version
(9)	King Air	light transport ac	2012	2013-2014	(9)	King Air-350 version
1	King Air	light transport ac	2012	2013	1	Second-hand but probably modernized before delivery; King Air-350 version
4	King Air-350 ISR	AGS aircraft	(2012)	2015-2016	(4)	
(12)	MD-500E	light helicopter	2012	2013	12	\$41 m deal; MD-530F version; for National Guard; for training
24	S-70/UH-60L	helicopter	2012	2014-2015	(24)	For National Guard; UH-60M version
(500)	AIM-120C AMRAAM	BVRAAM	2013	2015-2019	(500)	AIM-120C-7 version
(1300)	CBU-97 SFW	guided bomb	2013	2014-2015	(1300)	CBU-105D/B version
(1000)	GBU-39 SDB	guided bomb	(2013)	2017-2021	(1000)	
2	KC-130J Hercules	tanker/transport ac	2013	2016	2	\$181 m deal
(534)	M-ATV	APV	2013	2014-2016	(534)	

25	SR-22	light aircraft	2013	2013	25	Ordered via UK company (as part of GBP1.6 b deal); for training
(2176)	AGM-114L HELLFIRE	anti-tank missile	2014	2015-2016	(2176)	AGM-114R version
(355)	AGM-154 JSOW	guided bomb	2014	2016-2018	(355)	\$122 m deal; JSOW-C Block-3 version
24	AH-6S	combat helicopter	2014	2016-2018	(24)	\$235 m deal; AH-6i version; for National Guard
(4941)	BGM-71F TOW-2B	anti-tank missile	(2014)	2015-2018	(4941)	For National Guard
(10747)	BGM-71 TOW	anti-tank missile	2014	2015-2018	(10747)	BGM-71 TOW-2A and TOW-2A-RF versions; incl 9740 for National Guard
(742)	C13	diesel engine	2014	2018-2021	(665)	For 742 LAV-700 armoured vehicles from Canada
(60)	VT-400	diesel engine	2014	2015-2017	(60)	For 60 LM-13 APC from South Africa
24	AH-64E Apache	combat helicopter	2015	2021	(20)	Delivery planned 2021-2022
(1325)	M-ATV	APV	(2015)	2016-2017	(1325)	Recipient possibly other Middle Eastern country
10	MH-60R Seahawk	ASW helicopter	2015	2018-2019	(10)	
(320)	MIM-104F PAC-3	ABM	2015	2017-2019	(320)	For modernized Patriot SAM systems
(3)	Patriot Configuration-3	SAM/ABM system	2015	2017-2019	(3)	\$2 b deal
(8120)	Paveway	guided bomb	2015	2016-2017	(8120)	
402	Harpoon Block-2	anti-ship missile/SSM	(2016)	2020-2021	(110)	AGM-84L version; for F-15SA combat aircraft; delivery planned 2020-2026
(2645)	JDAM	guided bomb	2016	2018	(2645)	Incl GBU-31, GBU-38, GBU-54 LJDAM and GBU56 LJDAM versions
(2)	King Air-350 ISR	AGS aircraft	2016	2019-2020	(2)	
153	M-1A2S	tank	2016	2018-2020	(153)	
(20)	M-88A2 HERCULES	ARV	(2016)	2019-2020	(20)	
9	S-70/UH-60L	helicopter	2016	2017	(9)	
618	AGM-154 JSOW	guided bomb	2017	2019-2021	(525)	\$302 m deal; JSOW-C Block-3 version
8	CH-47F Chinook	transport helicopter	2017	2021	(4)	
130	MIM-104F PAC-3	ABM	2017	2020	(130)	PAC-3 CRI version
4	MMSC	frigate	2017			
(10)	PTDS	AGS aerostat	2017			74K Persistent Threat Detection System (PTDS) Aerostats
(100)	RIM-116A RAM	SAM	(2017)			For SeaRam SAM system on MMSC frigates
(512)	RIM-162 ESSM	SAM	(2017)			For MMSC frigates
(57)	S-70/UH-60L	helicopter	2017	2018-2021	(40)	UH-60M version; including 8 for National Guard
(650)	AGM-84H SLAM-ER	ASM	(2018)	2021	(50)	\$2 b deal; for F-15SA combat aircraft; delivery probably planned 2021-2028
	MIM-104F PAC-3	ABM	2018			Delivery planned by 2024
	MIM-104F PAC-3	ABM	2018			\$279 m deal; PAC-3 CRI version; delivery planned by 2023
5	Mk-41 VLS	naval SAM system	(2018)			For 5 Avante-2200 frigates from Spain
7	THAAD	ABM system	2018			Delivery planned 2023-2027
360	THAAD missile	ABM missile	2018			
(20000)	Paveway	guided bomb	2019	2019-2020	(20000)	Incl Enhanced Paveway version

(4000)

Paveway

guided bomb

2019

2020

(500)

Paveway-4 version

Appendix 2: Saudi Arms Purchases From All Countries

Transfers of major weapons: Deals with deliveries or orders made for 2000 to 2021

Note: The ‘No. delivered’ and the ‘Year(s) of deliveries’ columns refer to all deliveries since the beginning of the contract. The ‘Comments’ column includes publicly reported information on the value of the deal. Information on the sources and methods used in the collection of the data, and explanations of the conventions, abbreviations and acronyms, can be found at URL <<http://www.sipri.org/contents/armstrad/sources-and-methods>>.

Source: SIPRI Arms Transfers Database

Information generated: 27 February 2023

Supplier/ recipient (R)	ordered	No. designation	Weapon description	Year(s) Weapon of order	Year delivery	of delivered	No. Comments
Austria							
R: Saudi Arabia	(50)	MMV	APC	2014	2015-2016	(50)	
	(37)	M12 120mm	mortar	(2008)	2010	37	
Belgium							
R: Saudi Arabia	119	Cockerill-3105 105mm	tank turret	2014	2019-2021	(45)	Part of EUR3.2 b deal; for 119 LAV-700 FSV AFSV from Canada
	130	LCTS-90 90mm	tank turret	2000	2000-2004	(130)	For 130 Piranha LAV-90 (LAV-AG) AFSV from Canada
	(10)	LCTS-90 90mm	tank turret	(2006)	2006	(10)	For Piranha (LAV-AG) AFSV from Canada
	84	LCTS-90 90mm	tank turret	(2009)	2011-2014	(84)	For 84 Piranha (LAV-90 or LAV-AG) AFSV from Canada
(119)	MCT	IFV turret	2014	2019-2021	(97)	Part of EUR3.2 b deal; for 119 LAV-700 IFV from Canada	
Brazil							
R: Saudi Arabia	(10)	ASTROS-2000	self-propelled MRL	2014	2016	(10)	
Bulgaria							

R: Saudi Arabia	(2200)	Fagot	anti-tank missile	2015	2015-2017	(2200)	Possibly second-hand; probably for Saudi aid to Syrian rebels or Yemen
	24	BTR-60P	APC	2016	2016-2017	24	Second-hand; designation uncertain (reported as 'BTR'); probably to be used by Saudi Arabia as aid to Syrian rebels or Yemen

Canada

R: Saudi Arabia	987	Piranha	APC	1990	1994-2001	(987)	Part of \$700 m deal; ordered via USA; LAV version; incl 384 LAV-25 IFV, 71 ambulance, 18 ALV, 182 command post, 67 ARV, 34 AEV, 111 LAV-AT anti-tank and 73 AFSV version; for National Guard
	130	Piranha	APC	2000	2000-2004	(130)	Part of \$416 m deal; LAV-90 (LAV-AG) FSV version; ordered via USA as part of \$700 m deal for 1117 Piranha; for National Guard
	(132)	Piranha	APC	(2006)	2006-2009	(132)	Incl LAV-25 IFV and LAV-AG FSV version; for National Guard
	724	Piranha	APC	2009	2011-2015	(724)	\$2.2 b deal (part of \$5.8 b deal); sold via USA; LAV version; incl LAV-25 IFV, LAV-AG FSV, LAV-AT anti-tank, 120mm mortar carrier, ARV, command post and ambulance versions; for National Guard
	155	Piranha	APC	2011	2015	(155)	\$264 m deal; incl 82 for National Guard; incl 17 APC, 28 anti-tank, 29 command post, 5 ARV, 3 ALV, 1 AEW, 6 mortar carrier and 6 ambulance version
	(55)	PT6	turboprop/turboshaft	2012	2014-2016	(55)	For 55 PC-21 trainer aircraft from Switzerland
	(70)	Gurkha	APV	2013	2014-2016	(70)	Incl for border guard and police
	385	LAV-700	APC	2014	2018-2021	(330)	Part of CAD14 b (\$10-11) b deal; incl ambulance, ARV, command post and VIP transport versions; delivery planned 2018-2023
	119	LAV-700 AT	tank destroyer	2014	2018-2021	(37)	Part of CAD14 b (\$10-11) b deal
	119	LAV-700 FSV	AFSV	2014	2019-2021	(45)	Part of CAD14 b (\$10-11) b deal
	119	LAV-700 IFV	IFV	2014	2019-2021	(97)	Part of CAD14 b (\$10-11) b deal
	(8)	PW100	turboprop/turboshaft	2015	2015-2018	8	For 2 C295W transport and 2 C-295W maritime patrol aircraft from Spain
	(89)	Gurkha	APV	(2016)	2017-2018	(89)	Probably incl for border guard and police

China

R: Saudi Arabia	(54)	PLZ-45 155mm	self-propelled gun	(2007)	2008-2009	(54)
	(5)	CH-4B	armed UAV	(2014)	2015	(5)
	(15)	Wing Loong-1	armed uav	(2014)	2015-2017	(15)
	(50)	Wing Loong-2	armed uav	2017	2017-2021	(45)

Finland

R: Saudi Arabia	36	NEMO 120mm	mortar turret	(2011)	2012-2015	(36)	EUR100 m deal; for 36 Piranha (LAV-2) mortar carriers from Canada;
France							
R: Saudi Arabia	3	A-330 MRTT	tanker/transport ac	2008	2011-2012	(3)	Delivered via Spain
	3	A-330 MRTT	tanker/transport ac	2009	2014-2015	3	Delivered via Spain
	39	HSI-32	patrol craft	2018	2020-2021	(30)	Incl production under licence of 18 in Saudi Arabia
	19	HSI-32	patrol craft	2020			Probably produced under licence in Saudi Arabia
	3	F-3000S	frigate	1994	2002-2004	3	Part of \$3.4 b 'Sawari-2' deal (offsets 35%); also designated Modified La Fayette; Saudi designation Al Riyadh
	(50)	MM-40 Exocet	anti-ship missile	1994	2000-2005	(50)	For F-3000S (Al Riyadh) frigates; MM-40 Block-2 version
	12	AS-532U2 Cougar	transport helicopter	1996	1998-2001	12	\$508 m 'Al Fahd'; armed AS-532A2 CSAR version
	(75)	ASTER-15 SAAM	SAM	(1997)	2002-2004	(75)	For F-3000S (Al Riyadh) frigates
	(40)	F17 550mm	anti-ship/ASW torpedo	(1997)	2002-2004	(40)	For F-3000S (Al Riyadh) frigates
	(30)	VLRA TPK-BL	APC	(2005)	2006-2007	30	Possibly for police
	(6)	AS565M Panther	helicopter	(2006)	2010-2011	(6)	
	(80)	CAESAR 155mm	self-propelled gun	2006	2010-2011	(80)	For National Guard
	(1000)	Mistral	portable SAM	2006	2007-2010	(1000)	EUR500 m deal; for National Guard
	(25)	2R2M 120mm	mortar	2007	2009-2010	(25)	For M-113 mortar carrier; for National Guard
	(60)	Damocles	aircraft EO system	(2007)	2009-2017	(60)	For Tornado and Typhoon combat aircraft; possibly incl assembly or production of components in Saudi Arabia
	20	CAESAR 155mm	self-propelled gun	(2009)	2011	(20)	For National Guard
	(73)	Aravis	APC	2011	2013-2015	(73)	For National Guard
	(1000)	BONUS-2	guided shell	(2011)	2012-2013	(1000)	
	32	CAESAR 155mm	self-propelled gun	2011	2013-2015	(32)	EUR169 m deal; assembled from kits in Saudi Arabia
	(20)	Ground Master-60	air search radar	2011	2013-2015	(20)	Part of IMGP command/control systems for use with MPCV SAM system
	(800)	Mistral	portable SAM	2011	2013-2015	(800)	Mistral-2 version for MPCV SAM systems
	(49)	MPCV	SPAAG/SAM system	2011	2013-2015	(49)	For National Guard
	191	Aravis	APC	2012	2015-2016	(191)	For National Guard
	(500)	ARIVE	APC	(2013)	2016-2018	(500)	For National Guard
	(250)	MICA	BVRAAM	2013	2018-2019	(250)	For VL-MICA SAM system
	(100)	MILAN	anti-tank missile	(2013)	2014	(100)	For use on M-ATV armoured vehicles
	(130)	Mistral	portable SAM	2013	2016-2017	(130)	For Simbad RC system on 2 Boraida support ships
	(5)	VL-MICA	SAM system	2013	2018-2019	(5)	For National Guard and Royal Guard
	(4)	COBRA	arty locating radar	(2014)	2019	(4)	Originally ordered by Saudi Arabia as aid for Lebanon but Lebanese aid cancelled and radars taken over by Saudi Arabia
	(71)	Bastion	APC/APV	(2015)	2016	(71)	Bastion PATSAS version

	(10)	FLASH	ASW sonar	2015	2018-2019	(10)	For 10 MH-60R ASW helicopters from USA
	100	Sherpa	APC/APV	2016	2016-2017	(100)	Originally ordered by Saudi Arabia as aid for Lebanon but Lebanese aid cancelled and vehicles taken over by Saudi Arabia
	100	VAB MK-3	IFV	2016	2019-2020	(100)	VAB Mk-3 ARX-25 version; originally ordered by Saudi Arabia as aid for Lebanon but Lebanese aid cancelled and vehicles taken over by Saudi Arabia
	(70)	LG1 105mm	towed gun	(2017)	2018-2020	70	
	24	CAESAR 155mm	self-propelled gun	2018	2018	(24)	
	7	AS-532 Cougar/AS-332	transport helicopter	(2019)	2020	(7)	H215M version
<hr/>							
Georgia							
R: Saudi Arabia	100	Didgori	APV	2015	2016-2017	(100)	Assembled in Saudi Arabia
<hr/>							
Germany							
R: Saudi Arabia	(100)	Deutz V-10	diesel engine	(1995)	1998-2005	(100)	For 100 AF-40-8-1 APC produced in Saudi Arabia
	(80)	OM-366	diesel engine	2006	2010-2011	(80)	For 80 CAESAR self-propelled guns from France
	(1400)	IRIS-T	BVRAAM	2009	2010-2014	(1400)	For Tornado and Typhoon combat aircraft
	(20)	OM-366	diesel engine	(2009)	2011	(20)	For 20 CAESAR self-propelled guns from France
	(10)	Luna	UAV	2010	2011-2012	(10)	
	(32)	OM-366	diesel engine	2011	2013-2014	(32)	For 32 CAESAR self-propelled guns from France
	(73)	OM-924	diesel engine	2011	2013-2014	(73)	For 73 Aravis APC from France
	(41)	Spexer-2000	ground surv radar	(2011)	2012-2013	(41)	For border surveillance
	(191)	OM-924	diesel engine	2012	2015-2016	(191)	For 191 Aravis APC from France
	(500)	OM-926	diesel engine	(2013)	2016-2018	(500)	For 500 ARIVE APC from France
	15	FPB-40	patrol craft	2014	2016-2018	15	Delivery of 18 more cancelled 2020
	4	Spexer-2000	ground surv radar	2014	2014	(4)	For border surveillance
	23	EC145	light helicopter	2016	2017-2018	(23)	EUR500 m deal; ordered via France
	(5)	TRS-4D	multi-function radar	(2017)			For 4 MMSC frigates from USA
	20	MTU-1163	diesel engine	2018			For 5 Avante-2000 frigate from Spain; from Spanish production line
	(24)	OM-366	diesel engine	2018	2018	(24)	For 24 CAESAR self-propelled guns from France
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Italy							
R: Saudi Arabia	(5)	Super Rapid 76mm	naval gun	(2017)			For 4 MMSC frigates from USA
	5	Super Rapid 76mm	naval gun	(2018)			For 5 Avante-2200 frigates from Spain
	3	Super Rapid 76mm	naval gun	(1994)	2002-2004	3	For 3 F-3000S (Al Riyadh) frigates from France
	(16)	Bell-412	helicopter	2001	2002	(16)	\$150 m deal; AB-412 version
	(9)	X-TAR	air search radar	(2004)	2007-2009	(9)	
	(4)	Falco	UAV	(2011)	2012	(4)	Lease
	26	X-TAR	air search radar	2011	2015-2016	(26)	For use with MPCV SAM systems
	2	RAT-31S	air search radar	2013	2015	(2)	Designation uncertain (reported as 'transportable air traffic control radar'); possibly also for civilian use

	6	RAT-31S	air search radar	2016	2016-2017	(6)	Designation uncertain (reported as 'fixed and transportable air traffic control radar'); possibly also for civilian use
Netherlands							
R: Saudi Arabia	(225)	SQUIRE	ground surv radar	2009	2011-2015	(225)	Sold via French company (part of 'Miksa' deal); for border security
Pakistan							
R: Saudi Arabia	20	MFI-17 Supporter	trainer aircraft	2004	2005	(20)	\$34 m deal; Super Mushshak version
Russia							
R: Saudi Arabia	(10)	TOS-1	self-propelled MRL	(2017)	2019	10	
Serbia							
R: Saudi Arabia	(5)	M-63 Plamen 128mm	towed MRL	2015	2015	(5)	Second-hand; possibly ordered by Saudi Arabia as aid to Syrian rebels or Yemeni government
	(847)	UBM-52 120mm	mortar	(2015)	2015-2017	(847)	Second-hand; designation uncertain (reported as '120mm mortar'); delivered via Bulgaria and Slovakia; probably for Saudi aid to Syrian rebels or Yemen
	50	OT-64A	APC	2016	2016	50	Second-hand; possibly ordered by Saudi Arabia as aid for Yemeni government
Slovakia							
R: Saudi Arabia	(36)	BM-21 Grad 122mm	self-propelled MRL	(2012)	2013-2016	36	Second-hand; possibly ordered by Saudi Arabia as aid to Syrian rebels or Yemeni government; supplier may be Czech Republic
	(42)	M12 120mm	mortar	(2015)	2019-2020	42	M12-1535 version
South Africa							
R: Saudi Arabia	(50)	Al Kaser	APC	2005	2007-2008	50	
	46	RG-32 Scout	APV	(2005)	2006	46	
	(25)	Mamba	APC/APV	(2010)	2011	(25)	Reva-5 version; for police
	5	Al Kaser	APC	2013	2014	(5)	Al Mansour version
	60	LM13	APC/APV	2014	2015-2017	(60)	ZAR611m deal
	(35)	Casspir-6	APC	(2016)	2017-2020	(35)	For border guard; Caprivi Mk-3 version; may also include other APC types
South Korea							
R: Saudi Arabia	(100)	Raybolt	anti-tank missile	(2017)	2018	(100)	
Spain							
R: Saudi Arabia	2	C-295	transport aircraft	2015	2015-2017	2	For Ministry of Interior
	2	C-295MPA	MP aircraft	2015	2018	2	For Ministry of Interior
	100	Alakran 120mm	self-propelled mortar	2017	2020	100	For border guard

	5	Avante-2200	frigate	2018			EUR1.8-2 b 'Alsawarat' deal; Saudi designation Al Jubail; delivery planned 2022-2024
Sweden							
R: Saudi Arabia	(200) 2	RBS-56B Bill-2 Saab-2000 AEW	anti-tank missile AEW&C aircraft	2005 2010	2010-2011 2014	(200) 2	Possibly second-hand SEK4.5 b (\$670 m) deal; second-hand Saab-2000 transport aircraft modified to AEW aircraft
	71 5	MD5 CEROS-200	diesel engine fire control radar	(2015) 2017	2016	(71)	For Bastion APC from France For 4 MMSC frigates from USA
Switzerland							
R: Saudi Arabia	55	PC-21	trainer aircraft	2012	2014-2016	55	Part of GBP1.6 b (\$2.5 b) deal; ordered via UK company
	(18) (2) 5	Skyguard Skyguard GDM-008 35mm	fire control radar fire control radar CIWS	(2006) (2017) 2018	2009-2011 2019	18 (2)	For use with 35mm AA guns Skyguard-3 version for use with GDF 35mm AA guns For 5 Avante-2200 frigates from Spain
Turkey							
R: Saudi Arabia	(46) (98)	Karayel Cobra	armed uav APV	2020 (2003)	2020-2021 2004	(6) (98)	Designation uncertain (reported as 'light armoured vehicle')
	(64)	M-113A300	APC	2004	2005-2006	(64)	Saudi M-113 rebuilt to M-113A4 or M-113A300; assembled in Saudi Arabia
	(64)	M-113A300	APC	(2005)	2007	(64)	Saudi M-113 rebuilt to M-113A300 (M-113A4); assembled in Saudi Arabia
	10 (300)	ACV-S M-113A300	APC APC	2006 2007	2007 2008-2010	10 (300)	Command post version Saudi M-113 rebuilt to M-113A300 (M-113A4); assembled in Saudi Arabia
	(312)	M-113A300	APC	2010	2010-2013	(312)	\$324 m deal; Saudi M-113 rebuilt to M-113A300 (M-113A4); assembled in Saudi Arabia
	(320)	M-113A300	APC	2011	2013-2015	(320)	\$200 m deal; Saudi M-113 rebuilt to M-113A300 (M-113A4); assembled in Saudi Arabia
	(350)	M-113A300	APC	(2013)	2015-2017	(350)	\$360 m deal; Saudi M-113 rebuilt to M-113A300 (M-113A4); assembled in Saudi Arabia
Ukraine							
R: Saudi Arabia		Grom-2	SSM	2016			Assembled/produced under licence in Saudi Arabia; delivery planned from 2022
	(1204) 1806	R-2 R-3 Korsar	anti-tank missile anti-tank missile	(2017) (2017)	2018-2019 2018-2019	(1204) (1806)	
United Kingdom							
R: Saudi Arabia	3	Air refuel system	air refuel system	2008	2011-2012	(3)	For 3 A-330 MRTT tanker/transport aircraft from France

3	Air refuel system	air refuel system	2009	2014-2015	(3)	For 3 A-330 MRTT tanker/transport aircraft from France
(50) 73	MSTAR AMS 120mm	ground surv radar mortar turret	(1997) 1996	1998-2000 2000	(50) (73)	Assembled from kits in Saudi Arabia \$57 m deal (incl ammunition from Belgium); for 73 Piranha/LAV AFSVs delivered from Canada
100 (261) 24	Paveway Tactica Typhoon Block-20	guided bomb APC FGA aircraft	1999 (2006) 2007	2000 2008-2009 2015-2017	100 (261) 24	Second-hand; Paveway-3 version For National Guard; incl from Belgian production line Part of GBP4.4 b deal (part of up to GBP20 b 'Project Salam'); Typhoon Block-25C (Tranche-3A) version
48	Typhoon Block-8	FGA aircraft	2007	2009-2015	(48)	Part of GBP4.4 b deal (part of up to GBP20 b 'Project Salam'); Typhoon Block-8BC, Block-8C, Block-9C, Block-10C, Block-11C and Block-15C (Typhoon Tranche-2) versions
(350) 22 (2400)	Storm Shadow/SCALP Hawk-100 Paveway	ASM trainer/combat ac guided bomb	(2009) 2012 2013	2011-2013 2016-2017 2015	(350) 22 (2400)	For modernized Tornado combat aircraft Part of GBP1.6 b deal; Hawk-165 (Hawk AJT) version GBP150 m (\$250 m) deal; Paveway-4 version; for Typhoon and modernized Tornado combat aircraft
(100) (1000) 22	Storm Shadow/SCALP Brimstone Hawk-100	ASM ASM trainer/combat ac	2013 (2015) 2015	2016-2017 2016-2019 2019-2021	(100) (1000) (22)	For Tornado and/or Typhoon combat aircraft For Tornado combat aircraft Hawk-165 (Hawk AJT) version; assembled in Saudi Arabia
.. 8	Meteor MT-30	BVRAAM gas turbine	(2015) 2017	2018	(20)	EUR1 b deal; for Typhoon combat aircraft For 4 MMSC frigates from USA

United States

R: Saudi Arabia

(6)	CF6/F-103	turbofan	2008	2011-2012	(6)	For 3 A-330 MRTT tanker/transport aircraft from France
(6)	CF6/F-103	turbofan	2009	2014-2015	(6)	For 3 A-330 MRTT tanker/transport aircraft from France
(1748)	6V-53	diesel engine	(1990)	1991-2004	(1748)	6V-53T version for 1748 Piranha (LAV) APC from Canada and Switzerland
523 (2)	M-113A3 RE-3	APC SIGINT aircraft	1997 (1998)	2003-2006 2004	(523) (2)	\$413 m deal; Saudi M-113 rebuilt to M-113A3 Saudi KE-3A tanker aircraft rebuilt to RE-3 ELINT/SIGINT aircraft
500 1827	AIM-120C AMRAAM BGM-71 TOW	BVRAAM anti-tank missile	2000 2000	2003-2006 2001-2002	(500) (1827)	\$475 m deal; for F-15 combat aircraft Part of \$416 m deal; BGM-71E TOW-2A version; for National Guard
27 105 (16)	M-60A3 Patton-2 AGM-65 Maverick Bell-412	tank ASM helicopter	(2000) 2001 2001	2001 2002-2003 2002-2003	27 (105) (16)	Second-hand \$21 m deal; 98 AGM-65D and 7 AGM-65G version Bell-412SA or Bell-412RSAF version; from Canadian production line
(562)	BGM-71 TOW	anti-tank missile	2001	2002-2003	(562)	BGM-71E TOW-2A version

(48) (64)	M-109A5 155mm 6V-53	self-propelled gun diesel engine	(2001) 2004	2002-2004 2005-2006	(48) (64)	Probably Second-hand 6V-53T version for 64 M-113A300 (M-113A4) APC from Turkey
1 (64)	RE-3 6V-53	SIGINT aircraft diesel engine	(2004) (2005)	2007 2007	1 (64)	Second-hand E-8B AGS aircraft rebuilt to RE-3 6V-53T version for 64 M-113A300 (M-113A4) APC from Turkey
(75) (75)	AIM-9M Sidewinder AIM-9M Sidewinder	SRAAM SRAAM	2005 2005	2006 2007	(75) (75)	Part of \$17 m deal' Part of \$17 m deal
4 (132)	Citation-2 6V-53	light transport ac diesel engine	(2005) 2006	2005-2006 2006-2009	4 (132)	6V-53T version for 132 Piranha (LAV) APC from Canada
(10) (14) (100) 65	6V-53 AIM-120C AMRAAM LAV-25 turret F110	diesel engine BVRAAM IFV turret turbofan	2006 2006 2006 2007	2007 2008 2006-2009 2008-2009	10 (14) (100) (65)	6V-53T version for 10 ACV-S APC from Turkey AIM-120C-5 version For Piranha (LAV-25) IFV from Canada \$300 m deal; F-110-GE-129C version; for modernization of F-15S combat aircraft
16 (350)	S-92 6V-53	transport helicopter diesel engine	2007 2008	2008-2010 2008-2010	(16) (350)	For police; incl for civilian police use 6V-53T version for 320 M-113A300 (M-113A4) APC from Turkey
12 91	AH-64D Apache F110	combat helicopter turbofan	2008 2008	2011 2009-2010	(12) (91)	Incl 11 Saudi AH-64A rebuilt to AH-64D version Part of \$750 m deal; F-110-GE-129C version; for modernization of F-15S combat aircraft
900 (59) 22 (724)	JDAM M-1A2S S-70/UH-60L 6V-53	guided bomb tank helicopter diesel engine	2008 2008 2008 2009	2010-2011 2012-2014 2010-2011 2011-2015	(900) (59) (22) (724)	Second-hand but rebuilt to M-1A2S before delivery \$286 m deal 6V-53T version for 724 Piranha (LAV) APC from Canada
14 12 (150) 72	AAQ-33 Sniper AH-64E Apache AIM-9X Sidewinder ETS	aircraft EO system combat helicopter BVRAAM anti-tank AV turret	2009 (2009) 2009 (2009)	2010 2014-2015 2010 2011-2013	(14) (12) (150) (72)	\$40 m deal; for F-15S combat aircraft ETS Mk-2 version; for 72 Piranha (LAV-AT) tank destroyers from Canada
2 264 (90) (314) 100 9 19 (312)	King Air-350 ISR LAV-25 turret M-198 155mm M-1A2S Paveway Schweizer-330 Schweizer-330 6V-53	AGS aircraft IFV turret towed gun tank guided bomb light helicopter light helicopter diesel engine	(2009) (2009) (2009) 2009 (2009) 2009 (2009) 2010	2011 2011-2015 2010-2013 2012-2017 2010-2011 2009 2010 2010-2013	2 (264) 90 (314) (100) (9) (19) (312)	For 264 Piranha (LAV-25) IFV from Canada Second-hand Saudi M-1A1 rebuilt to M-1A2S version GBU-10 and GBU-12 Paveway-2 versions S-434 version S-333 version 6V-53T version for 312 M-113A300 (M-113A4) APC from Turkey
(21)	AAQ-33 Sniper	aircraft EO system	2010	2011-2012	(21)	\$40-42 m deal

(37) (2742)	APG-78 Longbow BGM-71 TOW	combat heli radar anti-tank missile	(2010) (2010)	2014-2016 2011-2013	(37) (2742)	For 37 AH-64D Longbow combat helicopters \$177 m deal; BGM-71E TOW-2A version; for National Guard
13 3 (670)	S-70/UH-60L S-70/UH-60L 6V-53	helicopter helicopter diesel engine	2010 2010 2011	2012-2013 2011 2013-2017	(13) 3 (670)	Saudi UH-60A rebuilt to UH-60L S-70i version; from Polish production line; for police 6V-53T version for 670 M-113A300 (M-113A4) APC from Turkey
(155)	6V-53	diesel engine	2011	2015	(155)	6V-53T version for 155 Piranha (LAV) APC from Canada
(193) (2592)	AAQ-13 LANTIRN AGM-114L HELLFIRE	combat ac radar anti-tank missile	(2011) (2011)	2016-2021 2013-2014	(154) (2592)	For F-15SA combat aircraft AGM-114R version; for AH-64 combat helicopters; for National Guard
(600) (24) (300) 84 68	AGM-88 HARM AH-64E Apache AIM-9X Sidewinder F-15 Advanced Eagle F-15 Advanced Eagle	ARM combat helicopter BVRAAM FGA aircraft FGA aircraft	(2011) (2011) (2011) 2011 2011	2018-2021 2015-2016 2012-2019 2016-2020 2016-2021	(400) (24) (300) (84) (17)	AGM-88B version AIM-9X Block-2 version Part of \$29 b deal; F-15SA version Part of \$29 b deal; Saudi F-15S rebuilt to F-15SA; delivery planned 2016-2026
21 (3100)	Patriot Configuration-3 Paveway	SAM/ABM system guided bomb	2011 (2011)	2014-2017 2013-2016	(21) (3100)	\$1.7 b deal; Saudi Patriot SAM systems rebuilt to Patriot-3 version Incl 1100 GBU-24 Paveway-3 and 2000 Dual Mode Paveway
2 12 (158) 12 (10) (25) (400) 600 (63) (9) 1	S-70/UH-60L S-70/UH-60L AAQ-33 Sniper AH-64E Apache DB-110 F110 Harpoon Block-2 JDAM K-6 120mm King Air King Air	helicopter helicopter aircraft EO system combat helicopter aircraft recce system turbofan anti-ship missile/SSM guided bomb mortar light transport ac light transport ac	2011 2011 2012 (2012) 2012 (2012) (2012) 2012 (2012) 2012 2012 2012 2012	2012 2013-2014 2016-2021 2015 2014-2016 2017-2019 2016-2020 2016 2013 2013-2014 2013	2 (12) (92) (12) (10) (25) (400) (600) 63 (9) 1	\$27 m deal Saudi UH-60A rebuilt to UH-60L version For F-15SA combat aircraft For National Guard \$183 m deal; for F-15SA combat aircraft Spare engines for F-15SA combat aircraft AGM-84L version; for F-15SA combat aircraft GBU-31B version Probably second-hand; M-120A1 version King Air-350 version Second-hand but probably modernized before delivery; King Air-350 version
4 (12)	King Air-350 ISR MD-500E	AGS aircraft light helicopter	(2012) 2012	2015-2016 2013	(4) 12	\$41 m deal; MD-530F version; for National Guard; for training
24 (500) (1300) (1000) 2	S-70/UH-60L AIM-120C AMRAAM CBU-97 SFW GBU-39 SDB KC-130J Hercules	helicopter BVRAAM guided bomb guided bomb tanker/transport ac	2012 2013 2013 (2013) 2013	2014-2015 2015-2019 2014-2015 2017-2021 2016	(24) (500) (1300) (1000) 2	For National Guard; UH-60M version AIM-120C-7 version CBU-105D/B version \$181 m deal

(534) 25	M-ATV SR-22	APV light aircraft	2013 2013	2014-2016 2013	(534) 25	Ordered via UK company (as part of GBP1.6 b deal); for training
(2176)	AGM-114L HELLFIRE	anti-tank missile	2014	2015-2016	(2176)	AGM-114R version
(355) 24	AGM-154 JSOW AH-6S	guided bomb combat helicopter	2014 2014	2016-2018 2016-2018	(355) (24)	\$122 m deal; JSOW-C Block-3 version \$235 m deal; AH-6i version; for National Guard
(4941) (10747)	BGM-71F TOW-2B BGM-71 TOW	anti-tank missile anti-tank missile	(2014) 2014	2015-2018 2015-2018	(4941) (10747)	For National Guard BGM-71 TOW-2A and TOW-2A-RF versions; incl 9740 for National Guard
(742) (60) 24	C13 VT-400 AH-64E Apache	diesel engine diesel engine combat helicopter	2014 2014 2015	2018-2021 2015-2017 2021	(665) (60) (20)	For 742 LAV-700 armoured vehicles from Canada For 60 LM-13 APC from South Africa Delivery planned 2021-2022
(1325) 10	M-ATV MH-60R Seahawk	APV ASW helicopter	(2015) 2015	2016-2017 2018-2019	(1325) (10)	Recipient possibly other Middle Eastern country
(320) (3)	MIM-104F PAC-3 Patriot Configuration-3	ABM SAM/ABM system	2015 2015	2017-2019 2017-2019	(320) (3)	For modernized Patriot SAM systems \$2 b deal
(8120) 402	Paveway Harpoon Block-2	guided bomb anti-ship missile/SSM	2015 (2016)	2016-2017 2020-2021	(8120) (110)	AGM-84L version; for F-15SA combat aircraft; delivery planned 2020-2026
(2645)	JDAM	guided bomb	2016	2018	(2645)	Incl GBU-31, GBU-38, GBU-54 LJDAM and GBU56 LJDAM versions
(2) 153	King Air-350 ISR M-1A2S	AGS aircraft tank	2016 2016	2019-2020 2018-2020	(2) (153)	
(20) 9	M-88A2 HERCULES S-70/UH-60L	ARV helicopter	(2016) 2016	2019-2020 2017	(20) (9)	
618	AGM-154 JSOW	guided bomb	2017	2019-2021	(525)	\$302 m deal; JSOW-C Block-3 version
8	CH-47F Chinook	transport helicopter	2017	2021	(4)	
130	MIM-104F PAC-3	ABM	2017	2020	(130)	PAC-3 CRI version
4 (10)	MMSC PTDS	frigate AGS aerostat	2017 2017			74K Persistent Threat Detection System (PTDS) Aerostats
(100)	RIM-116A RAM	SAM	(2017)			For SeaRam SAM system on MMSC frigates
(512)	RIM-162 ESSM	SAM	(2017)			For MMSC frigates
(57)	S-70/UH-60L	helicopter	2017	2018-2021	(40)	UH-60M version; including 8 for National Guard
(650)	AGM-84H SLAM-ER	ASM	(2018)	2021	(50)	\$2 b deal; for F-15SA combat aircraft; delivery probably planned 2021-2028
	MIM-104F PAC-3	ABM	2018			Delivery planned by 2024
	MIM-104F PAC-3	ABM	2018			\$279 m deal; PAC-3 CRI version; delivery planned by 2023
5	Mk-41 VLS	naval SAM system	(2018)			For 5 Avante-2200 frigates from Spain
7	THAAD	ABM system	2018			Delivery planned 2023-2027
360	THAAD missile	ABM missile	2018			

(20000)	Paveway	guided bomb	2019	2019-2020	(20000)	Incl Enhanced Paveway version
(4000)	Paveway	guided bomb	2019	2020	(500)	Paveway-4 version

SIPRI – US exports to Saudi Arabia 2000 to 2021

SIPRI – all global exports to Saudi Arabis 2000 to 2021

Score 35/35

Feedback

Submission Feedback

Overall Feedback

Sebastian,

I would have took issue with your consistent word count overage if the papers weren't engaging to read. You've done a wonderful job this semester engaging the materials and the discussions. I'm happy to hear that you enjoyed the course! Excellent work. The arms transfer relationship between the United States and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is indeed a delicate balancing act, one which as been especially tenuous in the past decade. You review the arms trade relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia succinctly and effectively laying the groundwork for your ultimate policy recommendation. you support your case with evidence effectively and its evident that you've been able to really engage in the coursework assigned in this course. I couldn't ask for a better paper. Great work this semester!