AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL CAMP DAVID SUMMIT: ANY RESULTS?

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

JULY 9, 2015

Serial No. 114–68

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

Available via the World Wide Web: http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov/ or http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

95–423PDF WASHINGTON : 2015

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Publishing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512–1800; DC area (202) 512–1800
Fax: (202) 512–2104 Mail: Stop IDCC, Washington, DC 20402–0001

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

EDWARD R. ROYCE, California, *Chairman*

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, New Jersey
ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, Florida
DANA ROHRABACHER, California
STEVE CHABOT, Ohio
JOE WILSON, South Carolina
MICHAEL T. McCAUL, Texas
TED POE, Texas
MATT SALMON, Arizona
DARRELL E. ISSA, California
TOM MARINO, Pennsylvania
JEFF DUNCAN, South Carolina
MO BROOKS, Alabama
PAUL COOK, California
RANDY K. WEBER SR., Texas
SCOTT PERRY, Pennsylvania
RON DeSANTIS, Florida
MARK MEADOWS, North Carolina
TED S. YOHO, Florida
CURT CLAWSON, Florida
SCOTT DesJARLAIS, Tennessee
REID J. RIBBLE, Wisconsin
DAVID A. TROTT, Michigan
LEE M. ZELDIN, New York
DANIEL DONOVAN, New York

ELIOT L. ENGEL, New York
BRAD SHERMAN, California
GREGORY W. MEEKS, New York
ALBIO SIRES, New Jersey
GERALD E. CONNOLLY, Virginia
THEODORE E. DEUTCH, Florida
BRIAN HIGGINS, New York
KAREN BASS, California
WILLIAM KEATING, Massachusetts
DAVID CICILLINE, Rhode Island
ALAN GRAYSON, Florida
AMI BERA, California
ALAN S. LOWENTHAL, California
GRACE MENG, New York
LOIS FRANKEL, Florida
TULSI GABBARD, Hawaii
JOAQUIN CASTRO, Texas
ROBIN L. KELLY, Illinois
BRENDAN F. BOYLE, Pennsylvania

AMY PORTER, *Chief of Staff* THOMAS SHEEHY, *Staff Director*
JASON STEINBAUM, *Democratic Staff Director*

SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, Florida, *Chairman*

STEVE CHABOT, Ohio
JOE WILSON, South Carolina
DARRELL E. ISSA, California
RANDY K. WEBER SR., Texas
RON DeSANTIS, Florida
MARK MEADOWS, North Carolina
TED S. YOHO, Florida
CURT CLAWSON, Florida
DAVID A. TROTT, Michigan
LEE M. ZELDIN, New York

THEODORE E. DEUTCH, Florida
GERALD E. CONNOLLY, Virginia
BRIAN HIGGINS, New York
DAVID CICILLINE, Rhode Island
ALAN GRAYSON, Florida
GRACE MENG, New York
LOIS FRANKEL, Florida
BRENDAN F. BOYLE, Pennsylvania

CONTENTS

Page

WITNESSES

Mr. Michael Eisenstadt, Kahn Fellow, Director, Military and Security Studies Program, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy 6
Mr. J. Matthew McInnis, Resident Fellow, American Enterprise Institute 13
David Andrew Weinberg, Ph.D., Senior Fellow, Foundation for Defense of Democracies 23
Kenneth Katzman, Ph.D., Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs, Congressional Research Service 62

LETTERS, STATEMENTS, ETC., SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING

Mr. Michael Eisenstadt: Prepared statement 9
Mr. J. Matthew McInnis: Prepared statement 15
David Andrew Weinberg, Ph.D.: Prepared statement 25
Kenneth Katzman, Ph.D.: Prepared statement 64

APPENDIX

Hearing notice 92
Hearing minutes 93
The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly, a Representative in Congress from the Commonwealth of Virginia: Prepared statement 94

THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL CAMP DAVID SUMMIT: ANY RESULTS?

THURSDAY, JULY 9, 2015

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:19 p.m., in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. This subcommittee will come to order. After recognizing myself and ranking member, my good friend, Ted Deutch, for 5 minutes each for our opening statements, I will then recognize any other members seeking recognition for 1 minute. We will then hear from our witnesses. Thank you for your patience. We had unscheduled votes come up, and we were there for 45 minutes, so we thank you for that.

Without objection, your prepared statements will be made a part of the record, and members may have 5 days to insert statements and questions for the record subject to the length and limitations in the rules.

The Chair now recognizes herself for 5 minutes.

As we continue to analyze the impact of a weak nuclear deal with Iran, it is important to examine how the Gulf Cooperation Council, the GCC, will be directly impacted by these policy decisions. There is no question that our relationships with the Gulf countries have been severely strained in recent years. It should be no surprise that our Gulf allies believe that the United States has turned its back on them, and that we are not committed to seeking stability in the Middle East.

First, by signaling a preference to focus attention outside of the Middle East with the so-called "Asia pivot"; second, by initiating naive rapprochement with Iran; and third, by not following through on the President's red lines in Syria. So that was the backdrop of the Camp David Summit that occurred with the GCC just 2 months ago. GCC countries see the desire to legitimize Iran as a power and counterweight in the region as the motivation for current U.S. policy, a policy that destabilizes the region as we see Iranian influence expand in Iraq, in Syria, in Lebanon, in Yemen, and elsewhere. They see the failure to take a strong stance against Iran's ally, Assad, or to enforce the red line against the use of chemical weapons as evidence of the desire not to upset Iran.

And let's not be fooled, any signing bonus or currency injection going to Iran from sanctions relief will be spent on Iran fomenting hegemonic ambitions in the region, which is another cause for concern for the GCC countries. At a time when we need as many partners as possible in the fight against ISIL and in the fight against Iran's support for terror, now is not the time for the administration to be alienating some of the GCC members, especially Saudi Arabia and the UAE, who have been part of the coalition against ISIL and have helped launch strikes against the terror group in Syria.

The GCC countries have also led the coalition against the Iranian-backed Houthis in Yemen, while we continue to ignore Iran's meddling in regional issues. So how does the administration respond to these countries that we need as partners, that we need to trust in the fight against ISIL and other terror groups? By trying continuously to pursue a nuclear deal with Iran that they will never accept, only to try to buy the GCC countries off with sales of advanced military systems.

For years, many of us have said that a nuclear Iran would lead to a nuclear arms race in the region, and that can still happen. But now a nuclear deal with Iran is also leading to a conventional arms race in the region. So while on one hand the U.S. was partially responsible for giving legitimacy to Iran and letting it become a larger menace in the region, on the other hand the U.S. is trying to sell these military systems to act as a deterrent against Iran. Instead of just trying to prevent the problem in the first place, the administration has chosen to treat the symptoms without addressing the underlying disease.

I also recognize that not all of the GCC countries have been ideal partners, and some haven't taken the necessary steps to stop terror financing and the undermining of U.S. national security interests. I am concerned that while some GCC countries will use our additional weapons for good and as partners in the fight against ISIL, others are only using this as an excuse to get arms for their own purposes.

In addition, human rights and the rule of law concerns continue in some GCC countries, but they have figured out our playbook. As long as they provide the U.S. with bases and are willing to host our troops, they know that the U.S. will look the other way when it comes to their many transgressions.

The other concern I have is with the objective of the most recent Camp David Summit and how it relates to Israel's qualitative military edge. We must be mindful that upholding Israel's qualitative military edge is the law of the land. Yet, many in the public did not notice that when the President signed the U.S.-Israel Strategic Partnership Act in December 2014, which was sponsored by Congressman Deutch and me, the President issued a signing statement saying that his administration would not implement the section that pertains to Israel's qualitative military edge. That is very concerning. What kind of message are we sending to our greatest major strategic partner in the Middle East, the democratic Jewish state of Israel. We need to take these military sales requests on a case-by-case basis.

Some GCC countries have been at the forefront of leading the fight against ISIL, which is a positive step forward. With ongoing

military operations in Yemen, Libya and throughout the region, some GCC countries have shown that they have the political will and they have the dedication to take this fight head on, and these countries should be supported.

We should be renewing our commitment to the Middle East and our GCC allies and combating Iranian aggression, not pulling back from this critical region of the world. And with that, I turn to my friend, the ranking member, Mr. Deutch.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. Thank you for calling today's hearing.

The announcement that President Obama would be convening GCC leaders at Camp David came on the heels of the April nuclear framework agreement with Iran. There was, in no uncertain terms, meant to reassure our allies that any impending deal would not result in greater Iranian interference or destabilization in the Middle East. I know that when this hearing was first noticed, we expected to be examining U.S.-Gulf relations in the wake of a final Iran nuclear deal. We are still waiting to hear whether P5+1 negotiators will reach a deal, and whether or not that deal would be acceptable, not just to Members of this Congress, but to our allies in the region.

However, Camp David Summit didn't just focus on Iran, and today's hearing provides us with an opportunity to assess the ways in which we can bolster cooperation with the GCC countries to enhance our mutual security concerns and strategic objectives on a range of issues. There has been—there is no doubt that there have been growing pains in our relations with the GCC in recent years, and there has been frustrations on both sides. The United States was deeply troubled by the early financing of extremist elements on the fight against Assad by some Gulf actors. The GCC countries, in turn, have been frustrated with what they perceive as a lack of action by the U.S. against Assad.

The GCC has been wary of American engagement with Iran. The U.S. has struggled to strengthen and reassure our partners, while also balancing what are legitimate human rights concerns. But as with any relationship, we have got to be able to air these grievances while also looking for ways to move forward together to confront our shared challenges.

The question is, did Camp David do enough to put us back on the right path. Current U.S.-GCC relations have been dominated by the Iranian nuclear threat in the fight against ISIS. Gulf states are allied in the coalition to fight ISIS, but it appears some countries have not fully lived up to their commitments to coalition. Nonetheless, continued GCC support in terms of intelligence sharing, stopping ISIS financing, and preventing foreign fighters from joining ISIS are critical to our efforts.

We continue to cooperate against Iran's terror proxy, Hezbollah, and our efforts to keep it from propping up the Assad regime and expanding its regional influence. These concerns are also shared by our ally, Israel. The unique alignment of security concerns for the Gulf and Israel have presented U.S. with an opportunity to foster greater regional cooperation. It was revealed in June that an unprecedented five bilateral meetings had been held between Israelis and Saudis to address the Iran threat.

So how do we move forward together to serve our mutual interests? Camp David Summit resulted in agreement to bolster defense sales. Some argue that increased sales to the GCC countries are beneficial because they not only increase our interoperability, but because these are foreign military sales, meaning that they are not paid for with U.S.-provided security assistance. So they are a boon to the American economy.

There are those who argue that if American made equipment is not for sale, our friends will turn elsewhere. In this increasingly volatile region, we do need to ensure our allies can both be active participants in combating shared threats, and also maintain their own defenses. Of course, any serious increase in these sales must carefully be vetted to ensure that Israel retains its qualitative military edge.

However, while defense sales have been a pillar of our relationship with the GCC countries, it cannot be the only leg on which these relationships stand. I was pleased to see the GCC summit include commitments to also increase maritime security, cyber security, and counterterrorism cooperation. These, too, are critical pieces of the security puzzle.

The Iranian navy is well-funded and active. The U.S., in conjunction with our partners, must be able to patrol the Gulf, particularly in Strait of Hormuz. Just a few months ago, we saw Iran illegally detain and board a commercial vessel passing through the Strait. And as Mr. Katzman notes, one-third of the internationally traded oil flows through that Strait. In addition, we share with the GCC a serious and real concern about Iran's regional meddling. Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, in particular, have accused Iran of stirring dissent among their populations.

In Yemen, Iran has long backed the Houthi rebels. And as the Houthis move to depose the U.S.-backed Hadi Government, Saudi Arabia intervened. Many saw this move by Saudi Arabia as a reaction to years of U.S. prodding to take a greater leadership role in regional security.

Outside of the security realm, there are additional steps that can be taken to strengthen the GCC. If the price of oil remains low, the GCC countries could lose over $200 billion, according to recent reports. Strengthening U.S. Gulf economic ties outside of the oil trade could help offset the deepened oil prices. As many GCC countries look to diversify their economies, there are numerous opportunities for cooperation on science and technology. In fact, many U.S. universities have built campuses in recent years in cities like Abu Dhabi and Doha.

Finally, we have to have constructive dialogue with our partners. While some saw the absence of several heads of state from the Camp David Summit as a blow to the administration, the opportunity for the President of the United States to speak directly with GCC top leadership was tremendously important. As I said before, as important as it is to present a united front with our allies, we won't agree on everything. So for the Gulf states, they must be able to share concerns about the implications of a potential Iran deal on regional proliferation, or the impact sanctions relief could have on Iran's ability to export terror.

Equally, we must have avenues to address our concerns about human rights violations. I believe in the importance of our relationships with Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, Bahrain, Oman, and Kuwait. I want to see these relationships stabilize and strengthen both on a bilateral and a multilateral basis, and I believe Camp David was a good first step. But to sustain this progress, we have to make a real commitment on both sides to continue cooperation and consultation. I look forward to discussing with our panel the ways in which we can help to encourage that process. And I yield back.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, Mr. Deutch, for your statement. Mr. Weber of Texas is recognized.

Mr. WEBER. Madam Chair, I am ready to listen.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. That is very charming of you. Thank you.

Mr. Boyle, we are ready to listen to you.

Mr. BOYLE. Well, now that really makes me look bad for wanting to say something.

Mr. WEBER. I am reclaiming my time—no.

Mr. BOYLE. I will just briefly say, I want to associate myself with the very thoughtful comments of Mr. Deutch, and I am very interested in this topic, especially the fact that this was when they were at Camp David, and for a fairly significant amount of time, this was much in the news and now has largely been forgotten. Certainly, whatever comes about in this part of the world and whatever resolution we may or may not reach with Iran will affect our partners and Saudi Arabia, and in the broader Arabian peninsula and what actions they may take in response. So making sure that we maintain a close relationship with them is of vital U.S. importance, and with that, I will yield 6 seconds back. So I almost didn't speak, but——

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Well, after your critical Oreo speech on the floor——

Mr. BOYLE. Thank you. Say no to Oreo.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. That was riveting. We all were attuned to that. That is an inside joke. We will explain later.

We are so pleased to introduce our witnesses. First, we would like to welcome Mr. Michael Eisenstadt, who is the Kahn fellow and director of the Washington Institute, Military and Security Studies Program.

Mr. Eisenstadt is a specialist in Persian Gulf security affairs. And, previously, he served as an officer in the U.S. Army Reserves and as a military analyst with the U.S. Government.

Thank you for your service, Mr. Eisenstadt.

Second, we welcome back Mr. Matthew McInnis, who is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute where he focuses on regional security issues of the Persian Gulf. Prior to this, Mr. McInnis served as a senior analyst at the U.S. Central Command and on leadership and advisory positions for the multi-national force in Iraq.

Thank you.

Next, we welcome Dr. David Andrew Weinberg, who is a senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies where his primary research is on Saudi Arabia and Gulf affairs. He was a professional staffer for this committee and survived that, and he was a visiting fellow at the UCLA Center for Middle East Development.

Welcome back, Dr. Weinberg.

And last, but certainly not least, we really welcome back Dr. Kenneth Katzman, who serves as a senior Middle East analyst for the Congressional Research Service. Formally, Mr. Katzman was an analyst for the Central Intelligence Agency and also worked as a consultant for the defense industry for 2 years.

Thank you, gentlemen, for being here. And we would love to hear from you. Feel free to summarize.

Let me just ask 1 second, if Mr. Connolly would like to make an opening statement. We would be honored to hear from you, Mr. Connolly.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you, Madam Chairman. I think in order to get on with the hearing, I will dispense with an opening statement. Obviously, we are quite interested in the reaction of the GCC. We have heard lots of speculation this morning about what the reaction might be in the event of a successful negotiated agreement, but would be delighted to hear from this panel in terms of their points of view.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Mr. Connolly.

So, Mr. Eisenstadt, we will begin with you.

STATEMENT OF MR. MICHAEL EISENSTADT, KAHN FELLOW, DIRECTOR, MILITARY AND SECURITY STUDIES PROGRAM, THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY

Mr. EISENSTADT. Chairman Ros-Lehtinen, Ranking Member Deutch, distinguished subcommittee members, thank you for inviting me to testify on the state of U.S.-GCC relations. It is an honor for me to be here. The high-level summit in Camp David last May with leaders of the six GCC states focused on assuring them that the U.S. remains committed to their security, while winning their support for the nuclear deal being negotiated with Iran. A joint statement released at the Summit included U.S. security assurances to the GCC and described the outlines of "a new U.S.-GCC strategic partnership," that committed the United States and the GCC to enhance cooperation in a number of areas.

While many of the announced measures would mark a step forward in U.S.-GCC relations, much will depend on follow-through in the months and years to come. Particularly with regard to countering Iran's destabilizing activities in the region. This is a central concern of Gulf leaders who are already deeply concerned about Iran's growing regional influence, and who are worried that in the event of a long-term nuclear accord between the P5+1 and Iran, the latter would use funds obtained through sanctions relief and its status as a nuclear threshold state to further advance its regional agenda.

Absent action on this front, many of the announced steps are unlikely to have significant impact on the broader fabric of U.S.-GCC relations. The roots of the growing distrust between the two sides can be traced to the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the perception that much of the region that the United States had to either incompetence or design turned over Iraq to the Shiites and Iran. This was reinforced by the widespread perception in the GCC and among other regional allies that when it entered office, the Obama

administration too eagerly courted traditional enemies, such as the Islamic Republic of Iran at the expense of its traditional allies, and too quickly abandoned traditional allies, such as Hosni Mubarak during the initial phases of what was then called the Arab Spring.

So to be fair, there was really not all that much, I think, that the U.S. could have done differently with regard to Mubarak. This destructive dynamic was further strengthened by the Obama administration's tendency to frame and implement measures to assure the GCC states in ways that tended to exacerbate rather than allay their fears. This is best illustrated by the following examples: First, in recent years, the United States has sold tens of billions of dollars in arms to its Gulf Arab allies. The intent has been to assure them by enhancing their ability to deter and counter external aggression.

Yet Tehran is then likely to engage in the conduct of conventional aggression that would provide its neighbors and the United States with reason to respond by conventional means. It is much more likely to engage in subversion and proxy warfare as it has done in the past and continue to do today. And in light of the administration's announced rebalance to Asia and the President's statement in an interview with Thomas Friedman in April, that "The U.S.'s core interests in the region are not oil," GCC leaders may view large U.S. arms sales less as a tangible expression of enduring commitment than a sign that Americais providing its friends with the means to fend for themselves as it prepares to leave the region.

Second, while the United States has drawn down its presence in Iraq and Afghanistan in recent years, it has increased other aspects of its presence around the Gulf as part of its efforts to assure allies and deter Iran. Yet, there is no sign that the large post-1991 U.S. military presence in the Gulf deterred Iran from using proxies to target U.S. interests in the region and elsewhere. Furthermore, our GCC allies are frequently reminded by U.S. officials that America continues to maintain some 35,000 servicemembers in the region, but this has led them to question the purpose of such a large show of presence at a time when Iran and Hezbollah's intervention has contributed to the death of more than 200,000 Syrians, mostly Sunni civilians, amid U.S. inaction.

And even when Washington finally did act against ISIL, it did so at least initially on behalf of beleaguered Iraqi minorities, the Yazidis in Sinjar, Turkmens at Amerli, and Kurds in Erbil, rather than Sunni Arabs.

Third, while President Obama declared in January 2012 that if Tehran tried to build a nuclear weapon, the U.S. would use all its means at its disposal to prevent it from doing so. Since then, he has tended to couch his threats in passive language that conveys more ambivalence than resolve. Thus, in a March 2012 interview with Jeffrey Goldberg he stated, when the U.S. says it is unacceptable for Iran to have nuclear weapons, we mean what we say.

In sum, the U.S. has a credibility deficit with its GCC partners that threatens its interests and endangers its allies in the region. The steps it has taken in the past to assure its GCC allies, arms transfers, forward presence, and red lines, often fail to allay their doubts and frequently compounded their fears. In this light, the

steps promised at a Camp David Summit do not constitute a game changer in U.S.-GCC relations, because the joint statement is so vague regarding specific steps to counter Iran's destabilizing activities. Only by pushing back against Iran's efforts to expand its regional influence can Washington hope to restore its credibility.

There is no reason that such a policy cannot go hand and in with engaging Iran, just as the U.S. pushed back against Soviet aggression while engaging Moscow during the Cold War. For as much it may be in the American interest to conclude a long-term nuclear accord with Tehran, it is also U.S. interest to curb Iranian activities that fuel sectarian violence, contribute to the appeal of groups such as Jabhat al-Nusra and ISIS and ultimately threaten the stability and security and of the U.S. allies in the region. Such a policy would also go a long way toward repairing ties with traditional allies in the part of the world that still very much matters to U.S. security. I apologize for going over.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Eisenstadt follows:]

U.S.-GCC Relations: Closing the Credibility Gap

Testimony of Michael Eisenstadt
Kahn Fellow and Director, Military and Security Studies Program
The Washington Institute for Near East Policy

Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, U.S. House of Representatives
Hearing on "The Gulf Cooperation Council Camp David Summit: Any Results?"
July 9, 2015

Chairman Ros-Lehtinen, Ranking Member Deutch, distinguished subcommittee members, thank you for inviting me to testify on the state of U.S.-GCC relations. It is an honor for me to be here.

The high-level summit in Camp David last May with leaders of the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states -- Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates -- focused on assuring them that the U.S. remains committed to their security, while winning their support for the nuclear deal being negotiated with Iran.

A Joint Statement released at the summit described the outlines of "a new U.S.-GCC strategic partnership" and highlighted a number of areas where the United States and the GCC committed to enhanced cooperation:

- **Security Assurances**: the U.S. stated its readiness "to work jointly with the GCC states to deter and confront an external threat to any GCC state's territorial integrity that is inconsistent with the UN Charter" to include "the potential use of military force."
- **Missile Defense**: the GCC states committed to "the development of a GCC-wide Ballistic Missile Early Warning System" as well as improved missile defense cooperation;
- **Military Training and Exercises**: the parties agreed to "a new, recurring, large-scale exercise emphasizing interoperability against asymmetric threats, such as terrorist or cyber-attacks" and more frequent counter-terrorism cooperation and training involving Special Operations Forces.
- **Arms Transfers**: the United States agreed to fast-track arms transfers to GCC states;
- **Maritime Security**: the GCC states agreed to increase their participation in international maritime task forces on counter-terrorism and counter-piracy and to further steps to share information about illicit arms transfers, while the U.S. agreed to additional training and assistance for coastal security, protection of offshore infrastructure, and counter-smuggling;
- **Counter-terrorism**: the parties agreed to initiatives to further build their capacity to track, investigate, and prosecute those engaged in terrorist activities within their borders, to deter transit, financing and recruitment by violent extremists, to identify and share information about suspected foreign terrorist fighters, and to cut off terrorist financing.
- **Critical Infrastructure and Cybersecurity**: the parties agreed to consult on cybersecurity initiatives, share expertise and best practices, and the U.S. agreed to provide additional assistance in this area, including workshops, exercises, and information sharing.
- **Regional Security**: the parties also committed to cooperate in finding peaceful solutions to the region's conflicts in Libya, Yemen, Syria, and Iraq, to a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and to counter Iran's destabilizing activities.

The statement also contained an endorsement by the GCC of the Administration's efforts to negotiate a "comprehensive, verifiable deal that fully addresses the regional and international concerns about Iran's nuclear program" and reaffirms the parties' willingness "to develop normalized relations with Iran should it cease its destabilizing activities" and "their belief that such relations would contribute to regional security."

While many of these announced measures would mark a step forward in U.S.-GCC relations, much will depend on follow-through in the months and years to come—particularly with regard to countering Iran's destabilizing activities. This is the central concern of Gulf leaders, who are already deeply concerned about Iran's growing regional influence, and who worry that in the event of a long-term nuclear accord between the P5+1 and Iran, the latter would use funds obtained through sanctions relief and its status as a nuclear threshold state to further advance its regional agenda. Absent action on this front, many of the announced steps are unlikely to have a significant impact on the broader fabric of U.S.- GCC relations, and on Washington's ability to influence the policies of particular GCC allies that it finds problematic.

The roots of the growing distrust between the two sides can be traced to the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the perception in much of the region that the United States had, through incompetence or design, turned over Iraq (which had been traditionally ruled by a largely Sunni Arab clique) to "the Shiites" and Iran. This was reinforced by the widespread perception in the GCC and among other regional allies, that when it entered office, the Obama Administration too eagerly courted traditional enemies such as the Islamic Republic of Iran at the expense of its traditional allies, and too quickly abandoned traditional allies such as Hosni Mubarak in 2011 during the initial phases of what was then called the Arab Spring. (Though, to be fair, there was really not all that much that the U.S. could do differently in the latter case.) This destructive dynamic was further strengthened by the Obama Administration's tendency to frame and implement measures to assure the GCC states in ways that tended to exacerbate, rather than allay their fears. This is best illustrated by the following examples:

Arms Transfers and Capacity Building -- Against Which Threat? In recent years, the United States has sold tens of billions of dollars in arms to its Gulf Arab allies (including missile defenses, attack helicopters, and strike aircraft). The intent has been to assure them by enhancing their ability to deter and counter external aggression, while convincing Tehran that its nuclear program will harm, rather than enhance, its security.

Yet Tehran is unlikely to engage in the kind of conventional aggression that would provide its neighbors (and the United States) with reason to respond by conventional means. It is much more likely to engage in subversion and proxy warfare, as it has done in the past and continues to do today. For example, the GCC states emphasize Tehran's role in the slaughter of Sunni Arab civilians in Iraq and Syria, and in stoking sectarian violence in the region, which (combined with past U.S. inaction) has enabled groups such as Jabhat al-Nusra and Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) to present themselves as stalwart defenders of the Sunnis.

By contrast, President Obama emphasized the following in an April 5 interview with Thomas Friedman: "The biggest threats that [our Sunni Arab allies] face may not be coming from Iran invading. It's going to be from dissatisfaction inside their own countries." Moreover, in light of the administration's announced "rebalance to Asia" and the president's statement in the Friedman interview that "the U.S.'s core interests in the region are not oil," GCC leaders may view large U.S. arms sales less as a tangible expression of enduring commitment than a sign that America is providing its friends with the means to fend for themselves as it prepares to leave the region.

Augmented U.S. Forward Presence -- To What End? While the United States has drawn down its presence in Iraq and Afghanistan in recent years, it has increased other aspects of its presence around the Gulf as part of efforts to assure allies and deter Iran. For instance, it has been building up its missile defenses in the region since 2006, with more than two battalions of Patriot PAC-2/3 missiles deployed in four countries, two to three Aegis ships in the Persian Gulf, and AN/TPY-2 X-band radars in Israel, Turkey, and Qatar. The U.S. Navy also keeps at least one aircraft carrier in the area, and the deployment of F-22 stealth fighters there has become routine. At the same time, American naval forces have worked to enhance their ability to deal with Iran's anti-access/area-denial capabilities.

Yet there is no sign that the large post-1991 U.S. military presence in the Gulf has deterred Iran from using proxies to target U.S. interests in the region or elsewhere. During this period, Tehran caused the death of nineteen U.S. airmen in the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia, provided arms to Shiite "special groups" that killed hundreds of U.S. service members in Iraq, and plotted to assassinate the Saudi ambassador in Washington in 2011. Nor has it deterred Iran from intervening in regional conflicts in ways that have exacerbated sectarian tensions, threatened the security of U.S. allies, and increased its influence in the region. In short, while the U.S. presence ensures freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf, it has not deterred Iran from pursuing a strategy of proxy warfare that poses a major challenge to regional stability.

GCC allies are frequently reminded that America continues to maintain some 35,000 service members in the region, but this has led them to question the purpose of such a large forward presence -- especially at a time when Iran and Hezbollah's intervention has contributed to the death of more than 200,000 Syrians, mostly Sunni civilians, amid U.S. inaction. And even when Washington finally did act against ISIS, it did so at least initially on behalf of beleaguered Iraqi minorities (Yazidis in Sinjar, Turkmens at Amerli, and Kurds in Erbil) rather than Sunni Arabs.

Faded Redlines? Over the years, Washington has attempted to define "acceptable" limits for, and drawn redlines of varying intensity regarding Iran's nuclear program. Thus, in January 2012, President Obama declared that if Tehran tried to build a nuclear weapon, the United States would use all means at its disposal to prevent it from doing so. This redline came, however, after Tehran had thwarted all prior attempts to impose limits on its program in order to become a nuclear threshold state. It also followed the president's August 2012 redline concerning chemical weapons use in Syria, which he subsequently failed to enforce when the Assad regime crossed it a year later.

Since his January 2012 warning to Iran, the president has tended to couch his threats in passive language that conveys more ambivalence than resolve, to allies and adversaries alike. In a March 2012 interview with Jeffrey Goldberg, he stated, "I also don't, as a matter of sound policy, go around advertising exactly what our intentions are. But...when the United States says it is unacceptable for Iran to have nuclear weapons, we mean what we say." He struck a similar tone in his April interview with Friedman, stating that if Iran does not change as a result of U.S. efforts to engage it, "our deterrence capabilities, our military superiority stays in place. We're not relinquishing our capacity to defend ourselves or our allies. In that situation, why wouldn't we test it?"

Thus, the U.S. redline gave Tehran the latitude it needed to become a nuclear threshold state. While this may not be an existential concern to the United States given its vast military superiority, from the point of view of America's regional partners it is a game-changing development that has significantly altered Middle Eastern power dynamics. And rather than stem nuclear proliferation in the region, the U.S. redline is likely to inadvertently spur proliferation, with Saudi Arabia vowing to match whatever nuclear infrastructure Iran is permitted to keep as part of a long-term accord with the P5+1.

Security Guarantees. Prior to the Camp David summit, he Obama administration had been looking for ways to formalize the U.S. commitment to its Gulf partners. The president emphasized this point in the Friedman interview: "When it comes to external aggression, I think we're going to be there for our [Arab] friends -- and I want to see how we can formalize that a little bit more than we currently have."

Prior to the summit, some Gulf states were expected to seek security guarantees along the lines of Article V of the 1949 Washington Treaty, the legal basis for the collective security arrangements that underpin the NATO alliance. Article V states that "an armed attack against one or more [parties to the treaty] in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all," and that "each of them" will take "such actions as it deems necessary...to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area." It should be noted that the article only covers attacks in Europe and North America, and gives each member significant latitude in choosing how to respond. Congress, however, would almost certainly not have approved a treaty that could draw the United States further into the region's numerous conflicts.

Instead, what the GCC states got was a somewhat tepid commitment to "work jointly…to deter and confront an external threat to any GCC state's territorial integrity that is inconsistent with the UN Charter." However, Tehran's reliance on subversion and proxy warfare (and, more recently, offensive cyber operations) would likely complicate efforts to respond to a perceived act of Iranian aggression -- as would the tendency of some U.S. Gulf allies to see Iranian hands behind almost every event in the region.

Conclusion. The United States currently has a credibility deficit that threatens its interests and endangers its allies. The steps it has taken in the past to assure GCC allies -- arms transfers, forward presence, and redlines -- have often failed to allay their doubts, and frequently compounded their fears. In this light, the additional steps promised at the Camp David summit do not constitute a game-changer in U.S.-GCC relations, especially since the Joint Statement is so vague regarding specific steps to counter Iran's destabilizing activities.

Only by pushing back against Iran's efforts to expand its regional influence can Washington hope to restore its credibility. To this end, the United States should:

1. Ramp up support for the "moderate" opposition in Syria.
2. More proactively work to deter and interdict Iran's arms shipments to allies and proxies in the region.
3. Strengthen support for partners engaged in conflicts with Tehran's allies and proxies.
4. Supplement routine defensive military exercises with exercises rehearsing long-range offensive strike operations in the Gulf.
5. Tend to and sharpen redlines regarding Iran's nuclear program to more clearly spell out the price Tehran would pay if it were to attempt a breakout.

There is no reason that such a policy cannot go hand-in-hand with engaging Iran, just as the United States pushed back against Soviet aggression while engaging Moscow during the Cold War. For as much as it may be in the American interest to conclude a long-term nuclear accord with Tehran, it is also a U.S. interest to curb Iranian activities that fuel sectarian violence, contribute to the appeal of groups such as Jabhat al-Nusra and ISIS, and ultimately threaten the stability and security of U.S. allies in the region. Such a policy would also go a long way toward repairing ties with traditional allies in a part of the world that still matters very much to U.S. security.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. It was fine. Thank you so much.
Mr. McInnis.

STATEMENT OF MR. J. MATTHEW MCINNIS, RESIDENT FELLOW, AMERICAN ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

Mr. MCINNIS. Chairman Ros-Lehtinen, Ranking Member Deutch, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to testify here today on the impact of the potential nuclear deal on our allies from the Gulf Cooperation Council. And let me begin with how Iran perceives this changing strategic environment and their contest with the Gulf states. Since the 1979 revolution, Iran has sought to spread its concepts of Islamic governance and to assert its regional hegemony by displacing the United States as the dominant power. Since the fall of Saddam Hussein's Iraq, countering the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states has dominated Iran's regional calculations. Saudi Arabia poses a unique ideological challenge to Tehran's attempts to assert its leadership in the Muslim world. The GCC states are increasingly alarmed about expanding Iranian influence in the Middle East, but seem unable to develop an effective means to push back against Tehran's growing influence and power.

For the past 36 years, Tehran has pursued its objectives against the GCC primarily through clandestine operations. In particular, Iran has utilized its resistance network of partners, proxies, and terrorist groups, including Lebanese's Hezbollah and others, while employing a suite of deterrence capabilities, including ballistic missiles and asymmetric naval platforms. With the new Saudi leadership under King Salman, Tehran is recalculating its threat perceptions and response. Iranian leaders worry that the GCC's expanded interventions in Yemen and Syria come as a result of U.S. encouragement perhaps at the Camp David Summit for the Gulf states to take a more leading role in countering Iran's destabilizing activities. A more active Saudi Arabia poses a risk to Iran's long-term objectives. Tehran may even be worried that Saudi Arabia, underwritten by its own financial holdings and U.S. military support, will begin using the IRGC's own playbook of regional proxy warfare against Iran. Considering these fears, it is important for us to look at how a nuclear deal will impact Iran's strategy toward the GCC and the rest of the region.

Supreme Leader Khamenei has not shown any indication that a nuclear deal will fundamentally alter Iran's regional policies toward the United States, our allies in the Gulf, and even Israel. The IRGC may initially become even more assertive against the GCC, the United States or Israel, as the Iranian leadership tries to establish its anti-Western and an anti-Zionist credentials following a nuclear deal. Tehran, however, will likely try to limit any resulting conflict escalation that could credibly endanger the world power's support for the agreement, especially with a new U.S. President entering office in 2017.

The bulk of Iran's estimated $150 billion windfall from a nuclear deal will likely go to internal economic investment as the U.S. administration argues. This does not mean that the Iranian leadership will not have access to billions more to allocate to the IRGC's efforts in Iraq, Syria, and around the region. We should not under-

estimate how far Iran will go to defend its interests in Beirut, Damascus, and Baghdad, as well as to attempt to expand its activities in Yemen, Bahrain, the Palestinian territories, and elsewhere.

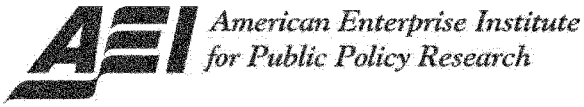
More critically, if the IRGC decides to send actual combat forces into Syria to fight the GCC or Turkish-backed opposition groups, or into Iraq to fight ISIL, we risk potential serious miscalculations by Turkey, the GCC, or Israel. The United States must be prepared for and try to prevent, if possible, escalation by these regional powers in response to a direct Iranian intervention. With this in mind, here are four recommendations that the United States should consider to best support our allies in the region: First, prevent the conventional forces' balance of power in the Gulf from eroding in Iran's favor, which a removal of the conventional arms embargo would do, which is being discussed potentially in Vienna. Congress should carefully scrutinize the Iranian nuclear deal to mitigate any weakening of the arms embargo or missile technology import restrictions that are currently in place. Second, reinforce the U.S. commitment to the region's security through enhanced defense agreements with the GCC, mindful to maintaining Israel's qualitative military edge. We may want to consider elevating the relationship by signing security treaties, but should avoid pursuing concepts such as a nuclear umbrella. Third, help the GCC develop better asymmetric warfare capabilities for both defensive and potentially offensive capabilities.

President Obama's comments at the Camp David Summit implied that the Gulf states already have sufficient resources to push back against Iran's destabilizing activities in the region. We need to go further. The United States and the GCC have a shared interest in contesting the IRGC, and formation of an Arab rapid reaction force would be a step forward in that directs.

Finally, we should focus diplomatic, legislative, intelligence, and military strategies for shaping the post-2025 environment, once Iranian uranium enrichment and nuclear research and development restrictions expire under a potential deal, to ensure Iran remains deterred from achieving a nuclear weapon. This should include ensuring that the United States maintains a robust military option to degrade or destroy Iranian infrastructure.

Taking these steps will help assure our Gulf partners at a time of increasing doubt about U.S. commitment to their security as well as mitigate the impact the Iran nuclear deal will have on our position in the region. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McInnis follows:]



Statement before the

House Committee on Foreign Affairs

Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa

"Iran's strategy towards the Gulf Cooperation Council: A look after the Camp David Summit"

J. Matthew McInnis
Resident Fellow
American Enterprise Institute

July 9, 2015

The views expressed in this testimony are those of the author alone and do not necessarily represent those of the American Enterprise Institute.

Chairman Ros-Lehtinen, Ranking Member Deutch, Honorable Members. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on an issue so important to U.S. national security.

Iranian views of GCC competition in the Middle East

Since the 1979 Revolution the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign policy has been driven by a desire to reshape the Middle East in its ideological image. Tehran seeks to spread its concepts of Islamic governance, to oppose the state of Israel, and to assert its regional hegemony by displacing the United States as the dominant regional power. Due to a relative disadvantage in conventional military power, Tehran has pursued these objectives primarily through clandestine operations for the past thirty-six years. In particular, Iran has utilized its "Resistance Network" of partners, proxies, and terrorist groups, including the Lebanese Hezbollah while employing a suite of deterrent capabilities including ballistic missiles and asymmetric naval platforms.

The United States and Israel are not the only obstacles to Iran's objectives in region, however. Leading the Middle East, and more importantly, the global Islamic Community, requires challenging Tehran's most powerful Arab Sunni rivals. Since the fall of Saddam Hussein's Iraq, countering the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and the Gulf states has dominated Iran's calculations. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states as a whole possess formidable economic, political, and conventional military power that arguably surpasses Iran's.

The Iranian regime's brand of Shia Islam will always be a handicap in its struggle for religious leadership of a Muslim world which is ninety percent Sunni.[1] The KSA, however, poses a unique ideological challenge to Tehran's attempts to assert leadership in the Muslim world. Riyadh's Custodianship of the Two Holy Mosques in Mecca and Medina gives the Al Saud monarchy an upper hand in the battle for spiritual leadership among Muslims, whether Sunni or Shia, who perform the Hajj to these sites at one point in their lives if able. Iran attempts to undermine the Kingdom's religious credentials by highlighting its close ties with the United States and accusing Saudi Arabia of fueling extremism and terrorism.

The contest between Riyadh and Tehran has evolved considerably since the election of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2005. The autumn of 2006 can be considered the most recent height of Iranian power in the Middle East.

In Iraq, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) solidified a political powerbase inside Prime Minister Nuri al Maliki's new government in Baghdad, dramatically expanded their influence in the Iraqi security apparatus, and built proxy forces to target U.S. and coalition forces.

---

[1] Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life, "Mapping the Global Muslim Population," October 7, 2009, http://www.pewforum.org/2009/10/07/mapping-the-global-muslim-population/.

In Lebanon and Syria, the Iranian leadership, in their view, also felt it had triumphed during this period. Iran's relationship with President Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria deepened following the 2003 Iraq War, and Iran's primary regional proxy, Lebanese Hezbollah, seemingly achieved victory against Israel in the 2006 Lebanon war. President Ahmadinejad and the IRGC were not hesitant to claim credit. The solidification of the Tehran's position in Damascus and Beirut solidified its position in the Levant. Iran's Sunni neighbors, notably the GCC states, were increasingly alarmed about expanding Iranian influence in the Middle East, but were unable to develop an effective means to push back against Tehran's growing influence and power.

The Iranian leadership saw the Arab Spring of 2011 initially as vindication of their ideology and a continuation of the 1979 Revolution's goals of exporting Islamic revolution. Tehran, however, overestimated the appeal of their limited popular governance model and underestimated the regional resistance to Persian and Shia leadership. Iran made no meaningful political inroads with Arab states in 2011 and shifted quickly to the defensive as its principle ally, Syria, became consumed in a civil war.

Iran's conflict with Saudi Arabia has escalated to direct covert attacks in recent years as well. In October 2011, federal authorities broke up a plot to assassinate the Saudi ambassador to the United States and claimed the conspirators were under IRGC Quds Force direction. The Saudi national oil company, Aramco, was the also the victim of damaging cyber attack in August 2012 that was traced back to Iran.

Iran believes the United States and the GCC are behind the unraveling of President al-Assad's regime and as well the rise of the Islamic State (IS) in Iraq and Syria. Not only would the loss of an allied government in Damascus—the key conduit to supplying Lebanese Hezbollah—place Iran's "axis of resistance" at risk, but IS in Iraq is a direct threat to Iranian territory. If Iran succeeds in its support of these governments, we will likely see a formidable integrated Shia expeditionary force able to threaten U.S. allies throughout much of the region, most notably Israel and the GCC.

However, Iran is not succeeding in its efforts presently. The situation looks increasingly dire for President Bashar al-Assad in Damascus, who is now completely dependent on Iranian financial and military support to survive. Tehran appears to have conceded that Assad will never reclaim all of his lost Syrian territory and that the focus instead should be on maintaining the land corridor between Beirut and Damascus. The IRGC Quds Force Commander Qassem Soleimani, who leads Iran's efforts in Syria and Iraq, has reportedly hinted that Tehran may need to intervene with IRGC combat troops to defend government-held areas.[2] Such an intervention

[2] "Qasim Soleimani: the world will be surprised by Syria over the next few days" *Al-Quds al-Arabi*, June 1, 2015, http://www.alquds.co.uk/?p=350367.

would break Iranian precedent and doctrine of avoiding deploying IRGC personnel in direct combat roles.

The struggle in Iraq against IS appears only marginally better. Iraqi government forces in conjunction with local Shia militias and Iranian proxy groups have not been able to recapture the majority of the territory lost to the extremist group. A stalemate is probably Iran's best outcome in Iraq for the near future.

Iran blames this negative turn in its fortunes, at least in part, on the new Saudi King Salman. Salman's greater willingness to work with Turkey and Qatar in supporting the Syrian opposition groups has been the single most important factor in improving Riyadh's strategy against Assad. The Iranian leadership is likely nervous this could portend further losses in their strategic competition with the GCC.

The war in Yemen is also symbolic of Tehran's fears of a new aggressive Saudi position. Iran, working mostly through their Lebanese Hezbollah partners, had been quietly working with Yemen's al Houthi rebels for years.[3] Unlike in Bahrain, the Zaydi Shia al Houthis provided a good opportunity for Tehran to expand its influence on the Arabian Peninsula and pressure the Saudis with minimal cost to itself. Iran likely did not believe the al Houthis were ready to run the country when the al Houthis, with the assistance of former President Ali Abdullah Saleh's military units, staged a de facto coup in January 2015. The Saudis and their Sunni allies launched Operation "Decisive Storm" in March 2015 to halt Iran's perceived expansion in Yemen. Tehran escalated its rhetorical and diplomatic support of the al Houthis in response, and even attempted to brazenly ship arms to rebel held areas. Yemen, a red line for the GCC, is now the most salient and hot theater of the GCC-Iranian contest.

Iran did not seek a region-wide sectarian conflict, but it is in the midst of one now. The Iranian leadership wants to lead both the Middle East and the entire Islamic world. Tehran's aggressive efforts to establish proxy groups, normally Shia, in multi-sectarian states and to continue to advocate forms of Islamic governance in opposition of establish state governments ironically creates the very chaos and Sunni resistance it hoped to avoid. This is the internal contradiction and fundamental weakness of Iran's foreign policy today.

Beyond Asymmetric Competition: the Conventional Balance of Power

Iran's efforts to dominate the region also extend to conventional military force. Ballistic missiles have been the cornerstone of Iranian military strategy since the end of the Iran-Iraq War. Tehran lacks sufficient air and land forces to effectively project power beyond its borders. It cannot establish air superiority or deploy large combat formations abroad. Missiles are an attempted substitute.

---

[3] Erika Solomon, "Lebanon's Hizbollah and Yemen's Houthis open up on links," *Financial Times*, May 8, 2015.

Iranian missiles lack precision-guided warheads and cannot be employed to reliably and accurately destroy adversaries' military targets. These missiles are employed more for deterrent or coercive purposes against the GCC and Israel. GCC missile defenses, with U.S. assistance, are improving but cannot assure 100% effectiveness against an Iranian attack.

Iran understands that while most GCC countries possess far more advanced air defense, armor, naval capabilities, they continue to struggle to effectively integrate and operate their systems due to separate procurement processes and to training. Tehran also is aware that the Gulf states will remain entirely dependent on U.S. support in intelligence, reconnaissance, communication, logistics, and training to conduct major military operations for the foreseeable future.

The Iranian military doctrines and defense acquisition strategies aim to exploit this operational advantage and compensate for its own conventional disadvantage. The IRGC will continue to expand its asymmetric capabilities in order to both deter the GCC states and to raise the cost for any future U.S. or allied actions in the Persian Gulf. The IRGC will keep investing in armed small boats, coastal defense cruise missiles, submarines, unmanned aerial vehicles, cyber, and other systems that frustrate U.S. and GCC capacity to project power into the Persian Gulf or onto Iranian territory. Iran feels it must remind the region and the world of its ability to disrupt or control the Strait of Hormuz, as we have seen with recent harassment and interdictions of international shipping in April and May of this year.

For Tehran, the conventional balance of power in the Persian Gulf will remain a defensive and coercive game in the near term. The critical question is whether Iran can or will successfully modernize its missile, air, air defense, naval and land forces in the coming decades to become a true military power that can directly challenge the GCC states.

Iranian views of the Camp David Summit

As much as the Iranian leadership denounced this past May's U.S.-GCC summit at Camp David as an exercise to excite "Iranophobia" in the region, Tehran certainly enjoyed the spectacle of Washington's diplomatic missteps in convening the GCC leadership in the Maryland countryside.[4] The GCC's strong undercurrent of mistrust with U.S. regional policy, let alone the damaged U.S.-Saudi relationship, was very evident.

---

[4] Najmeh Bozorgmehr and Roula Khalaf, "US-Gulf summit a show of 'Iranophobia', says Tehran," *Financial Times*, May 12, 2015, http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/dc10456e-f899-11e4-8e16-00144feab7de.html#axzz3f7WAoXNc.

Iran was also likely pleased the United States did not announce significant policy changes, especially any new collective security agreements with the GCC. This was a minimal impact summit, though it was not all positive for Tehran.

Camp David publicly reinforced the idea that Iran's neighbors and much of the international community still see the Islamic Republic as a major theat. The summit showed the GCC's increased willingness to integrate its military capabilities and expand coordination on security issues. The summit's joint statement pledged to further the GCC's ballistic missile defenses, while the annex contained provisions for expanding GCC air defenses and establishing a working group to pursue "the development of rapid response capabilities" within an Arab League's "unified Arab force".[5] These provisions especially were likely not well-received in Tehran. More worrisome to the Iranian leadership was the commitment to expand the Gulf States' political and economic engagement with Baghdad, which could undermine Iran's core strategy in Iraq.

In the aftermath of Camp David and amid the escalating war in Yemen, Iranian rhetoric towards Saudi Arabia and other GCC members has only become more heated. A leading IRGC strategist, Brigadier General Gholam Reza Jalali, stated the Islamic Republic "must be prepared for a new type of conflict" with Riyadh and that Saudi Arabia has evolved from a "regional rival" to a "proxy threat."[6] Most importantly, Jalali tied these changes to a shift in American strategy. He argued the United States is no longer directly intervening in the region, but does so indirectly by reinforcing the intelligence, logistical, advisory, and political frameworks of its regional allies.

These types of comments reflect Tehran's worry that the new aggressive Saudi leadership under King Salman comes as the result of U.S. encouragement—perhaps at the Camp David summit—for the GCC to take on more of the leading role in pushing back Iran's destabilizing activities. A more active Saudi Arabia poses a risk to Iran's long-term objectives. Iran may even be worried Saudi Arabia, backed by Gulf state money and U.S. military support, will begin effectively using Iran's own playbook of regional proxy warfare against it.

How should we expect Iran to behave after a nuclear agreement?

---

[5] "U.S.-Gulf Cooperation Council Camp David Joint Statement," The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, May 14, 2015, https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/05/14/us-gulf-cooperation-council-camp-david-joint-statement; and "Annex to the U.S.-Gulf Cooperation Council Camp David Joint Statement," The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, May 14, 2015, https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/05/14/annex-us-gulf-cooperation-council-camp-david-joint-statement.

[6] "Bayad barai modelhay jadid moqabela ba Saudi Arabia amada bashem/radi paye cyber Saudi der moneghishat dakhili Iran" [Have to be prepared to deal with new models of Saudi Arabia/Saudi's cyber footprints in Iran's internal conflicts] *Defa Press*, June 27, 2015, http://www.defapress.ir/Fa/News/48882.

Despite the unprecedented diplomatic engagement we have had over the past two years with Iran, Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei has not shown any indication that a nuclear deal will fundamentally alter Iran's regional policies towards the United States, our allies in the Gulf, or Israel. The IRGC may initially become even more assertive against the United States or Israel as the Iranian leadership tries to re-establish its anti-Western and anti-Zionist credentials following a nuclear deal. Tehran, however, will likely try to limit any resulting conflict escalation that could credibly endanger P5+1 support for the agreement, especially with a new U.S. president entering office in 2017.

The bulk of the funds that Iran expects to receive from sanctions relief will likely go to internal economic investment and infrastructure, as the U.S. administration argues.[7] This does not mean the IRGC will not have access to billions of more rials to support its efforts in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and elsewhere. Tehran must preserve the rump Syrian state and prevent any weakening in its position in Iraq. These are existential problems for Tehran and we should not underestimate how far Iran will go to defend its interests in Beirut, Damascus, and Baghdad.

More critically, if the IRGC decides to send combat forces into Syria to fight GCC- or Turkish-backed opposition groups, or into Iraq to fight IS, we risk potential serious miscalculations by Turkey, the GCC, and Israel. The United States must be prepared for, and try to prevent if possible, escalation by these regional powers which an Iranian intervention may provoke.

Policy Recommendations

Congress will have a critical role in not only reviewing an Iranian nuclear deal, but also in tightening the oversight of the agreement's implementation and preparing contingencies for likely inevitable Iranian breaches. To support our allies in region the United States should also:

- Prevent the conventional forces balance of power in the Gulf from eroding in Iran's favor. Congress should carefully scrutinize the Iranian nuclear deal to mitigate any weakening of the arms embargo and technology import restriction regimes currently in place.

- Prevent or mitigate the loosening of any technology restrictions on Iran's ability to acquire advanced missile technology. An accurate and reliable

[7] See for example, Remarks of Secretary Jacob J. Lew at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy 30th Anniversary Gala, April 29, 2015, http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl0040.aspx; Press Briefing by Press Secretary Josh Earnest, White House, May 5, 2015, https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/05/05/press-briefing-press-secretary-josh-earnest-552015; and Daily Press Briefing by Marie Harf, U.S. Department of State, April 17, 2015, http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2015/04/240807.htm.

Iranian ballistic force would fundamentally and negatively shift regional states' calculations for deterrence, coercion, and retaliation.

- Improve the GCC's deterrent counter-coercion capabilities through greater cooperation on missile defense and offensive capabilities that could mitigate or neutralize Iran as a threat.

- Work with GCC leaders to develop better strategies and operational doctrines to combat Iran's asymmetric capabilities, instead of purely focusing on helping these states acquire new or improve existing weapon systems.

- Strengthen the domestic counter-terrorism cooperation between the United States and the GCC against both IS and the IRGC Quds Force.

- Help the GCC develop better asymmetric warfare capabilities for both defensive and potentially, offensive capabilities. President Obama's comments at the Camp David summit implied that the GCC states already have sufficient resources to pushback against Iran's destabilizing activities in the region. We need to go further. The United States and the GCC have a shared interest in contesting the IRGC, especially Quds Force proxy formation and support. The formation of an Arab Rapid Reaction Force, even if only with a coalition of the willing like the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Jordan, and Bahrain, would be helpful for these types of missions.

- Re-enforce the U.S. commitment to the region's security through enhanced defense agreements with the GCC, mindful of maintaining Israel's qualitative military edge (QME). We may want to consider elevating the relationship to by signing security treaties, but should avoid pursuing concepts such as a nuclear umbrella.

- We should discourage Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and other GCC states from pursuing nuclear weapons programs. We need to consider, however, aiding their civil nuclear programs if that helps alleviate concerns over Iran's future nuclear intentions.

- Focus diplomatic, legislative, intelligence, and military strategies on shaping the post-2025 environment—once Iranian uranium enrichment and nuclear research and development restrictions expire—to ensure Iran remains deterred from achieving a nuclear weapons capability. This should include ensuring that the United States maintains a robust military option to degrade or destroy the Iranian nuclear infrastructure.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, Mr. McInnis.

Dr. Weinberg.

STATEMENT OF DAVID ANDREW WEINBERG, PH.D., SENIOR FELLOW, FOUNDATION FOR DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACIES

Mr. WEINBERG. Chairman Ros-Lehtinen, Ranking Member Deutch, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today.

America's relations with the GCC states are on the wrong track. Each side offers the others some benefits, yet our main interests continue to go unfulfilled. Today I will cover four main topics on this regard: Threats from Iran, negligence on terror finance, religious incitement, and abuses of basic rights.

On Iran, our Sunni-ruled Gulf allies see the pursuit of a nuclear bargain with their main enemy and Washington's disengaged approach to the conflicts in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen, and they wonder if they are on the fast track to abandonment. These states perceive an imminent threat from Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, which, as Mr. McInnis indicated, will inevitably share in any windfall from sanctions relief.

The U.S. should offer the GCC states explicit commitments about how we will respond to cheating on a nuclear deal, and how we will prevent Iran from obtaining the bomb after the deal begins to sunset. That said, we should also press Riyadh to take its own confidence-building steps to prove their own nuclear program will also stay peaceful.

With regard to regional conflicts and Iran's destabilizing activities, we should strive to get Iran-backed militias in Iraq off of the front lines in Sunni majority areas of the country, such as in the effort to retake Ramadi. In Yemen, we should help make the Saudi-backed arms embargo more sustainable, specifically by finding ways to mitigate its significant humanitarian impact.

In Syria we should boost support for the moderate opposition, including providing air cover where appropriate, but impose sanctions on groups like Ahrar al-Sham, Jund al-Aqsa, and the Army of Conquest, urging Gulf states to similarly choke off support. Unfortunately, in the fight against ISIL and al-Qaeda, our GCC allies have broken their word in two critical regards that they pledged on the last anniversary of 9/11: To end the impunity of terror financiers and to halt the religious incitement that feeds extremist recruitment.

They agreed to take these steps when they joined the anti-ISIL coalition, yet still today, little has changed. Last year America's czar for combating terror finance revealed that the majority of private support reaching al-Qaeda's core leadership in Pakistan came from the Gulf. The worst offenders were Qatar and Kuwait. Yet neither country has taken noteworthy legal action against individuals on U.S. or U.N. terror lists.

For example, it appears that Muthanna al-Dhari, whom the U.S. and U.N. charged with providing over $1 million to the group we now know as ISIL, was let into Qatar yet again last month since the Camp David Summit, in violation of his U.N. travel ban, and earlier this year he was hugged and kissed by the Qatari Emir's father. Kuwait released two men sanctioned by the U.S. as al-

Qaeda financiers several hours after detaining them. For the fourth time last week, Israel accused another Hamas operative in Doha of directing a West Bank terror cell, and I believe Congress can take some constructive steps to address this challenge. We should not let the Gulf states' lucrative arms purchases or desire to invest in U.S. assets crowd terror finance off the agenda, and we should not wait to insulate our economy from Gulf energy disruptions via a national strategy for transportation fuel choice.

As for incitement, Saudi Arabia and Qatar have recklessly supported religious leaders who propagate hatred. To highlight one example, Representative Deutch, you mentioned U.S. campuses in Doha, for instance. Yet, we found that the mosque that serves the U.S. universities in Doha's Education City, campuses like Northwestern University and Texas A&M, when the mosque was inaugurated earlier this year, the ceremony was sponsored by the Emir of Qatar's mother. The preacher who was invited to give the sermon has memorably called on Qatar TV saying that Osama bin Laden died with more dignity and honor than any infidel, such as any Christian, any Jew, any apostate, any atheist, any Zoroastrians. This is very discouraging rhetoric, and unfortunately these sorts of clerics have continued to receive state perks especially from the Saudi and Qatari Governments, but also from the Governments of Dubai, Kuwait, and Bahrain as well.

Finally, while President Obama claims that it is important to have tough conversations with our allies in the Gulf, and said this in advance of the Camp David Summit, there wasn't really clear indication in the public view that this sort of conversation has actually been had. Unfortunately, this is all too typical for U.S. administrations, both Democrat and Republican, when it comes to the Gulf. All six GCC states are systematically demolishing the constituencies needed to move their countries in a more moderate direction. Washington needs to get tougher with Gulf security chiefs, whom we treat as partners against al-Qaeda, yet also preside over the sorts of egregious rights abuses that we know feeds extremism long term.

Thank you. And with that, I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Weinberg follows:]

Congressional Testimony

The Gulf Cooperation Council Camp David Summit: *Any Results?*

David Andrew Weinberg, Ph.D.
Senior Fellow
Foundation for Defense of Democracies

Hearing before the
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa

Washington, D.C.
July 9, 2015

1726 M Street NW • Suite 700 • Washington, DC 20036

David Andrew Weinberg 7/9/2015

Chairman Ros-Lehtinen, Ranking Member Deutch, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee: thank you on behalf of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies for the opportunity to testify before you again on America's relations with the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). As a former professional staff member at this Committee, I am particularly appreciative for the chance to discuss this important topic with you here today.

In light of President Obama's May summit with senior princes from the Arab Gulf monarchies, it makes sense to take stock of America's relations with members of the Gulf Cooperation Council. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, and Qatar all rely on the United States to ensure their national security, and America looks to these countries as essential security partners in the region. So how healthy are U.S. relations with the Gulf?

Unfortunately, not very. U.S. relations with members of the GCC can best be likened to a dissatisfying relationship such as a bad marriage, in which both sides rely on each other for certain basic needs but also feel that their broader desires are going unfulfilled. Prince Saud al-Faisal, who until recently represented Saudi Arabia as the longest-serving foreign minister in the world, described his country's ideal relationship with America as transitioning away from a monogamous Catholic marriage to one resembling a polygamous Islamic marriage that allows the kingdom to seek strategic relations with several partners at once.[1]

Yet the GCC states still look to America as the ultimate guarantor of their security against external threats, as the closing joint statement from the recent Camp David summit confirmed. And Washington still relies on the Arab Gulf monarchies as a jumping-off platform for many of our military activities in the region. The tenor and content of relations in the last two years or so have arguably been worse off than at any point since the immediate aftermath of 9/11, with frequent sniping in the press. We should explore how to make relations more sustainable and more valuable to the citizens on both sides.

The Gulf summit at Camp David showcased our relationship with the GCC states, including the strong areas – such as military-to-military cooperation – and the not-so-strong areas, such as our anemic dialogue on reform and human rights. Nominally, the purpose of the talks was to address Gulf concerns about the Iranian nuclear negotiations, with President Obama first calling for the summit in his remarks upon the conclusion of the Lausanne framework agreement with Iran in April. However, the U.S. seems to have offered very little in the way of new security assurances or operational plans to impede Iran's destabilizing actions in the region.

The Gulf states are particularly disappointed about American inaction with regard to Syria, where they feel we have turned a blind eye to Bashar al-Assad's massacre of their

[1] David B. Ottaway, *The King's Messenger: Prince Bandar bin Sultan and America's Tangled Relationship With Saudi Arabia* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 2010), page 226.

fellow Sunni compatriots. Saudi officials have already described the conflict in Syria as genocide, yet despite Saudi Arabia's newfound military assertiveness in recent months, Syria is one place where they simply don't feel they can go it alone.[2]

Our Gulf allies also view with great trepidation America's pursuit of a multilateral agreement with Tehran on the nuclear track, since most of these monarchies see Iran's invasive Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as their primary threat in the region. Our partners in the Gulf have nominally welcomed the possibility of a verifiable and enforceable nuclear agreement with Iran, but privately they tend to characterize the results of recent negotiations with Iran as a failure to live up to that ideal.[3] For example, they view the deal's sunset provisions as a worrying sign that they have been abandoned in the face of an unchecked, long-term Iranian threat.

The United States, on the other hand, has at least three major reasons to be upset with some of its partners in the Gulf: negligence in the fight against terror finance, religious incitement, and state abuses of human and civil rights. Together, these factors create a toxic brew that heightens the appeal and capacity of terrorist groups throughout the broader Middle East and North Africa.

Several of America's GCC allies have egregiously violated the formal terms of their role in the fight against the Islamic State, as exemplified by the Jeddah Communiqué. Secretary of State John Kerry worked extremely hard to get the GCC states and four other Arab governments to commit to fighting the flow of foreign fighters, ending the incitement, and stopping terror finance – to change the rules of the game so that we can finally defeat groups like ISIL and keep them from reemerging.[4] States such as Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait have violated some of these crucial pledges, and it is up to our government to press them for more serious results.

Further, it is impossible to describe America's relations with the Gulf without also considering the prominent energy dimensions of these ties. Our allies in the region are heavily dependent on fossil fuels for their revenues and broader prosperity, and they approached America's shale revolution as a serious threat to their financial well-being. As such, Saudi Arabia's decision to maintain production in a bear market and crash the price of oil should be seen in part as a conscious effort to kill the growth in high-cost oil

---

[2] John Kerry, "Remarks With Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal After Their Meeting," *Jeddah, Saudi Arabia*, June 25, 2013. (http://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2013/06/211092.htm)

[3] David Andrew Weinberg, "Doomsday: Stopping a Middle East Nuclear Arms Race," *The National Interest*, March 31, 2015; (http://nationalinterest.org/feature/doomsday-stopping-middle-east-nuclear-arms-race-12511?page=show) Angus McDowall, "Public Saudi Welcome for Iran Nucler Deal Masks Private Unease," *Reuters*, April 3, 2015. (http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/03/us-iran-talks-saudi-reaction-idUSKBN0MU0RF20150403?irpc=932)

[4] Spencer Ankerman, "Middle East Countries Sign uUp to Obama's Coalition Against Isis," *The Guardian* (U.K.), September 11, 2014. (http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/11/obama-isis-coalition-middle-east-countries); Maria Abi-Habib & Rory Jones, "Kuwait Attack Renews Scrutiny of Terror Support Within Gulf States," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 28, 2015. (http://www.wsj.com/articles/kuwait-attack-renews-scrutiny-of-terror-support-within-gulf-states-1435529549)

production, including from hydraulic fracturing in the U.S., tar sands in Canada, deep-water drilling around Brazil, and oil drilling in the Arctic.

This decision by Saudi Arabia and supported by several other Gulf states (with the very public exception of Oman)[5] is also undermining the economic viability of alternative fuel options by decreasing their market viability. The unfortunate reality is that even with the boom in America's domestic production of natural gas, we remain over 95% reliant on petroleum (in short, gasoline) for fueling our transportation sector.[6] This is a real economic and national security vulnerability, and an area where we need leadership from Washington in the form of a national strategy for advancing domestic fuel choice. Without it, American industry and consumers will remain acutely vulnerable to oil market disruptions of this sort from the Gulf.

Iran in the Gulf

Iran is the shared threat that animates the lion's share of America's security cooperation with the Gulf monarchies today. That is also where we have the most work left to do when it comes to reassuring our Gulf allies, and it was at least nominally the focus of why President Obama called for a summit at Camp David earlier this year. At Camp David, the GCC states gave their vague backing to at least the idea of a "comprehensive, verifiable" nuclear deal with Iran, but they also remain wary as to whether the terms of a deal are likely to fulfill their requirements.[7]

The IRGC:

Despite hopes articulated by the administration that we will see a more moderate Iran in the case of a nuclear agreement, Tehran's conduct in and around the Gulf since the adoption of the interim Joint Plan of Action (JPOA) and the Lausanne framework has yet to provide persuasive indication they are turning over a more moderate leaf in the region. In fact, the most recent Iranian budget displayed a shocking 48% increase in the IRGC's public allotment in spite of the impact of international sanctions.[8]

Now imagine what the IRGC will be capable of once its government eventually has access to over $100 billion in assets currently frozen, plus some combination of sanctions lifted on oil sales, upstream energy investment, the petrochemical sector, transferring advanced energy technologies, banks used by the regime, Iranian shipping authorities,

---

[5] "Oman Oil Minister Slams OPEC Policy on Prices, Market Share," *Reuters*, January 21, 2015. (http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/01/21/oman-oil-opec-idUKL6N0V00SL20150121)

[6] U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Monthly Energy Review," June 2015, page 35. (http://www.eia.gov/totalenergy/data/monthly/pdf/sec2.pdf)

[7] Juliet Eilperin & Karen DeYoung, "U.S., Gulf Nations Agree 'Verifiable' Nuke Deal with Iran Helps Everyone," *The Washington Post*, May 14, 2015. (http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/obama-works-to-assure-gulf-leaders-about-us-alliance-in-region/2015/05/14/3654275e-fa50-11e4-9ef4-1bb7ce3b3fb7_story.html)

[8] Emanuele Ottelenghi & Saeed Ghasseminejad, "Iran's Repressive Apparatus Gets a Raise," *The Wall Street Journal*, December 22, 2014. (http://www.wsj.com/articles/emanuele-ottolenghi-and-saeed-ghasseminejad-irans-repressive-apparatus-gets-a-raise-1419281552)

and on trade in precious metals.[9] While it would be folly to suggest all of these assets will end up in the hands of terrorists, it would be similarly misleading to believe the IRGC will not share in the windfall.

Since the signing of the JPOA, Iran's international misadventures have included particularly aggressive proxy activity in Iraq, in Syria, and in Yemen. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, they are even increasing their training, funding, and provision of weapons to the Afghan Taliban.[10] Tehran's magnanimous relationship with Hamas is reportedly "back on track," and Tehran has been providing increasingly sophisticated missile hardware to Hezbollah.[11] Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and particularly Bahrain claim to have been the victims of Iranian espionage or subversion.[12] In the case of Bahrain, last year U.S. officials seemed to confirm attempts by the IRGC to smuggle weapons into the country and to train violent members of the radical opposition.[13] Last month, Bahraini officials announced the seizure of advanced explosives and bomb-making materials that they claimed bore "clear similarities" to methods used by the IRGC and its regional proxies.[14]

In Iraq, the latest State Department counterterrorism report revealed that "Iran increased its assistance to Iraqi Shia militias, one of which is a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization," and several of which have previously targeted U.S. troops or "committed serious human rights abuses against primarily Sunni civilians."[15]

These militias have now displaced the Baghdad formal military as the main ground force used for many military operations in Western Iraq.[16] From the perspective of the GCC, it is particularly worrisome for them to see the U.S. working indirectly to provide air cover for these Iranian protégés in Iraq. Reports that some U.S. soldiers have been forced to

---

[9] Carol E. Lee & Jay Solomon, "U.S. Suggests Compromise on Iran Sanctions," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 17, 2015. (http://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-suggests-compromise-on-iran-sanctions-1429308388)

[10] Margherita Stancati, "Iran Backs Taliban With Cash and Arms," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 11, 2015. (http://www.wsj.com/articles/iran-backs-taliban-with-cash-and-arms-1434065528)

[11] Nidal Al-Mughrabi, "Hamas' Deputy Chief Says It Has Patched Up Ties With Iran," *Reuters*, December 17, 2014. (http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/17/us-mideast-hamas-gaza-idUSKBN0JV1NH20141217); Stuart Winer, "Iran Boasts of Rocket Aid to Palestinians, Hezbollah," *The Times of Israel*, February 3, 2015. (http://www.timesofisrael.com/iran-boasts-of-rocket-aid-to-palestinians-hezbollah/)

[12] David Andrew Weinberg, "The Gulf Cooperation Council: Deepening Rifts and Emerging Challenges," *Testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa*, May 22, 2014. (http://www.defenddemocracy.org/media-hit/david-weinberg-the-gulf-cooperation-council/)

[13] U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2013," April 2014, pages 9-10, 132-133. (http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/225886.pdf)

[14] "Bahrain Claims It Seized Explosives Headed for Use In Saudi Arabia," *Reuters*, June 18, 2015. (http://www.voanews.com/content/bahrain-claims-it-seized-explosives-headed-for-use-in-saudi-arabia/2827367.htmlhttp://www.voanews.com/content/bahrain-claims-it-seized-explosives-headed-for-use-in-saudi-arabia/2827367.html)

[15] U.S. State Department of State, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2014," June 2015, page 285. (http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/239631.pdf)

[16] Kirk H. Sowell, "After Ramadi, Militias in the Lead," *Sada*, July 1, 2015. (http://carnegieendowment.org/sada/2015/07/01/after-ramadi-militias-in-lead/ibb4)

share a base with some of these militias are particularly stunning.[17] Saudi officials have complained "Iran is taking over the country."[18]

In fact, the Gulf states are so concerned that the new Saudi king, Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, jettisoned his predecessor's campaign against the Muslim Brotherhood to make common cause with a wider range of Arab states against Iranian efforts throughout the region.[19] This played a key part in Riyadh's bid to build a coalition against the insurgents of Ansar Allah, also known as the Houthis, in Yemen, as well as in the kingdom's turnabout on radical Islamist groups inside Syria.

While Tehran does not appear to exert command and control over the Houthi rebels inside Yemen, it is inconceivable that they would have been able to conquer so much of the country, including most of the north, without the generous aid they had been receiving from Iran. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, American officials believe the rebels received "significant" cash from Tehran, and an informed Houthi official said the group received tens of millions of dollars from Tehran.[20]

According to an Iranian official quoted by *Reuters*, the IRGC's Quds Force deployed hundreds of operatives in Yemen to train Houthi fighters; additionally, Houthi members were reportedly traveling to Iran and Lebanon for military training.[21] News reports since at least 2012 have documented ships linked to the IRGC bringing military equipment to Ansar Allah in Yemen by the ton, including rifles, ammunition, night-vision goggles,

[17] Josh Rogin & Eli Lake, "Iran's Forces and U.S. Share a Base in Iraq," *Bloomberg*, June 22, 2015. (http://www.bloombergview.com/articles/2015-06-22/iran-s-forces-and-u-s-share-a-base-in-iraq)
[18] Lucas Tomlinson, "'Nobody is Going to Wait': Saudi Drafting Nuclear Back-Up Plan to Counter Iran?" *Fox News*, March 7, 2015. (http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2015/03/07/nobody-is-going-to-wait-saudi-drafting-nuclear-back-up-plan-to-counter-iran/)
[19] Yaroslav Trofimov, "Saudis Warm to Muslim Brotherhood, Seeking Sunni Unity on Yemen," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 2, 2015. (http://www.wsj.com/articles/saudis-warm-to-muslim-brotherhood-seeking-sunni-unity-on-yemen-1427967884)
[20] Jay Solomon, Dion Nissenbaum, & Asa Fitch, "In Strategic Shift, U.S. Draws Closer to Yemen Rebels," *The Wall Street Journal*, Jan 29, 2015. (http://www.wsj.com/articles/in-strategic-shift-u-s-draws-closer-to-yemeni-rebels-1422576308?tesla=y)
[21] Yara Bayoumy & Mohammed Ghobari, "Iranian Report Seen Crucial for Yemen's Houthis," *Reuters*, December 15, 2014. (http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/15/us-yemen-houthis-iran-insight-idUSKBN0JT17A20141215)

missiles, artillery, rocket-propelled grenades, and explosives.[22] Others claim the group received such shipments as early as 2009.[23]

When Judy Woodruff of *PBS NewsHour* asked Secretary of State Kerry about Iranian military aid to the rebels, he said that "there are obviously supplies that have been coming from Iran. There are a number of flights every single week that have been flying in, and we trace those flights and we know this."[24] The Saudi-led coalition spokesperson General Ahmed Asiri went even further, claiming Tehran had fourteen domestic flights per week running to Sanaa before the war and that "most of them" were "used to transport ammunition and weapons."[25]

The U.S. has provided ammunition, target vetting, and refueling support to the air coalition, as well as backing the Saudi-led air and naval embargo. Yet we have fundamentally been treating it as someone else's war, which has not escaped the attention of Sunni-ruled states in the Gulf. Between our government's pursuit of a nuclear deal with Iran and its disengaged approach to Syria, Iraq, and Yemen, many of Gulf allies have begun to wonder if they are on a fast track to military abandonment.

As my co-panelist Mr. Eisenstadt has aptly noted, this credibility gap cannot be addressed with arms sales or forward military deployments alone.[26] The Gulf states need to believe that we will use our own military might to support them when push comes to shove.

America's decision not to launch airstrikes after the Assad regime was caught using chemical weapons against its own people in 2013 seriously exacerbated this credibility gap, and reportedly so did America's reluctance to send additional forces to the Gulf at

---

[22] Eric Schmidt & Robert F. Worth, "With Arms for Yemen Rebels, Iran Seeks Wider Mideast Role," *The New York Times*, March 15, 2012. (http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/15/world/middleeast/aiding-yemen-rebels-iran-seeks-wider-mideast-role.html?pagewanted=all&_r=1); Barbara Starr, "Weapons Seized off Yemen Point to Iran, U.S. Official Says," *CNN*, January 30, 2013. (http://edition.cnn.com/2013/01/29/world/meast/yemen-weapons-seized/); Yara Bayoumy & Mohammed Ghobari, "Iranian Report Seen Crucial for Yemen's Houthis," *Reuters*, December 15, 2014. (http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/15/us-yemen-houthis-iran-insight-idUSKBN0JT17A20141215); "Iranian Ship Unloads 185 Tons of Weapons for Houthis at Saleef Port," *Al Arabiya* (Saudi Arabia), March 20, 2003. (http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2015/03/20/Iranian-ship-unloads-185-tons-of-weapons-for-Houthis-at-Saleef-port.html); "Iranian Ship Laden with Weapons Docked near the Yemeni Port of Hodeida," *Al Jazeera Arabic* (Qatar), March 19, 2015. (http://www.aljazeera.net/news/arabic/2015/3/19/اليمني-الحديدة-ميناء-قرب-ترسو-بالسلاح-محملة-إيرانية-سفينة)

[23] "Yemen Seizes Vessel With Iranian Crew," *Al Arabiya* (Saudi Arabia), October 26, 2009. (http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2009/10/26/89328.html)

[24] John Kerry, "Interview with Judy Woodruff of PBS Newshour," *PBS News*, April 8, 2015. (http://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2015/04/240486.htm)

[25] "Brig. Gen. Ahmed Asiri Says, in His Fourth Daily Briefing, That Houthi Militia Managed to Work in The Previous Period to Transfer Yemen to A Huge Inventory of Ammunition and Weapons," *Saudi Press Agency* (Saudi Arabia), March 29, 2015. (http://www.spa.gov.sa/english/details.php?id=1343771)

[26] Michael Eisenstadt, "Assuring Uneasy Gulf Allies at Camp David: The Military Dimension," *The Washington Institute for Near East Policy*, May 7, 2015. (http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/assuring-uneasy-gulf-allies-at-camp-david-the-military-dimension)

that time to ward off possible retaliation by Iran.[27] Simply put, the Gulf states have trouble believing that America will actually be prepared to join them in fighting back against incursions by the IRGC and its local military allies. And so long as the Gulf states do not believe we have their best interests in mind, it becomes dramatically harder for us to encourage them to take important steps to combat religious incitement, terror finance, and abuses of civil and human rights.

As I testified before this panel last year, the prism through which the GCC states view Iran's intentions, including its long-term nuclear intentions, is how Iran utilizes the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.[28] Further, the IRGC is the bellwether by which our Gulf allies view America's value as an ally and our intentions with regard to Iran's nuclear program. If Iran does not decrease its regional adventurism after a deal and we do not step up our efforts to contain the IRGC, then the Gulf states will not trust us to keep Iran from building a nuclear weapon either before or after the terms of a nuclear agreement with the E3/EU+3 have expired.

Proliferation Challenges

The stakes for this debate could not be any higher. The Arab Gulf states, and Saudi Arabia in particular, are in a position to redouble their efforts to build a civilian nuclear infrastructure with possible military dimensions. Individuals close to the Saudi leadership have been making reckless but unsurprising threats in this regard, suggesting that they view an Iranian nuclear deal as the starting gun in a decade-plus race to build their own nuclear capabilities to match.[29] They have warned that Riyadh will begin to revisit their nuclear doctrine now with an eye toward developing a domestic civilian infrastructure for nuclear energy that is well-suited to allow for adding on possible military dimensions later on.[30]

It is incumbent on U.S. officials across various components of the government to unambiguously condemn these irresponsible Saudi statements and threats. It is intolerable when Tehran behaves in this manner, but it is also intolerable for U.S. allies to blackmail us with their own threats of such roguish behavior.

---

[27] Maria Abi-Habib, "Saudis Reject U.N. Security Council Seat," *The Wall Street Journal*, October 18, 2013. (http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702303680404579143062631256616)

[28] David Andrew Weinberg, "The Gulf Cooperation Council: Deepening Rifts and Emerging Challenges," *Testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa*, May 22, 2014. (http://www.defenddemocracy.org/media-hit/david-weinberg-the-gulf-cooperation-council/)

[29] Yaroslav Trofimov, "Saudi Arabia Considers Nuclear Weapons to Offset Iran," *The Wall Street Journal*, May 7, 2015. (http://www.wsj.com/articles/saudi-arabia-considers-nuclear-weapons-to-offset-iran-1430999409)

[30] Nawaf Obaid, "Saudi Arabia is Preparing Itself in Case Iran Develops Nuclear Weapons." *The Telegraph* (U.K.), June 29, 2015. (http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/general-election-2015/politics-blog/11705381/Nawaf-Obaid-Saudi-Arabia-is-preparing-itself-in-case-Iran-develops-nuclear-weapons.html); Nawaf Obaid, "Actually, Saudi Arabia Could Get a Nuclear Weapon," *CNN*, June 19, 2015. (http://www.cnn.com/2015/06/19/middleeast/obaid-saudi-nuclear-weapon/)

Of course, it is also incumbent on U.S. leaders to address our allies' legitimate security concerns, in particular their fear of abandonment vis-à-vis Iran. When American officials say that Iran will not be permitted to acquire nuclear weapons, they should also be taking steps to convince our allies that America will not dither to punish violations of the agreement and to devise joint plans to deter Iran from breaking out to a nuclear weapon after provisions of the deal begin to sunset. And we should be fighting the IRGC like there is no nuclear deal.

Finally, it is not enough to take these steps unless Saudi Arabia's nuclear ambitions are also treated as part of the technical arms control conversation. In the course of reassuring the Saudis that we will help shield them from external military threats, we should be using a mix of sticks and carrots to convince them to accept real limits on the possible weaponization of their nascent nuclear energy program.[31]

The U.A.E. signed a Section 123 agreement with Washington in 2009 whereby they agreed to forego the enrichment of uranium. This step provides a model for the region of peaceful nuclear development. And while it will be difficult to hold the Saudis to such a standard given what Tehran is permitted to keep under the terms of recent international agreements, there are still creative ways to devise credible limits on the Saudi program, such as committing to ship all nuclear fuel out of the country for enrichment and to accept rigorous monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency.[32] As a member of the G20, Riyadh should be expected to take the goodwill gestures needed to reassure the world community that they are the responsible world leaders they claim to be.

Commerce in the Gulf

Moving forward, it seems likely that a revival of trade in the Gulf may not be far off. Several members of the GCC, Oman in particular, have been eager to cash in on Iran's possible reintegration into international markets. In addition to reaching a nearby, relatively untapped group of consumers, many GCC states will look to Iran if sanctions are dropped as a source of natural gas to keep skyrocketing domestic energy consumption from eating into their oil exports.

However, this dynamic also would exacerbate Saudi Arabia's fear of regional isolation and poses a threat to the United States if Iran's illicit economic networks are allowed to increase their activities amidst a broader increase in above-the-board, permitted trade.

---

[31] Gene Gerzhoy, "How to Manage Saudi Anger at the Iran Nuclear Deal," *The Washington Post*, May 22, 2015. (http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/05/22/how-to-manage-saudi-anger-at-the-iran-deal/)

[32] Sigurd Neubauer, "Saudi Arabia's Nuclear Envy," *Foreign Affairs*, November 16, 2014. (https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/middle-east/2014-11-16/saudi-arabias-nuclear-envy); Colin Kahl, Melissa Dalton, & Matthew Irvine, "Atomic Kingdom," *CNAS*, February 2013, pages 36-38. (http://www.cnas.org/files/documents/publications/CNAS_AtomicKingdom_Kahl.pdf)

Oman has already inked deals to serve as a hub for Iranian natural gas exports,[33] and Kuwait has also voiced a desire to purchase and consume Iranian natural gas.[34] Qatar shares the world's largest natural gas field with Tehran and has signaled interest in pursuing technology sharing and joint informational coordination on it.[35] The ruler of Dubai, historically a major entrepôt for Iranian trade, voiced support for lifting Iran sanctions shortly after conclusion of the interim JPOA.[36] Several of the smaller, less prosperous emirates toward the northern end of the U.A.E., such as Ras al-Khaimah, have expressed a particular interest in being new partners for Iranian trade.[37]

U.S. officials will have to keep an eye out for increased flows of illicit activity amidst the potential resurgence of legally permitted finance and trade. This has been a longstanding challenge in some of these locales: for instance, Dubai has fought hard in recent years to crack down on Iranian sanctions busting, and yet the U.S. Treasury Department continues to identify entities engaged in such activity that seek to exploit Dubai's territory for illicit gain.

This will be a region-wide challenge for the United States to monitor and disrupt, and our leaders should not allow the conclusion of a nuclear bargain with Iran to prevent them from continuing to confront the illegal networks Iran employs to break international rules and restrictions on the books. This should also be an area of continuing dialogue and cooperation with our partner governments in the GCC.

Defense Cooperation

The Camp David summit in May focused heavily on military-to-military cooperation, traditionally one of the areas of America's Gulf relations that receive the most attention. While the GCC states were denied some of their most far-reaching requests for sophisticated military equipment or assurances, they did not walk away empty-handed. The meeting also provided an opportunity to review shared regional security challenges,

---

[33] Ankit Panda, "India, Iran and Oman Open Talks on Deep Sea Gas Pipeline," *The Diplomat*, March 1, 2014. (http://thediplomat.com/2014/03/india-iran-and-oman-open-talks-on-deep-sea-gas-pipeline/); Andrew Critchlow, "In the Shadow of Iran A New UAE Oil Port is Transforming the Energy Sector," *The Telegraph* (U.K.), September 29, 2014. (http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/energy/oilandgas/11127089/In-the-shadow-of-Iran-a-new-UAE-oil-port-is-transforming-energy-sector.html); Shaddad Al Musalmy, "Iran Will Help Oman Become A Regional Economic Hub," *Muscat Daily* (Oman), February 10, 2014. (http://www.muscatdaily.com/Archive/Oman/Iran-will-help-Oman-become-a-regional-economic-hub-Envoy-2xau)

[34] Anthony Dipaola, "Kuwait Wants to Buy Iran Gas As Energy Ties Trump Nuclear Fears," *Bloomberg*, June 2, 2014. (http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-06-02/kuwait-wants-to-buy-iran-gas-as-energy-ties-trump-nuclear-fears)

[35] Amena Bakr, "RPT-Qatar Says Can Help Iran Get More From World's Biggest Gas Field," *Reuters*, December 23, 2013. (http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/12/23/qatar-iran-gas-idUSL6N0K22U420131223)

[36] "End Iran Sanctions, Dubai Ruler Sheikh Mohammed Tells BBC," *BBC News*, January 13, 2014. (http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-25708538)

[37] Nicolas Parasie, "Ras Al Khaimah Charts Its Own Economic Course," *The Wall Street Journal*, September 8, 2014. (http://blogs.wsj.com/middleeast/2014/09/08/ras-al-khaimah-charts-its-own-economic-course/?KEYWORDS=ras+al+khaimah)

although in most cases the results appear to have been simply a modest restatement of common principles.

Secretary of State Kerry predicted that the summit would "take us beyond anything that we have had before" by "fleshing out a series of new commitments" and "a new security understanding."[38] However, the outcome of the summit was more along the lines of what President Obama predicted, namely that he would use the summit "to see how we can formalize that a little bit more."[39]

As I have written with my FDD colleague Patrick Megahan, the administration evidently declined to sell the Gulf certain advanced weapons systems such as the F-35 joint strike fighter, improved bunker buster bombs, or advanced cruise missiles.[40] On the other hand, the U.S. did agree to establish a "dedicated Foreign Military Sales procurement office to process GCC-wide sales," a step that could speed up arms sales to the region. Press reports suggest that the U.S. may also have agreed to replenish Riyadh and Abu Dhabi's store of guided bombs to replace those used in Yemen; to possibly sell Kuwait F/A-18 fighter jets; to move ahead with updating radar systems and avionics for F-15s and F-16s already owned by our Gulf allies; to sell Saudi Arabia ten new MH-60R helicopters; and to sell additional advanced missile defense systems such as the THAAD Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system.[41]

The United States also offered its allies a reformulation of longstanding security guarantees, namely that we will "work with our GCC partners to determine what actions may be appropriate" in case of an external threat, up to the possible use of force,[42] but that stilted reformulation of past practices fell far short of the formal defense treaty

---

[38] John Kerry, "Press Availability with Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir," *U.S. Department of State*, May 8, 2015. (http://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2015/05/242043.htm)

[39] Thomas Friedman, "Iran and the Obama Doctrine," *The New York Times*, April 5, 2015. (http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/06/opinion/thomas-friedman-the-obama-doctrine-and-iran-interview.html?_r=0)

[40] Patrick Megahan & David Andrew Weinberg, "Camp David Summit: Major or Modest Moves in U.S.-Gulf Ties," *Al Arabiya* (Saudi Arabia), May 15, 2015. (http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/analysis/2015/05/15/The-Camp-David-Summit-Major-or-modest-moves-in-U-S-Gulf-ties-.html)

[41] John Hudson, "Israel: Go Ahead and Give the Gulfies Guns," *Foreign Policy*, May 13, 2015. (http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/05/13/israel-go-ahead-and-give-the-gulfies-guns/); Andrea Shalal, "Exclusive: Boeing Poised to Clinch $3 Billion Plus Kuwait F/A-18 Order," *Reuters*, May 6, 2015. (http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/05/06/us-boeing-kuwait-idUSKBN0NR21F20150506); Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Press Release, "Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, MH-60R Multi-Mission Helicopters," May 20. 2015. (http://www.dsca.mil/major-arms-sales/kingdom-saudi-arabia-mh-60r-multi-mission-helicopters); Defense Security Cooperation Agency, Press Release, "United Arab Emirates (UAE) – Guided Bomb Units GBU-31s and GBU-12s)," May 29, 2015. (http://www.dsca.mil/major-arms-sales/united-arab-emirates-uae-guided-bomb-units-gbu-31s-and-gbu-12s)

[42] The White House, Press Release, "U.S-Gulf Cooperation Council Camp David Joint Statement," May 14, 2015. (https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/05/14/us-gulf-cooperation-council-camp-david-joint-statement)

several Gulf states, especially the U.A.E., had reportedly sought.[43] Further, the regional plans laid out at the conference seemed somewhat threadbare.

Syria:

On Syria, we offered yet another blandishment promising "increasing support to the moderate opposition in Syria" without any sort of explicit and credible blueprint for doing so.[44] In the months ahead, U.S. and Gulf officials should devise new measures to actualize this objective so that moderate forces can provide a better counterweight to the Assad dictatorship on one hand and hardline jihadist fighters on the other.

This is particularly important given reports that Saudi Arabia under the new king has joined Qatar and Turkey in strengthening hardline jihadists in Syria at the expense of the moderate opposition, allegedly allowing aid to reach certain elements of the Army of Conquest coalition in Syria that contains al Qaeda's Nusra Front and several al Qaeda-friendly militias such as Ahrar al-Sham and Jund al-Aqsa.[45] The summit's closing language stated that leaders "warned against the influence of other extremist groups" in Syria beyond just ISIL "such as Al-Nusrah, that represent a danger to the Syrian people, to the region and to the international community."[46] Yet there is no sign that this statement has since brought about a realignment of Saudi, Qatari, or Turkish policy inside Syria since then.

Americans continue to fly air sorties against ISIL in Syria as part of Operation Inherent Resolve with some participation from the GCC states, but the vast majority of these strikes have been conducted by the U.S., not our Gulf allies.[47] Kuwait and Oman did not

[43] "UAE Envoy Says Seeks U.S. Security Guarantee at Camp David Summit," *Reuters*, May 7, 2015. (http://www.businessinsider.com/r-uae-envoy-says-seeks-us-security-guarantee-at-camp-david-summit-2015-5)

[44] Office of the Press Secretary, Press Release, "Annex to U.S.-Gulf Cooperation Council Camp David Joint Statement," May 14, 2015. (https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/05/14/annex-us-gulf-cooperation-council-camp-david-joint-statement)

[45] Yaroslav Trofimov, "To U.S. Allies, al-Qaida Official in Syria Becomes the Lesser Evil," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 11, 2015. (http://www.wsj.com/articles/to-u-s-allies-al-qaeda-affiliate-in-syria-becomes-the-lesser-evil-1434022017); David Ignatius, "A New Cooperation on Syria," *The Washington Post*, May 12, 2015. (http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/a-new-cooperation-on-syria/2015/05/12/bdb48a68-f8ed-11e4-9030-b4732caefe81_story.html); Karen DeYoung & Liz Sly, "U.S. Allies in Middle East Ramping Up Support for Rebel Forces in Syria," *The Washington Post*, April 29, 2015. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-allies-in-middle-east-ramping-up-support-for-rebel-forces-in-syria/2015/04/29/07b1d82c-edc8-11e4-8666-a1d756d0218e_story.html)

[46] The White House, Press Release, "U.S-Gulf Cooperation Council Camp David Joint Statement," May 14, 2015. (https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/05/14/us-gulf-cooperation-council-camp-david-joint-statement)

[47] "Exclusive: As Easy Targets Thin, Syria Airstrikes By U.S. Allies Plunge," *Reuters*, December 17, 2014. (http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/17/us-mideast-crisis-syria-strikes-exclusiv-idUSKBN0JV2JB20141217); "U.S. Officials Confirm Suspension of UAE Combat Missions," *Al Jazeera English*, February 5, 2015. (http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2015/02/uae-pulls-coalition-air-strikes-isil-150204165342698.htmlhttp://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2015/02/uae-pulls-coalition-air-strikes-isil-150204165342698.html); Micah Zenko, "Nine Months of Coalition Air Strikes Against the Islamic State," *Council on Foreign Relations*, May 8, 2015. (http://blogs.cfr.org/zenko/2015/05/08/nine-months-of-coalition-air-strikes-against-the-islamic-state)

pledge to participate in the airstrikes, and CENTCOM also does not include Qatar in its recent listings of states that have launched airstrikes as part of the operation to date.[48] Meanwhile, the value of these strikes may be outweighed if some U.S. allies are turning a blind eye to al Qaeda making gains in Syria.

Libya:

On Libya, the Camp David closing statement indicated that "the leaders agreed to move in concert to convince all Libyan parties to accept an inclusive power-sharing agreement" based on U.N. initiatives and to "focus on countering the growing terrorist presence in the country."[49] The statement's more detailed annex included a clarification that the goal in Libya would be to "establish a national unity government before Ramadan."[50]

The start of Ramadan came and went without a unity government in Libya, but the rival Libyan governments from Tobruk and Tripoli sat down this past month for substantive talks in Morocco, even though the Islamist factions that control Tripoli have been stalling since then on responding to the U.N. team's blueprint for a unity government.[51] Still, this readiness to pursue peace talks is a positive step, presumably with encouragement from the two sides' patrons in Doha and Abu Dhabi, whom President Obama pressed in Maryland to set aside their differences over the conflict in Libya.[52] Likely, the threat posed to all actors from a nascent Islamic State in the country also played a motivating role.

Yemen:

On Yemen, the U.S. wrested language from Gulf participants in the summit that "underscored the imperative of collective efforts to counter Al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula" and praised Saudi Arabia "for the generous grant of $274 million" to U.N. humanitarian efforts there.[53] Yet press reports allege that Saudi Arabia may have delayed

---

[48] United States Central Command, Press Release, "Military Airstrikes Continue Against ISIL Terrorists in Syria and Iraq," June 26, 2015. (http://www.centcom.mil/en/news/articles/june-26-military-airstrikes-continue-against-isil-terrorists-in-syria-and-i)

[49] The White House, Press Release, "U.S-Gulf Cooperation Council Camp David Joint Statement," May 14, 2015. (https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/05/14/us-gulf-cooperation-council-camp-david-joint-statement)

[50] The White House, Press Release, "Annex to U.S.-Gulf Cooperation Council Camp David Joint Statement," May 14, 2015. (https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/05/14/annex-us-gulf-cooperation-council-camp-david-joint-statement)

[51] Aziz El Yaakoibi, "Libyan Factions Sit At The Same Table in UN Peace Talks," *Reuters*, June 28, 2015. (http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/06/29/us-libya-security-idUSKCN0P80TF20150629); Aziz El Yaakoibi, "U.N. Talks on Libya Stumble As Rival Government Postpones Participation," *Reuters*, July 2, 2015. (http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/02/us-libya-security-idUSKCN0PC21Z20150702)

[52] Akbar Shahid Ahmed, "Obama Brokered a Secret Deal between 2 Arab States Could Help End Libya's Civil War," *The Huffington Post*, June 21, 2015. (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/06/17/libya-peace-uae-qatar_n_7605898.html)

[53] The White House, Press Release, "U.S-Gulf Cooperation Council Camp David Joint Statement," May 14, 2015. (https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/05/14/us-gulf-cooperation-council-camp-david-joint-statement)

the subsequent delivery of this aid to wrest concessions from United Nations agencies.[54] Further, there is no clear indication that America's Gulf partners are devising their battle plan to include going after AQAP, arguably al Qaeda's most dangerous branch to our security and theirs.

AQAP overran the capital of Yemen's largest province in April, and yet Saudi-led coalition airstrikes in Yemen have focused exclusively on Ansar Allah and renegade units of the military loyal to former Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh. While presumably Saudi Arabia is still sharing important intelligence on AQAP and probably the Islamic State's upstart affiliate in Yemen as well, it is not unreasonable to expect our allies to take a direct role in combating Sunni terrorist groups in a country where they already have established clear air superiority.

Unfortunately, the war in Yemen recently passed its 100th day since the coalition intervened with no end in sight, although of course Ansar Allah's campaign of conquest further precedes that count. We may see this war go for 1,000 days or more before it is over, and the Saudi spokesperson General Asiri has now been talking in terms of a campaign on the same order of length as the U.S.-led military effort in Afghanistan.[55] It is hard to envision either side in Yemen coming to a lasting resolution at this point given that the Houthis still control the capital, can contest most major cities in the north, and have little incentive to given them up.

Meanwhile, the humanitarian toll for the Yemeni people is quite heavy. More than 3,000 people have been killed, more than a million have been displaced, and the number of people facing food insecurity now exceeds thirteen million.[56] Shortages of fuel, water, and medicine are also widespread.

A central reason for this toll is the clumsy implementation of the air and sea embargoes now imposed on Yemen. Yet the goal of keeping Iranian weapons from flooding back into the country is worthwhile. The United States should examine whether there are ways it can help improve the flow of food, fuel, and medicine through this embargo, making the restrictions on illicit weapons more sustainable while decreasing the harm they are imposing on Yemen's civilians.

Iraq:

On Iraq, the Camp David summit's closing statement "stressed the importance of strengthening ties between GCC member states and the Iraqi government," as well as

[54] Lara Jakes, "Saudi Arabia's Unpaid Debts," *Foreign Policy*, June 17, 2015. (http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/06/17/saudi-arabias-unpaid-debt/)
[55] Carolyn Cole, "Saudi Military Official Discusses Arab Coalition's Fight in Yemen," *Los Angeles Times*, April 7, 2015. (http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-yemen-saudi-qa-20150407-story.html)
[56] "Yemen Facing Serious Food Insecurity As Conflict Deteriorates, New UN Study Finds," *UN News Centre*, June 18, 2015. (http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51187#.VZqqhvn4_IU); Shane Dixon Kavanaugh & Vlad Vovcuk, "Saudi-Led Campaign of Airstrikes in Yemen Marks 100th Day," *Vocativ*, July 1, 2015. (http://www.vocativ.com/news/207203/saudi-led-airstrikes-in-yemen-marks-100th-day-of-bombings/)

calling on Baghdad to implement its pledges to reconcile with Sunni groups and exert control over Shi'ite militias.[57] Sadly, little work has yet been done to reign in Iranian-backed militias in Iraq. On the plus side, Qatar and Saudi Arabia have moved ahead with plans to reopen embassies in Baghdad after too many years of limited relations, and Riyadh recently swore in its next ambassador to Baghdad.

However, when it comes to the steps that would truly be necessary for helping Baghdad win the war against terrorist organizations such as ISIL, many of America's Gulf allies are coming up short.

Secretary of State Kerry exerted considerable effort after the Abadi government was sworn in to persuade the GCC states and several other Arab governments to sign onto the Jeddah Communiqué, an important document issued on the most recent anniversary of 9/11.[58] In it, they promised to help the Iraqi government as part of a coalition against the Islamic State by finally addressing some of the longstanding shortcomings with their policies to combat the emergence of terrorist groups.

Most notably, they committed to the following: "stopping the flow of foreign fighters through neighboring countries, countering financing of ISIL and other violent extremists, repudiating their hateful ideology, ending impunity and bringing perpetrators to justice."[59] While several GCC states adopted tougher regulations for punishing any citizens who seeks to join ISIL or al Qaeda as foreign fighters, several of our partners have failed to follow through on their pledges, most notably on terror finance and religious incitement.

In short, states within the GCC have failed to implement the Jeddah Communiqué. In these critical regards, they are failing the coalition against ISIL, and they are breaking their word to the United States of America to fully fight terror.

President Obama arguably alluded to this fact in his Monday remarks on ISIL, when he said that he still expects our Muslim partners to "step up in terms of pushing back... against these hateful ideologies," including "what we're teaching young people" and "the sectarianism that so often fuels the resentments and conflicts."[60]

Negligence on Terror Finance

[57] The White House, Press Release, "U.S-Gulf Cooperation Council Camp David Joint Statement," May 14, 2015. (https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/05/14/us-gulf-cooperation-council-camp-david-joint-statement)

[58] Spencer Ackerman, "Middle East Countries Sign Up to Obama's Coalition Against ISIS," *The Guardian* (U.K.), September 11, 2014. (http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/11/obama-isis-coalition-middle-east-countries); Maria Abi-Habib & Rory Jones, "Kuwait Attack Renews Scrutiny of Terror Support Within Gulf States," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 28, 2015. (http://www.wsj.com/articles/kuwait-attack-renews-scrutiny-of-terror-support-within-gulf-states-1435529549)

[59] U.S. Department of State, Press Release, "Jeddah Communique," September 11, 2014. (http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/09/231496:htm)

[60] White House, Press Release, "Remarks by the President on Progress in the Fight against ISIL," July 6, 2015. (https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/07/06/remarks-president-progress-fight-against-isil)

In March of 2014, America's top official for combating terror finance, then-Under Secretary of the Treasury for Terrorism and Financial Intelligence David Cohen, delivered a speech in which he indicated that the GCC states, American allies, became the biggest source of private terror finance to core al Qaeda.[61] He also stated last year that tiny Kuwait had become the single biggest source of private donations to al Qaeda linked terrorists fighting in Syria such as the Nusra Front and ISIL.[62] Cohen labeled Qatar and Kuwait as a whole "permissive jurisdictions" for terror finance, a rather stark form of criticism for such influential allies.[63]

Since then, it does not appear that this state of affairs has changed. Some press reports suggest that the size of these flows might have diminished or note that Kuwait and Qatar passed relevant new laws in recent years.[64] But enforcement remains halting, typically only in response to major terror attacks or concerted U.S. pressure.

We are still under the same disappointing regulatory system for handling terror finance in these two Gulf states. Enforcement still lacks political will, and entities under U.S. sanctions as Specially Designated Global Terrorists still tend to escape punishment under Qatari or Kuwaiti law. The volume of terror finance coming from the Gulf is likely to resurge again unless serious action is taken soon.

Under Secretary Cohen revealed in October 2014 that two Qatari nationals under terror finance sanctions by the United States and United Nations, Abdulrahman al-Nu'aymi and Khalifa al-Subaiy, were enjoying legal impunity in their home country.[65] This is particularly worrisome given that Subaiy was released from Qatari jail after only barely half a year in 2008 following a conviction on charges that included terror finance. At that time, Qatari officials assured America that this man, evidently a former senior state official at Qatar's Central Bank, would be "under control" and subject to surveillance and

---

[61] David Cohen, "Confronting New Threats in Terrorist Financing," *Remarks before the Center for a New American Security*, March 4, 2014. (http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2308.aspx)
[62] Karen DeYoung, "Kuwait, Ally on Syria, is Also the Leading Funder of Extremist Rebels," *The Washington Post*, April 25, 2014. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/kuwait-top-ally-on-syria-is-also-the-leading-funder-of-extremist-rebels/2014/04/25/10142b9a-ca48-11e3-a75e-463587891b57_story.html)
[63] David Cohen, "Confronting New Threats in Terrorist Financing," *Remarks before the Center for a New American Security*, March 4, 2014. (http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2308.aspx)
[64] Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "Qatar's Friends-With-Everyone Approach Rankles Some of its Persian Gulf Neighbors," *The Washington Post*, October 4, 2014. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/qatars-friends-with-everyone-approach-rankles-some-of-its-persian-gulf-neighbors/2014/10/04/b89977f8-4a7b-11e4-b72e-d60a9229cc10_story.html); Maria Abi-Habib & Rory Jones, "Kuwait Attack Renews Scrutiny of Terror Support Within Gulf States," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 28, 2015. (http://www.wsj.com/articles/kuwait-attack-renews-scrutiny-of-terror-support-within-gulf-states-1435529549)
[65] Robert Mendick, "Terror Financiers Are Living Freely in Qatar, US Discloses," *The Telegraph* (U.K.), November 16, 2014. (http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/islamic-state/11233407/Terror-financiers-are-living-freely-in-Qatar-US-discloses.html)

tight banking restrictions.[66] And yet the U.S. Treasury Department announced last autumn that Subaiy had resumed funding core al Qaeda to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars.[67]

Jay Solomon of the *Wall Street Journal* recently quoted Qatari officials confirming that these two sanctioned individuals are still free men in Qatar.[68] Qatar's ambassador to Washington insisted that Doha was building a legal case against the two men, but there has been little indication since then that much of anything is going on.[69] This is a country where Nu'aymi was previously thrown in jail without trial simply for criticizing the country's rulers and where suspected enemies of the state are often detained for months on end without trial or filing of charges.[70] The fact that Nu'aymi and Subaiy still seem to be free men says something about priority the Al Thani regime attributes to punishing and deterring purported acts terror finance.

The Qataris have reportedly imposed travel bans against several sanctioned individuals accused of terror finance, but its application of these restrictions still leaves much to be desired.[71] When individuals are subject to U.N terror finance sanctions, member states are supposed to impose a travel ban. And yet Qatar historically has let Muthanna al-Dhari enter its territory even though the U.S. and the U.N. have each sanctioned him on charges of providing over $1 million to al Qaeda in Iraq and of directing attacks against Iraqi civilians,[72] and even though his organization reportedly responded to ISIL's conquest of Western Iraq by welcoming the "great victories achieved by the revolutionaries."[73]

Muthanna evidently visited Doha as recently as last month, at the salon of a royal family member in connection to programming by an international Qatar-based fundraising

---

[66] David Andrew Weinberg, "Qatar and Terror Finance, Part I: Negligence," *Center on Sanctions & Illicit Finance*, December 2014, page 16. (http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/publications/Qatar_Part_I.pdf)

[67] U.S. Department of the Treasury, Press Release, "Treasury Designates Twelve Foreign Terrorist Fighter Facilitators," September 24, 2014. (http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2651.aspx)

[68] Jay Solomon & Nour Mallas, "Qatar's Ties to Militants Strain Alliance," *The Wall Street Journal*, February 23, 2015. (http://www.wsj.com/articles/qatars-ties-to-militants-strain-alliance-1424748601)

[69] Jay Solomon & Nour Mallas, "Qatar's Ties to Militants Strain Alliance," *The Wall Street Journal*, February 23, 2015. (http://www.wsj.com/articles/qatars-ties-to-militants-strain-alliance-1424748601)

[70] David Andrew Weinberg, "Qatar and Terrorism Part I: Negligence," Center on Sanctions & Illicit Finance, December 2014. (http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/publications/Qatar_Part_I.pdf)

[71] U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2014," June 2015, page 206. (http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/239631.pdf)

[72] United Nations Security Council Committee Pursuant To Resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) Concerning Al-Qaida And Associated Individuals And Entities, "Muthanna Harith Al-Dari," March 25, 2010. (http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/NSQDi278E.shtml); U.S. Department of the Treasury, Press Release, "Treasury Targets Al Qai'da In Iraq," March 25, 2010. (http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/tg612.aspx)

[73] Andrew Gilligan, "How Our Allies in Kuwait and Qatar Funded Islamic State," *The Telegraph* (U.K.), September 6, 2014. (http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/kuwait/11077537/How-our-allies-in-Kuwait-and-Qatar-funded-Islamic-State.html)

organization.[74] Even more repugnant, this March Qatar's Father Emir exchanged kisses with and physically embraced Muthanna, as did an elder brother to Qatar's Emir who serves as his "personal envoy."[75]

Another individual likely subject to such a travel ban is Abdulmalik Abdulsalam, a former resident of Qatar whom the U.S. and U.N. allege worked in concert with Subaiy to aid al Qaeda.[76] The Treasury Department also alleges that Abdulsalam was arrested attempting to carry large sums of money out of the Beirut airport that was intended for delivery to al Qaeda in Syria.[77] Last year, a Lebanese court convicted Abdulsalam and two other defendants on charges that included terror finance, and press coverage claimed that one of these co-defendants, Abdulaziz Khalifa al-Attiyah, had provided funds in Abdulsalam's possession intended for Syrian jihadists.[78]

But conveniently for Attiyah, he is also the cousin of Qatar's foreign minister, and both Lebanese and Kuwaiti papers cited allegations that Doha issued a series of swift, punitive

---

[74] @althani_faisal, "الضاري حارث مثنى الدكتور وفضيلة العودة سلمان الدكتور الشيخ فضيلة من بزيارة الامس مجلسنا تشرف ومفيدة ممتعة جلسة وكانت," Twitter, June 28, 2015. (https://twitter.com/althani_faisal/status/615279539279626240); @ayedhalqahtani2, "بضيافة العودة سلمان.د رافـ# إرادة_رمضاني#الرحمة_يشائر# مهرجان المجالس برنامج ضمن ثاني آل جاسم بن فيصل الشيخ مجلس," Twitter, June 28, 2015. (https://twitter.com/ayedhalqahtani2/status/615291202900897792); salman_alodah, "بمجلس ضيوفا كانوا العلم وطلبة الدكاترة من ولفيف الضاري حارث مثنى .د و الصلابي علي .د .. جاسم بن فيصل.د الشيخ ..يارب عامر مجلس.." Instagram, June 29 2015. (https://instagram.com/p/4hhMNvsE9t/)

[75] "HH the Father Emir Offers Condolences on Death of Harith Al-Dhari," *Qatar News Agency*, March 19, 2015. (http://www.qna.org.qa/en-us/News/15031919220056/HH-the-Father-Emir-Offers-Condolences-on-Death-of-Harith-Al-Dhari); العراق في المسلمين علماء ينة, Facebook, March 19, 2015. (https://www.facebook.com/iraq.amsi/photos/a.591541200883660.1073741827.289539944417122/798865970151181/?type=1); العراق في المسلمين علماء ينة, *Facebook*, March 19, 2015. (https://www.facebook.com/iraq.amsi/photos/pb.289539944417122.-2207520000.1435770280./798866310151147/?type=3&src=https%3A%2F%2Fscontent.xx.fbcdn.net%2Fhphotos-xaf1%2Fv%2Ft1.0-9%2F11081174_798866310151147_2360145105808591333_n.jpg%3Foh%3D03172c3c3d3c7306e2fb9f876453e885%26oe%3D5614FED3&size=625%2C269&fbid=798866310151147); العراق في المسلمين علماء ينة, *Facebook*, March 19, 2015. (https://www.facebook.com/iraq.amsi/photos/pb.289539944417122.-2207520000.1435770280./798866360151142/?type=3&src=https%3A%2F%2Fscontent.xx.fbcdn.net%2Fhphotos-xpa1%2Fv%2Ft1.0-9%2F11039240_798866360151142_4451469926683737231_n.jpg%3Foh%3De615d590e88258d8b1d9c7be5708e316%26oe%3D5631C3D9&size=370%2C251&fbid=798866360151142); الشيخ الوالد الأمير" التغبي قناة, "بالأردن الضاري حارث الراحل الشيخ فضيلة بوفاة التعزية يقدم ثاني آل خليفة بن حمد," *YouTube.com*, uploaded March 19, 2015. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_GKIdual8qk)

[76] U.S. Department of the Treasury, Press Release, "Treasury Designates Twelve Foreign Terrorist Fighter Facilitators," September 24, 2014. (http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2651.aspx); U.N. Security Council Committee Pursuant to Resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) Concerning Al-Qaida and Associated Individuals and Entities, "QDi.346. 'Abd al-Malik Muhammad Yusuf 'Uthman 'Abd al-Salam," January 23, 2015. (http://www.un.org/sc/committees/1267/NSQDi346E.shtml)

[77] U.S. Department of the Treasury, Press Release, "Treasury Designates Twelve Foreign Terrorist Fighter Facilitators," September 24, 2014. (http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2651.aspx)

[78] Andrew Gilligan, "Minister's family ties to terror," *The Guardian* (U.K.), November 1, 2014. (http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/qatar/11203140/Ministers-family-ties-to-terror.html); "تفاصيل عن علاقة الموقوف المولوي باعترافات أردني أبعدته طهران إلى دمشق ومنها أبعد إلى لبنانب: 3 قتلى وأكثر من 20 جريحاً في طرابلس وميقاتي ضد تخطية المخلين وأسلوب الأمن العام," *Al Hayat* (UK), March 14, 2012; (http://bit.ly/1w2raoj)

threats, forcing Lebanon to release Attiyah from their custody shortly after his detention in 2012.[79] Attiyah was back home in Qatar by the time of his in absentia conviction and has since been granted a lifetime achievement award by the Qatar Olympic Committee, which is chaired by the country's ruler, Emir Tamim.[80]

Abdulsalam appears to be the son of a prominent jihadist leader in Syria nicknamed Abu Abdulaziz al-Qatari who was killed in early 2014.[81] According to sympathetic biographies, Al-Qatari was a former al Qaeda official in Iraq and Syria who later served until his death as the founding leader of Jund al-Aqsa in Syria,[82] a militia closely aligned with al Qaeda that has been designated as a terrorist group by the U.K. but not yet by the U.S. for attacks on civilian targets.[83] Jund al-Aqsa reportedly received considerable funding from Gulf sources,[84] and biographies of al-Qatari claim that he also had sent material support to Iraqi jihadists from Qatari territory.[85]

Jund al-Aqsa is also part of the Army of Conquest battlefield alliance that includes al Qaeda in Syria. My colleague Thomas Joscelyn alleges that the Jund is "an al Qaeda front group," pointing out that two more of its leaders were also senior veterans of al Qaeda, including one who was a senior official in the Khorasan Group that U.S. officials have said is planning attacks against the American homeland.[86] The U.S. should impose

---

[79] Andrew Gilligan, "Minister's family ties to terror," *The Guardian* (U.K.), November 1, 2014. (http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/qatar/11203140/Ministers-family-ties-to-terror.html)
"قطر والإمارات والبحرين دعت مواطنيها لعدم السفر للبنان... والموجودين فيه للرحيل فورا," *Al Rai Media* (Al Kuwait), May 20, 2012; (http://www.alraimedia.com/Articles.aspx?id=333916) & "Charbel: UAE, Qatar, Bahrain's Travel Restrictions Are Precautionary Measures," *Naharnet* (Lebanon), May 20, 2012. (http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/40840)

[80] "شربل : المولوي أطلق لأن تهمته بسيطة وأدعو الى حال طوارئ سياسية," *Al Hayat* (U.K.), May 23, 2012; (http://goo.gl/PbIPxt) & "العطية ومعتز برشم يتقاسمان جائزة رياضي الموسم," *Al Kass* (Qatar), May 14, 2013; (http://www.alkass.net/news_details.aspx?news_id=53548)

[81] Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "Muhajireen Battalions in Syria (Part IV)," *Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi Website*, August 19, 2014; (http://www.aymennjawad.org/15207/muhajireen-battalions-in-syria-part-iv)

[82] "جريمة مقتل القائد أبو عبدالعزيز القطري - جبهة ثوار سوريا من الداخل (الحلقة 2)" *YouTube*, uploaded March 5, 2015. (https://youtu.be/n5GdmJMj1GI?t=1m22s); "شهادة القائد أبو جهاد الشيشاني/ مقطع ابو عبد العزيز القطري," *Palestine Youth website (archived)*, March 26, 2014. (https://web.archive.org/web/20141113072416/http://www.shabab.ps/vb/archive/index.php/t-145507.html)

[83] Holly Watt, "Terror on Twitter: How Banned Terror Organisations Are Making a Mockery of the Law on Social Media," *The Telegraph* (U.K.), January 23, 2015. (http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/11363891/Terror-on-Twitter-How-banned-terror-organisations-are-making-a-mockery-of-the-law-on-social-media.html); "21 Jan 2015: Column 319," *Daily Hansard* (U.K.), Janaury 21, 2015. (http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmhansrd/cm150121/debtext/150121-0004.htm)

[84] Tam Hussein, "Why Did Jund Al-Aqsa Join Nusra Front in Taking Out 'Moderate' Rebels in Idlib?" *The Huffington Post*, June 11, 2014. (http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/tam-hussein/nusra-front_b_6112790.html)

[85] "جريمة مقتل القائد أبو عبدالعزيز القطري - جبهة ثوار سوريا من الداخل (الحلقة 2)" *YouTube*, uploaded March 5, 2015; (https://youtu.be/n5GdmJMj1GI?t=1m22s) & Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, "Muhajireen Battalions in Syria (Part IV)," *Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi Website*, August 19, 2014; (http://www.aymennjawad.org/15207/muhajireen-battalions-in-syria-part-iv)

[86] Thomas Joscelyn, "An al Qaeda Front Group in Syria," *The Long War Journal*, May 2, 2015. (http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/05/an-al-qaeda-front-group-in-syria.php); Thomas Joscelyn,

sanctions on Jund al-Aqsa, on groups such as the Army of Conquest that heavily feature al Qaeda, and on other militias close to al Qaeda such as Ahrar al-Sham that have had its operatives in their upper ranks since being founded.[87]

The U.S. administration has cited two puzzling incidents as supposed proof Qatar has moved against terror finance. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, U.S. and Qatari officials "said the emirate has expelled a Jordanian associate of Mr. Nuaymi and shut a social-media website the U.S. believed was used in raising money for al-Qaeda-linked militants in Syria."[88] Since then, the State Department's Country Reports on Terrorism released in June indicated that Qatar's "steps to stem the flow of funds from Qatar to violent extremist groups and individuals" included "shut[ing] down the Madad Ahl al-Sham online fundraising campaign that was suspected of sending funds to violent extremist elements in Syria" and "deport[ing] a Jordanian terrorist financier resident in Doha who had been employed by a Qatari charity."[89]

But upon closer consideration, both of these steps seem disappointing and half-hearted in nature. If Qatar were truly serious about tackling terror finance and these allegations are true, Doha should have arrested Nu'aymi's Jordanian associate and preventing him from leaving the country. If Madad Ahl al-Sham was indeed a terror finance concern, then it is worrisome that none of its fundraising captains, officers, or endorsers appear to have been subject to visible court proceedings in Qatar.

Separately, the *Christian Science Monitor* reported that in December "Qatari authorities briefly detained two Hamas financiers under suspicion of 'illegal monetary and economic transactions'."[90] Given that Hamas is a U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organization, Qatar's decision to release these individuals is worrying, as are reports that Hamas has real estate holdings in Qatar and other Gulf nations.[91]

"Another al Qaeda Veteran Reportedly Killed While Leading Jund al Aqsa in Syria," *The Long War Journal*, May 27, 2015. (http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/05/another-al-qaeda-veteran-reportedly-killed-while-leading-jund-al-aqsa-in-syria.php)

[87] Thomas Joscelyn, "Syrian Rebel Leader Was bin Laden's Courier, Now Zawahiri's Representative," *The Long War Journal*, December 17, 2013. (http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/12/aq_courier_rebel_leader_zawahiri.php)

[88] Jay Solomon & Nour Malas, "Qatar's Ties to Militants Strain Alliance," *The Wall Street Journal*, February 23, 2015. (http://www.wsj.com/articles/qatars-ties-to-militants-strain-alliance-1424748601)

[89] U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2014," June 2015, page 206. (http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/239631.pdf)

[90] Taylor Luck, "In Hamas Leader's Exit from Qatar, Signs of Growing Saudi-Egyptian Influence," *The Christian Science Monitor*, January 26, 2015. (http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2015/0126/In-Hamas-leader-s-exit-from-Qatar-signs-of-growing-Saudi-Egyptian-influence)

[91] Jonathan Schanzer, "Hamas's Benefactors: A Network of Terror," *Testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs*, September 9, 2014. (http://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA13/20140909/102629/HHRG-113-FA13-Wstate-SchanzerJ-20140909.pdf); "דולר מיליארד 3-2 שווה מרזוק-אבו סגנו, דולר מיליארד 5-2 שווה משעל אלד'ה; חמאס של הטייקונים," *Globes* (Israel), July 24, 2014. (http://www.globes.co.il/news/article.aspx?did=1000957870); "The Corruption at The Head of Hamas," *Globes* (Israel), July 20, 2014. (http://www.jpost.com/Business/Business-Features/The-corruption-at-the-head-of-Hamas-363550)

Two other individuals now on U.S. and U.N. terror finance lists for allegedly funding al Qaeda were detained in the fall for several hours by Kuwaiti authorities but then let go shortly thereafter.[92] According to press and social media reports, the men, Shafi and Hajjaj al-Ajmi, also relied on fundraising representatives in Qatar, but there is no sign that those associates have been punished by authorities in Doha. Qatar's Interior Ministry, which is run by the prime minister and the lead agency for tackling suspected terror finance, asked one of these individuals to preach to its employees this past month for Ramadan.[93]

Another Kuwaiti national who is subject to U.N. terror finance sanctions, Hamid Abdullah al-Ali, was invited to deliver a sermon from the Qatari state-controlled Grand Mosque, where he allegedly spoke about jihad in Syria[94]. He was supposed to be subject to a U.N. travel ban. It is worth noting that these sanctions and the associated ban were blocked from late 2006 until early 2008 in large part because Qatari diplomats opposed the sanctions at the U.N. Security Council upon request from Kuwait City.

It is important to recognize that these countries provide a safe haven not just to terror financiers, but also to terrorist operatives themselves.

Just last week, Israel's internal security service, the Shin Bet, announced the arrest of 40 individuals from a West Bank Hamas cell that was "preparing the groundwork for terrorist activity."[95] Israeli officials asserted that a top Hamas official in Qatar, Husam Badran, organized the cell and was involved in its recruitment and financing with hundreds of thousands of dollars, partially obtained through gold smuggling.[96]

This is not the first time Israeli security officials have made such accusations. In 2013, Israel's military announced that Badran was the "primary contact person abroad" for a disrupted cell in the West Bank that was "planning to kidnap an IDF soldier" and was "receiving guidance and funding" from operatives abroad.[97] Two other Hamas officials based in Qatar, Talal Shareem and Hesham Hejazi, were accused by Israel of directing

---

[92] "Kuwait Detains Muslim Cleric Suspected of Funding Militants: Security Source," *Reuters*, August 20, 2014. (http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/20/us-syria-crisis-kuwait-cleric-idUSKBN0GK25Q20140820)

[93] "رمضان لشهر محاضرات تنظم الجنائية والمعلومات الأدلة ادارة" *Qatar Interior Ministry website,* June 17, 2015; (http://www.moi.gov.qa/site/arabic/news/2015/06/17/34700.html) & Andrew Gilligan, "The 'Club Med for Terrorists'," *The Telegraph*, September 27, 2014. (http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/qatar/11125897/The-Club-Med-for-terrorists.html)

[94] Andrew Gilligan, "The 'Club Med for Terrorists'," *The Telegraph* (U.K.), September 27, 2014. (http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/qatar/11125897/The-Club-Med-for-terrorists.html)

[95] Dan Williams, "Israel Says Arrests Dozens of Hamas Militants in West Bank," *Reuters*, July 1, 2015. (http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/07/01/us-israel-palestinians-hamas-idUSKCN0PB4L620150701)

[96] Yoav Zitun, "Shin Bet Arrests 40 Hamas Members in Nablus," *Ynetnews* (Israel), July 1, 2015. (http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4674956,00.html)

[97] "Hamas Terrorist Assets Revealed in Hebron," *Israel Defense Forces*, accessed July 6, 2015. (http://www.idf.il/1153-18193-en/Dover.aspx)

terror cells in the West Bank in 2013 and 2014.[98] Additionally, Hamas's Khaled Meshal, who still appears to be resident in Qatar, and Salah Arouri, based in Turkey, were both permitted to visit Kuwait City to meet with the Amir Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah at his palace last July.[99]

In early 2014, the Amir of Kuwait appointed Nayef al-Ajmi, who had been involved in pro-jihadist fundraising, to run the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Endowments, key posts for the control of terror finance.[100] Subsequently, then-Under Secretary Cohen called out Kuwait for this appointment calling it "a step in the wrong direction" and stating that one of the fundraising networks claiming an endorsement from al-Ajmi was a major funder of al Qaeda in Syria.[101] Several weeks after the Kuwaiti cabinet publicly voiced its resentment at the charges in his defense, Nayef al-Ajmi stepped down.[102]

Thus, you can see why Kuwait and Qatar have not yet shown themselves genuinely willing to tackle terror finance from private individuals inside their territory. They have also embraced senior operatives of Hamas, providing safe haven to a terrorist group. There are laws on the books that may offer a model for empowering the Congress and convincing the executive branch to punish states which provide such a safe haven, and the conclusion of this testimony will offer some options for doing so.

While Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have taken some steps to tackle terrorism and terror finance in recent years, there are still some areas in which their actions fall short. Riyadh joined Washington in imposing sanctions this April against the rebranded Pakistan office of the Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS), the local branch of a Kuwaiti charity under U.S. terror finance sanctions on charges of funding al Qaeda. Yet Saudi Arabia has yet to sanction RIHS as a whole.[103]

---

[98] "Security Forces Capture Hamas Terrorist," *Israel Defense Forces*, March 6, 2013. (http://www.idf.il/1283-19091-EN/Dover.aspx); Yonah Jeremy Bob, "Shin Bet Busts Palestinian Footballer For Meeting With Hamas Terrorist In Qatar," *The Jerusalem Post* (Israel), June 11, 2014. (http://www.jpost.com/Sports/Palestinian-soccer-player-admits-to-meeting-with-Hamas-operative-while-in-Qatar-356003); "ميعدو صفقة تبادل حركة حماس و إسرائيل," *Wafa* (Palestinian Territories), January 10, 2011. (http://www.wafainfo.ps/atemplate.aspx?id=9155)

[99] @DavidAWeinberg, "Mtg btwn #Kuwait Amir & Khaled Mashal was also attended by Hamas's Salah Al-Arouri (2nd left): http://www.kuna.net.kw/ViewPics.aspx?id=1244505 ..." *Twitter*, July 21, 2014. (https://twitter.com/DavidAWeinberg/status/491319971570401280)

[100] David Andrew Weinberg, "New Kuwaiti Justice Minister Has Deep Extremist Ties," *The National Interest*, January 16, 2014. (http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/new-kuwaiti-justice-minister-has-deep-extremist-ties-9719)

[101] David Cohen, "Confronting New Threats In Terrorist Financing," Remarks before The Center For A New American Security, March 4, 2014. (http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/jl2308.aspx)

[102] Karen DeYoung, "Kuwait Official Quits Post; U.S. Accused Him Of Funding Extremist Fighters In Syria," *The Washington Post*, May 12, 2014. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/kuwait-official-quits-post-us-accused-him-of-funding-extremist-fighters-in-syria/2014/05/12/31a8df86-d9fb-11e3-8009-71de85b9c527_story.html)

[103] David Andrew Weinberg, "Saudi Steps on Terror Finance Fall Short," *FDD Policy Brief*, April 16, 2014. (http://www.defenddemocracy.org/media-hit/david-weinberg-saudi-steps-on-terror-finance-fall-short/)

Notably, both Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates issued formal lists of banned terrorist organizations for the first time in 2014. However, many observers noted that the credibility of these lists was undercut by a decision to include groups linked to the Muslim Brotherhood (and even a European nonviolent democracy-promotion group in the case of the U.A.E.).[104] It is also worth noting that these lists bizarrely excluded Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), and other violent terrorist groups.

Shortly after the U.A.E. joined Saudi Arabia in issuing its list, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine claimed credit for the gruesome killing of worshippers in a West Jerusalem synagogue with a gun and a meat cleaver, yet neither Abu Dhabi nor Riyadh added the group to their lists.

Incitement, Hatred, and State-Sanctioned Intolerance

As recently as last week, the Qatari network Al Jazeera was still explicitly lionizing the perpetrators of that West Jerusalem terrorist attack as martyrs.[105] The network, which still largely reflects Qatar's political agenda, has also provided unfettered airtime to terrorist commanders over the last twelve months.[106] During the 2014 Gaza war, the state news wires of Bahrain and Qatar both included known terrorists in with civilians as part of their tally of "martyrs" among the Palestinians.[107]

This is just one example of the intolerable incitement that continues to emanate from our allies in the Gulf. Incitement from religious sources is particularly extensive, whereby firebrand Islamic preachers spout hatred toward other religions yet receive privileges

---

[104] David Andrew Weinberg, "UAE's Zealous New Terror List," *FDD Policy Brief*, November 17, 2014. (http://www.defenddemocracy.org/media-hit/david-weinberg-uaes-zealous-new-terror-list/)

[105] "القدس شهيد منزل من بثأر الاحتلال," *Al Jazeera* (Qatar), July 1, 2015. (http://www.aljazeera.net/news/reportsandinterviews/2015/7/1/القدس-جمل-أبو-الشهيد-منزل-يغلق-الاحتلال); "القدس من شهيد زوجة ترحيل يعتزم الاحتلال" *Al Jazeera* (Qatar), June 22, 2015. (http://www.aljazeera.net/news/humanrights/2015/6/22/القدس-من-شهيد-زوجة-ترحيل-يعتزم-الاحتلال)

[106] David Andrew Weinberg, Oren Adaki, & Grant Rumley, "The Problem with Al Jazeera," *The National Interest*, September 10, 2014. (http://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-problem-al-jazeera-11239)

[107] @DavidAWeinberg, "Like #Qatar's #AlJazeera, #Bahrain's state news wire is lumping known terrorists into its count of #Gaza "martyrs": http://www.bna.bh/portal/en/news/627718 ..." *Twitter*, July 31, 2014. (https://twitter.com/DavidAWeinberg/status/494902618380984320); "Palestinian Death Toll: 1377 Martyrs, 7700 Wounded," *Bahrain News Agency* (Bahrain), July 31, 2014. (http://www.bna.bh/portal/en/news/627718); @DavidAWeinberg, "Like #AlJazeera, #Qatar's state news wire calls known terrorists "martyrs" and "victims" in its #Gaza death count: http://www.qna.org.qa/News/14073108140011/%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B9-%D8%B9%D8%AF%D8%AF-%D8%B6%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A-%D8%A5%D9%84%D9%89-1363-%D8%B4%D9%87%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A7-%D9%887680-%D8%AC%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%AD%D8%A7 ..." *Twitter*, July 31, 2014. (https://twitter.com/DavidAWeinberg/status/494907859411300352); @QatarNewsAgency, "ضحايا عدد ارتفاع جريحا 7680و شهيدا 1363 إلى الإسرائيلي العدوان http://bit.ly/1n5Jo1V #qatar," *Twitter*, July 31, 2014. (https://twitter.com/QatarNewsAgency/status/494759524721373184)

from the state. This issue is especially problematic in Saudi Arabia and Qatar, but it is also an ongoing challenge in Dubai, Kuwait, and Bahrain.

As recently last week, the Qatari network Al Jazeera was still explicitly lionizing the perpetrators of that West Jerusalem terrorist attack as martyrs.[108] The network, which still largely reflects Qatar's political agenda, has also provided unfettered airtime to terrorist commanders over the last twelve months.[109] During the 2014 Gaza war, the state news wires of Bahrain and Qatar both lumped known terrorists in with civilians as part of their tally of "martyrs" among the Palestinians.[110]

Take, for example, the case of Saad bin Ateeq al-Ateeq. Ateeq delivered a sermon from Qatar's state-controlled Grand Mosque earlier this year beseeching Allah to "destroy" the Jews, Christians, Alawites, and Shi'a.[111] This was the sixth time Ateeq had been invited back to the Grand Mosque since making similar remarks in 2013, so the Qataris presumably knew what they were likely to get.[112]

Depending upon how one counts titles, Ateeq has been serving as an official at up to three different Saudi ministries: as the preacher in residence at the academy for Saudi Arabia's National Guard, as an Islamic supervisor at the regional education department in Riyadh, and as chairman of a quasi-governmental community religious board overseen by the Saudi Ministry of Islamic Affairs.[113] Since calling for the destruction of adherents to other religions, Ateeq has been invited to speak throughout the kingdom, at a festival sponsored by the ruler in Dubai, to officers of the Qatari Navy and Qatari airport security, and to officers under the supervision of Saudi Arabia's Interior Ministry.[114]

Saudi Arabia's new King Salman is moving the country in a more religiously conservative direction. He fired an official who had tried to rein in the austere religious police, appointed a preacher to advise his court whose way of condemning ISIL is to call it "more infidel than Jews and Christians," and dismissed only one member of the state's highest religious board, who was considered a relative reformer.[115]

When King Salman skipped the Camp David summit, he instead met with officials from the state-appointed religious board, whose members have made a range of hateful statements over the years. These statements reportedly include calling for socially liberal

---

[111] Jamie Dettmer, "An American Ally's Grand Mosque of Hate," *Daily Beast*, February 19, 2015 (http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/02/19/qatar-s-a-us-ally-against-isis-so-why-s-it-cheerleading-the-bad-guys.html)

[112] David Andrew Weinberg, "Qatar Needs Tough Love," *Politico*, February 23, 2015 (http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/02/qatar-emir-tamim-isil-115425.html#.VZxAj_n4_IU)

[113] Oren Adaki & David Andrew Weinberg, "Preaching Hate and Sectarianism in the Gulf," *Foreign Policy*, May 5, 2015 (http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/05/05/preaching-hate-and-sectarianism-in-the-gulf-saudi-arabia-qatar-uae-saad-bin-ateeq-al-ateeq/)

[114] Oren Adaki & David Andrew Weinberg, "Preaching Hate and Sectarianism in the Gulf," *Foreign Policy*, May 5, 2015 (http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/05/05/preaching-hate-and-sectarianism-in-the-gulf-saudi-arabia-qatar-uae-saad-bin-ateeq-al-ateeq/)

[115] David Andrew Weinberg, "King Salman's Audacious Power Play," *National Interest*, February 2, 2015 (http://nationalinterest.org/feature/saudi-king-salmans-audacious-power-play-12170)

Muslim media owners to be executed, encouraging any young Saudi capable of entering Iraq while U.S. troops were there to join the fight, authorizing slavery, supporting anti-miscegenation laws, hate speech against LGBT individuals, urging men and women to observe sexual segregation even on the Internet, and calling Jewish people perfidious and deceptive.[116] Also retained by Salman is the country's Grand Mufti, who has said that all churches on the Arabian Peninsula should be demolished and authorized child-marriage for girls as young as age ten.[117]

When recent Saudi textbooks call for executing gay people and anyone who converts away from Islam, when the Saudi religious affairs minister says that Islam is at "war," under attack from a "dangerous triad" of Christians, Jews, and *mushrikeen* (a common derogatory term in the kingdom for Shi'ite Muslims that translates loosely to "polytheists"),[118] it is unsurprising if other clerics who receive privileges from the state presume they can get away with voicing hatred of other religions.[119] Many such clerics regularly condemn Shi'a as apostates, Safavids, or *rawafidh* (or "rejectionists") for refusing to accept the Salafist Sunni version of Islam.[120]

Indeed, if you look at the language used by ISIL when claiming credit for bombings perpetrated by Saudi nationals against Shi'ite worshippers in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait these last two months, the statements have specifically used words like *mushrikeen* (polytheists) and *rafidha* (rejectionism, typically referring to Shi'a).[121]

---

[116] David Andrew Weinberg, "The King of Saudi Arabia Skipped Obama's Camp David Summit — To Meet With Some Of His Country's Most Extreme Clerics," *The Business Insider*, May 13, 2015. (http://www.businessinsider.com/the-king-of-saudi-arabia-skipped-obamas-camp-david-summit--to-meet-with-some-of-his-countrys-most-extreme-clerics-2015-5)

[117] Elizabeth Broomhall, "Destroy All Churches In Gulf, Says Saudi Grand Mufti," *Arabian Business* (United Arab Emirates), March 15, 2012. (http://www.arabianbusiness.com/destroy-all-churches-in-gulf-says-saudi-grand-mufti-450002.html); "Saudi Mufti Okays Marriage for 10 Year Old Girls," *Al Arabiya* (Saudi Arabia), November 2, 2010. (http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2009/01/15/64297.html)

[118] Ahmed Ghalab, " وزير الشؤون الإسلامية: المهددات ليست من «الإخوان» وحدهم بل هناك تغريبيون وحركيون" *Al-Hayat*, April 9, 2014 (http://goo.gl/qpTHRn)

[119] Oren Adaki, "Highlighting Hatred in Saudi Textbooks," *FDD Policy Brief*, March 27, 2014. (http://www.defenddemocracy.org/media-hit/oren-adaki-highlighting-hatred-in-saudi-textbooks/); "وزير الشؤون الإسلامية: المهددات ليست من «الإخوان» وحدهم بل هناك تغريبيون وحركيون," *Al Hayat* (London), April 9, 2014. (http://alhayat.com/Articles/1686765/وزير-الشؤون-الإسلامية--المهددات-ليست-من--الإخوان-وحدهم-بل-هناك-تغريبيون-وحركيون)

[120] Sami Aboudi, "Bombing Exposes Saudi Failure To Curb Sectarian Strains," *Reuters*, May 26, 2015. (http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/05/26/us-gulf-security-sectarianism-analysis-idUSKBN0OB1GL20150526)

[121] See, for example, "بالسعودية-علي-الإمام-مسجد-تفجير-يتبنى-الدولة-تنظيم," *Arabi 21* (Saudi Arabia), May 22, 2015. (http://arabi21.com/story/832835/%D8%AA%D9%86%D8%B8%D9%8A%D9%85-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AF%D9%88%D9%84%D8%A9-%D9%8A%D8%AA%D8%A8%D9%86%D9%89-%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%AC%D9%8A%D8%B1-%D9%85%D8%B3%D8%AC%D8%AF-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D9%85%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%B9%D9%84%D9%8A-%D8%A8%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D8%B9%D9%88%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%A9); Toby Matthiesen, "Sectarianism After The Saudi Mosque Bombings," *The Washington Post*, May 29, 2015. (http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/05/29/sectarianism-after-the-saudi-mosque-bombings/); "'الروافض وخصوصاً الاسلام أعداء" من الجزيرة شبه "تطهير" الى تدعو "نجد ولاية'"," *An-Nahar TV* (Lebanon), May 30, 2015.

Last month, Emir Tamim of Qatar personally hugged, kissed, and physically embraced some of the most hateful clerics in the Gulf.[122] He kissed on the head Yusuf al-Qaradawi, who once called in a public sermon for Allah to "take the Jews, the treacherous aggressors" and "count their numbers, and kill them, down to the very last one."[123] Emir Tamim embraced and exchanged kisses with Aidh al-Qarni, who has called the fighters of Hamas holy warriors and maligned Jews as "the brothers of apes and pigs," as well as Mohammed al-Arifi, who has been accused of calling Shi'a "non-believers who must be killed."[124] The Emir held hands with Nasser al-Omar, who reportedly has signed a petition calling the "Shi[ite] sect an evil among the sects of the Islamic nation, and the greatest enemy and deceivers of the Sunni people."[125]

In Dubai, a government department invited residents to a 2015 Ramadan forum that hosted two extremist clerics this past weekend who deny and mock the truth of how al Qaeda used passenger aircraft to perpetrate the attacks of 9/11.[126] This is particularly worrisome given that Dubai has the world's busiest airport in terms of international travelers.

Last year, a Quranic festival sponsored by the ruler of Dubai hosted Saad al-Ateeq, the aforementioned Saudi preacher who beseeched Allah to "destroy" adherents of other religions.[127] This year, that same festival featured an opening lecturer named Saleh al-Moghamsy, who notoriously has said that Osama bin Laden died with more dignity and honor than any "infidels" such as "Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, apostates, and atheists."[128]

(www.annahar.com/article/240957-الروافض-وخصوصا-الاسلام-أعداء-من-الجزيرة-شبه-تطهير-الى-تدعو-نجد-ولاية)

[122] David Weinberg, "Qatar's Rulers Are Still Surrounding Themselves with Some of the Most Hateful Clerics in the Persian Gulf," *The Business Insider*, July 1, 2015. (http://www.businessinsider.com/qatars-rulers-associated-with-hateful-persian-gulf-clerics-2015-7)

[123] "Sheikh Yousef Al-Qaradhawi on Al-Jazeera Incites Against Jews, Arab Regimes, and the U.S.; Calls on Muslims to Boycott Starbucks and Others; Says 'Oh Allah, Take This Oppressive, Jewish, Zionist Band of People... And Kill Them, Down to the Very Last One'" *Middle East Media Research Institute*, January 12, 2009. (http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/0/3006.htm)

[124] David Weinberg, "Qatar's Rulers Are Still Surrounding Themselves with Some of the Most Hateful Clerics in the Persian Gulf," *The Business Insider*, July 1, 2015. (http://www.businessinsider.com/qatars-rulers-associated-with-hateful-persian-gulf-clerics-2015-7)

[125] "Denied Dignity: Systematic Discrimination and Hostility Toward Saudi Shia Citizens," *Human Rights Watch*, September 2009, pages 12-13. (http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/saudi0909web.pdf)

[126] Shane Dixon Kavanaugh, "Dubai Provides Pulpit For Muslim Clerics Who Mock 9/11," *Vocativ*, July 2, 2015. (http://www.vocativ.com/news/207818/dubai-provides-pulpit-for-muslim-clerics-who-mock-911/); Omar Adbelkafi, "The Internet," *MEMRI TV*, January 18, 2015. (http://www.memritv.org/player/largePlayer.php?&width=571&height=463&skin=memri_red&autoplay=1&clip_image=http://www.memritv.org/pic_clip/clip_intro_571_432.jpg&clipid=4782)

[127] Oren Adaki & David Andrew Weinberg, "Preaching Hate and Sectarianism in the Gulf," *Foreign Policy*, May 5, 2015. (http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/05/05/preaching-hate-and-sectarianism-in-the-gulf-saudi-arabia-qatar-uae-saad-bin-ateeq-al-ateeq/)

[128] David Andrew Weinberg & Oren Adaki, "Meet Saudi Arabia's Biggest (and Most Controversial) Twitter Star," *The National Interest*, June 22, 2015. (http://nationalinterest.org/feature/meet-saudi-arabias-biggest-most-controversial-twitter-star-13158); "جدول فعاليات الدورة 1," *Government of Dubai Website*, accessed July 6, 2015. (http://www.quran.gov.ae/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=207&Itemid=550)

Kuwait and Bahrain have both allowed Moghamsy to speak at their state-controlled Grand Mosques in recent years.[129] His lecture in Kuwait this April was sponsored by the Amir Sabah al-Ahmed al-Sabah himself, and Moghamsy was permitted to use the Amir's honor hall at the airport.[130] Kuwait's government also hosted the Saudi preacher Saleh bin Humeid as a guest speaker,[131] both before and after he gave a sermon brimming with hate speech against LGBT individuals.[132] Both times in Kuwait he was honored with gifts.[133] Amir Sabah's choice for Minister of Islamic Affairs and Endowments in early 2014 gave a sermon on Kuwaiti state TV calling Jews "apes and pigs" and "the scum of mankind."[134] This March, Kuwaiti state TV aired a sermon invoking the noted forgery Protocols of the Elders of Zion and proclaiming that Allah does not like the Jewish people because they spread corruption throughout the land.[135]

News reports that Kuwait may now be moving to ban Salafist media outlets from Saudi Arabia that incite hatred against Shi'ite Muslims is a positive step in the right direction, and American officials should privately encourage Riyadh to match Kuwait's example.[136]

In Bahrain, Saleh al-Moghamsy was honored by a lunch with members of the royal family, including a deputy prime minister and the head of the country's religious establishment.[137] In little more than the last two years, Bahrain's deputy prime minister, justice minister, and the commander-in-chief of the defense forces have all received a hardline Bahraini preacher named Jassim al-Saeedi (twice in the case of the BDF's

---

[129] David Andrew Weinberg & Oren Adaki, "Meet Saudi Arabia's Biggest (and Most Controversial) Twitter Star," *The National Interest*, June 22, 2015. (http://nationalinterest.org/feature/meet-saudi-arabias-biggest-most-controversial-twitter-star-13158)

[130] "فعاليات جائزة الكويت الدولية," *Kuwait International Prize of the Holy Quran* (Kuwait), accessed July 6, 2015. (http://www.kuwaitprize.org/?p=875); @SalehAlmoghamsy, "صور من استقبال فضيلة الشيخ #في قاعة التشريفات الأميرية بمطار الكويت الدولي صالح_المغامسي," *Twitter*, April 5, 2015. (https://twitter.com/SalehAlmoghamsy/status/584726846513680385)

[131] @thaqafa, "وخطيب إمام حميد_بن_صالح# .د الشيخ فضيلة الإسلامية_الثقافة_إدارة# وضيف الكويت_دولة#ضيف زيارة ترقبوا #الحرام_المسجد," *Twitter*, December 13, 2014. (https://twitter.com/thaqafa/status/543815271119454210); @thaqafa, "تابعوها حميد بن صالح .د الشيخ فضيلة الحرام المسجد إمام ضيفنا محاضرة وتنطلق الله بإذن دقائق http://www.islam.gov.kw/thaqafa," *Twitter*, April 16, 2013. (https://twitter.com/thaqafa/status/324178245463453697)

[132] Oren Adaki & David Andrew Weinberg, "The Sexually Stifled Kingdom," *Washington Blade*, June 26, 2014. (http://www.washingtonblade.com/2014/06/26/sexually-stifled-kingdom/)

[133] "grand_mosque," Instagram, December 19, 2014. (https://instagram.com/p/wygXdhMZqT/)

[134] "Kuwaiti Preacher Sheik Nayef Jaijaj Al-Ajami: Allah Transformed the Jews, the 'Scum of Mankind,' into Apes and Pigs," *The Middle East Media Research Institute*, accessed July 6, 2015. (http://www.thememriblog.org/antisemitism/blog_personal/en/41341.htm)

[135] "Kuwait Friday Sermon: The Jews Spread Corruption, as Described in "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion"," *The Middle East Media Research Institute*, May 29, 2015. (http://www.memritv.org/clip_transcript/en/4964.htm)

[136] "وصال قناة بث توقف الإعلام وزارة," *Al-Watah Newspaper* (Qatar), June 26, 2015. (http://alwatan.kuwait.tt/articledetails.aspx?id=440732); "تقدم الأمير سمو / بالوحدة الفتنة تواجه الكويت ...الدم امتحان الكبير المسجد في المعزين آلاف الأمة مجلس ورئيس العهد وولي," *Alrai Mediagroup*, June 29, 2015. (http://www.alraimedia.com/Articles.aspx?id=602961)

[137] David Andrew Weinberg & Oren Adaki, "Meet Saudi Arabia's Biggest (and Most Controversial) Twitter Star," *The National Interest*, June 22, 2015. (http://nationalinterest.org/feature/meet-saudi-arabias-biggest-most-controversial-twitter-star-13158?page=show)

commander).[138] Saeedi has allegedly preached for Allah to "damn the Jews and Christians and Rafidha [derogatory term referring to Shi'a]," and the meetings took place shortly after a call on his Twitter account for Allah to "destroy the Rafidha and those who are hostile and the Majous [derogatory term for Alawites] and the sons of Jews and the Christians and the sons of apes and pigs."[139] Activists have also alleged that Manama's armed forces republished a Salafist book in February 2015 called *Light of the Sunni Faith and the Darkness of Heresy*, the text of which states that common Shi'ite rituals and beliefs make one an infidel, a polytheist, and a heretic.[140]

Human Rights, Civil Rights, and Justice

The systematic abuse of civil rights and other human rights by Gulf regimes is another essential area where our allies are setting the stage for greater regional instability and thus undermining our own national security.

As former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice explained in her 2005 speech at the American University in Cairo, "for 60 years, my country, the United States, pursued stability at the expense of democracy in this region here in the Middle East – and we achieve neither."[141] This is one of the main lessons we should have drawn from 9/11 as well as from the Arab Spring: reform cannot be postponed indefinitely, and attempts to do so cause greater radicalization and instability down the line.

President Obama seems to understand this, at least on the rhetorical level. In his interview with the *New York Times* ahead of the Camp David summit, he said that "the biggest threat" our Gulf allies face is "going to be from dissatisfaction inside their own countries." He said "that's a tough conversation to have, but it's one that we have to have."[142] And yet just before the summit began, a senior administration official informed *Politico* that political reform is "not what Camp David is about" and "not what Camp David was designed to do."[143]

---

[138] "السعيدي جاسم الدكتور النائب يستقبل مبارك بن محمد الشيخ سمو," *Bahrain News Agency* (Bahrain), May 14, 2013. (http://www.bna.bh/portal/news/560681); "BDF Commander-in-Chief Receives MP Jassim Al Saeedi," *Bahrain News Agency* (Bahrain), May 19, 2013. (http://www.bna.bh/portal/en/news/561440); "Justice Minister Receives MP Dr. Jassim Al Saeedi," *Bahrain News Agency* (Bahrain), May 23, 2013. (http://www.bna.bh/portal/en/news/562117); BDF Commander-in-Chief Receives MP Jassim Al-Saeedi," *Bahrain News Agency* (Bahrain), June 18, 2014. (http://bna.bh/portal/en/news/622732)

[139] "والمجرمين بالمجوس ويصفهم البحرين في طائفة على يدعو السعيدي," *Al Wasat News* (Bahrain), October 19, 2014. (http://www.alwasatnews.com/4425/news/read/929439/1.html); @jassimalsaeedi, "والجماعة السنة ياأهل البحرين# رتويت# والخنازير أبناءالقردة والنصارى اليهود أبناء والمجوس والنواصب الرافضة دمر اللهم خير على تصبحون السعيدي#," *Twitter*, September 8, 2012. (https://twitter.com/jassimalsaeedi/status/244537355187408897)

[140] *Inter alia*, Nabeel Rajab, "Why is Bahrain's Government Afraid of a Tweet?," *Foreign Policy*, April 9, 2015. (http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/04/09/why-is-bahrains-government-afraid-of-a-tweet-nabeel-rajab-arrest/)

[141] Condoleezza Rice, "Remarks at the American University in Cairo," *Remarks before the American University in Cairo*, June 20, 2005. (http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/48328.htm)

[142] Thomas L. Friedman, "Iran and the Obama Doctrine," *The New York Times*, April 5, 2015. (http://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/06/opinion/thomas-friedman-the-obama-doctrine-and-iran-interview.html?_r=0)

[143] Michael Crowley, "The Kings and O," *Politico*, May 11, 2015. (http://www.politico.com/story/2015/05/obama-middle-east-monarchs-117769.html)

This seems to reflect a broader challenge across administrations: that we jettison our principles on matters of civil rights and other human rights when we engage with our allies in the Gulf. Indeed, President Obama declined to bring up human rights when he might with Saudi Arabia's then-King Abdullah last year near Riyadh.[144] He downplayed the importance of discussing human rights on his way to meet the new King Salman in the Saudi capital this January,[145] and there is little indication that he seriously raised the issue at Camp David, despite a positive statement to this effect in the president's post-summit press conference.[146]

Human rights abuses are particularly egregious in Saudi Arabia, which has been undergoing an authoritarian regression since the King Salman took the throne. Power is so centralized now among a handful of individuals, particularly the direct descendants his Sudairy family clique, that the country only half-jokingly being referred to as "Sudairy Arabia."[147] The country is on its way to setting a new record for executions, with over 100 so far this year, and the state is hiring more executioners to help with the beheadings.[148] Death sentences continue to be handed out on such outrageous charges as blasphemous speech, conversion away from Islam, and perceived acts of sorcery.

Yet throughout the GCC region, U.S.-allied monarchies are headed in the wrong direction in terms of domestic inclusivity, moderation, and reform. In fact, they are systematically demolishing the constituencies required to move their countries in a more tolerant direction while continuing to embrace intolerant or repressive hardliners.

Bloggers, civil society groups, women's advocates, proponents of sectarian dialogue, human rights lawyers, and ordinary citizens engaging in free speech have all faced unjust repression at the hands of Gulf governments since the Arab Spring. President Obama has said that "America's support for civil society is a matter of national security," and nowhere is the shortfall in our support for these efforts more transparent and in need of changing than in the Gulf.[149]

Kuwait, a government that historically has shied away from prosecuting prominent financiers of terrorism has shown no such compunction when it comes to sending

---

[144] How to Build a More Sustainable and Mutually Beneficial Relationship with Saudi Arabia: Blueprint for U.S. Government Policy," *Human Rights First*, March 2015. (http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/sites/default/files/Saudi-Arabia-Blueprint-final.pdf)

[145] Ibid.

[146] Jeremy Diamond, "Obama Defends Saudi Relationship: 'Sometimes We Have to Balance'," *CNN*, January 27, 2015. (http://www.cnn.com/2015/01/27/politics/obama-saudi-arabia-zakaria/); @DavidAWeinberg, "POTUS paid lip service to inclusive governance in press conf, though that doesn't mean HRs were raised in the mtgs: youtu.be/3T44g6kXJO8?t=7m55s ...," *Twitter*, May 15, 2015. (https://twitter.com/DavidAWeinberg/status/599264986406461440)

[147] See, for example, Kenneth M. Pollack, "Welcome to Sudayri Arabia," *Brookings*, April 30, 2015. (http://www.brookings.edu/blogs/markaz/posts/2015/04/30-saudia-arabia-salman-yemen-pollack)

[148] "Saudi Arabia is Hiring Executioners as Beheadings Rise," *FoxNews.com*, May 19, 2015.

[149] Barack Obama "Remarks," *Speech before the Clinton Global Initiative*, September 23, 2014. (https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/23/remarks-president-clinton-global-initiative)

ordinary people to prison for years simply for criticizing government policies or the personage of the country's Amir.[150]

In Oman, an atheist blogger who criticized state policies went missing after being summoned by intelligence officials. He reappeared at a mental institution with shackles on his legs.[151]

Qatar, a purported champion of the broader Arab Spring, sentenced a local poet for expressing similar yearnings to a lifetime in prison, although his sentence was subsequently reduced to a mere 15 years.[152]

Beyond treating their own citizens with little dignity, Gulf regimes have a tendency to treat foreigners, particularly foreign laborers, as less than human. Qatar's *kefala* labor system inherently lends itself to egregious abuses of foreign workers, in some cases verging on modern day slavery, but the country's government continues to drag its feet on legislative reforms.[153] Saudi Arabia's *kefala* system is arguably not much better, and reports continue to emerge from the United Arab Emirates of foreign laborers being beaten, harassed, or deported for seeking to express their collective voice.[154]

The last time the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers visited the U.A.E., she concluded that officials handling state security cases "almost systematically violate" defendants' right to due process, utilize secret detention facilities and incommunicado detention, that arrests are "usually carried out without a warrant," and that she received "credible information and evidence that in many cases, detainees are tortured and/or subjected to ill-treatment."[155]

Last week, the U.S. government decided to lift the hold on security assistance to Bahrain's Defense Forces and National Guard that was instituted after the regime's harsh crackdown on protesters that started in 2011.[156] The State Department cited "some meaningful progress on human rights reforms in Bahrain" to justify the move, even

---

[150] Human Rights Watch, "Kuwait: Crackdown on Free Speech," February 3, 2015. (https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/02/03/kuwait-crackdown-free-speech)
[151] "Oman Holding Blogger Muawiyah Alrawahi at Psychiatric Hospital," *Committee to Protect Journalists*, August 5, 2014. (https://cpj.org/2014/08/oman-holding-blogger-muawiyah-alrawahi-at-psychiat.php)
[152] "Qatari Poet Life Sentence Reduced to 15 Years," *BBC*, February 25, 2013 (http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-21572072)
[153] "Qatar 'Kafala' Labour Reforms Face Fresh Delay," *AFP*, June 23, 2015. (http://sports.yahoo.com/news/qatar-kafala-reforms-face-fresh-delay-000217060--sow.html)
[154] David Batty, "Migrants Building UAE Cultural Hub 'Risk Abuse if They Complain'," *The Guardian*, February 10, 2015 (http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/feb/10/migrants-united-arab-emirates-human-rights-watch)
[155] United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Preliminary Observations on the Official Visit to the United Arab Emirates by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers (28 January-5 February 2014)," February 5, 2014. (http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14223&LangID=E)
[156] State Department spokesperson, "Press Statement: Lifting Holds on Security Assistance to the Government of Bahrain," June 29, 2015. (http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2015/06/244478.htm

though four days earlier a senior U.S. official admitted Manama "has focused much of its energy on prosecuting peaceful critics."[157] While the State Department's announcement praised the "recent release" of some prisoners, the evidence in this regard – as in other regards on the Bahraini file – is disappointing at best.[158]

Last month, Manama released from prison Ibrahim Sharif, a top Sunni member of the country's political opposition. Sharif had been arrested in 2011 and already served most of his five-year sentence.[159] But this positive gesture came just days after a severe step in the wrong direction, when the leader of the country's mainstream opposition, Shi'ite cleric Ali Salman, was sentenced to four years in jail.[160] Amnesty International considers Salman a prisoner of conscience, calling his conviction "an affront to freedom" as he was sentenced "solely for peacefully expressing his opinion."[161]

One day before the State Department's announcement, a court in Bahrain sentenced opposition politician Fadhel Abbas to five years in prison for a statement and tweets opposing the war in Yemen.[162] One day after the U.S. announcement, Salman's deputy Khalil Marzooq was unavailable for comment because Bahrain's Interior Ministry summoned him for statements he had expressed at a recent public meeting, reportedly charging him with insulting the interior minister.[163] Two days after the U.S. decision, another prominent member of the opposition who served as president of the Manama Municipal Council for eight years, Majeed Milad, was allegedly detained by authorities and facing charges "related to his peaceful political activism and for expression of political opinion."[164]

Human rights abuses in the GCC are important to address now because otherwise the risk of instability in this area may get worse, not better over time.

---

[157] Tom Malinowski, "Briefing on the 2014 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices," *U.S. Department of State*, June 25, 2015. (http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2015/06/244368.htm)
[158] State Department spokesperson, "Press Statement: Lifting Holds on Security Assistance to the Government of Bahrain," June 29, 2015. (http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2015/06/244478.htm
[159] "Bahrain Frees Sunni Opposition Leader After Four Years," *AFP*, June 20, 2015. (http://news.yahoo.com/bahrain-frees-sunni-opposition-leader-four-years-083010472.html)
[160] "Bahrain Sentences Opposition Leader to Four Years in Jail," *Reuters*, June 16, 2015. (http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/06/17/us-bahrain-trial-idUSKBN0OW0MB20150617)
[161] "Bahrain: Jailing Opposition Leader an Affront to Freedom of Expression," *Amnesty International*, June 16, 2015. (https://www.amnesty.org/latest/news/2015/06/bahrain-jailing-opposition-leader-an-affront-to-freedom-of-expression/)
[162] "Bahrain Jails Politician for Criticising Yemen War," *Khaleej Times* (UAE), June 30, 2015. (http://www.khaleejtimes.com/mobile/inside.asp?xfile=/data/middleeast/2015/June/middleeast_June268.xml&section=middleeast)
[163] Jennifer Fenton, "Bahrain's Human Rights Still Fall Short, Despite Washington Policy Shift," *Al Jazeera America*, June 30, 2015. (http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/6/30/bahrain-human-rights-still-fall-short.html); "US/Bahrain: Bad Move to Resume Arms Sales," *Human Rights Watch*, July 2, 2015. (https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/07/02/us/bahrain-bad-move-resume-arms-sales)
[164] "Bahrain: Opposition Figure to be Held in Remand for Expressing Opinion," *Al Wefaq National Islamic Society*, July 2, 2015. (http://alwefaq.net/cmsen/2015/07/02/44747/)

Virtually all the GCC states rely directly or indirectly on petroleum revenues for their economic wellbeing. But by refusing to reduce skyrocketing domestic energy consumption by eliminating exorbitant subsidies, these countries are generally in for leaner economic times ahead. Without tapping into the power of civil society to channel and address people's desire for better governance, public grievances are set to expand. The continued exclusion of women from much of the labor market means economic growth will struggle to keep pace with the global economy. Further, the looming presence of a demographic bulge means rising numbers of young people will be disaffected and underemployed. And by refusing to tackle incitement, the GCC governments are ensuring that hardliners get to indoctrinate the youths who will be agitating for change and determining its eventual character.

Policy Recommendations

Energy and Economic Relations:

The GCC states are extremely appealing as big-ticket economic partners. Although they do not regularly respect the rule of law, these petroleum-enriched regimes offer highly centralized decision-making and often dispense economic privileges as political favors. Thanks in large part to arms sales, the United Arab Emirates is now America's number one destination for exports anywhere in Africa, the Middle East, or South Asia.[165] Additionally, tiny Qatar has announced plans to invest a whopping $35 billion inside U.S. territory.[166]

But we should not let such immediate economic advantages blind us to the long-term economic and strategic risks of allowing U.S.-Gulf relations to continue on autopilot in the midst of the current turmoil in the region. We should not let the tempting subject of foreign investments overshadow pressing issues like terror finance, religious incitement, and systematic repression that are sowing the ground for greater insecurity and violence down the road.

As the recent Saudi decision to crash the oil market reveals, we should not wait to begin protecting our economy and pocketbooks from sudden disruptions in global oil markets, which are often shaped in large part by the Gulf. We need a national strategy to promote fuel choice and American energy independence, and that requires leadership from the very top, something every president for several decades has promised but none has truly delivered.

With regard to Iran, it would be unrealistic to expect that all of our GCC allies will shun the economic opportunities presented by Tehran after the possible lifting of sanctions.

---

[165] David Andrew Weinberg, "The Gulf Cooperation Council: Deepening Rifts and Emerging Challenges," *Testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa*, May 22, 2014. (http://www.defenddemocracy.org/media-hit/david-weinberg-the-gulf-cooperation-council/)

[166] "Qatar Delegation Begins Visit to the United States," *Qatar News Agency*, January 27, 2015. (http://www.qna.org.qa/en-us/News/15012722180059/-Qatari-Delegation-Begins-Visit-to-the-United-States)

Yet given the longstanding history of Iranian sanctions-busting networks in the Gulf, it will be particularly important for American officials to proactively monitor and punish instances of such illicit activity in the Gulf in the event of an accord and to partner with local authorities when we can be helpful to them.

Regional Reassurance and Iran:

The United States should fight aggression by the IRGC and its proxies regardless of any nuclear agreement. Without doing so, it is impossible to truly reassure our Gulf allies, and it is crucial for ensuring the stability and balance of the region. It is up to Congress and the administration to ensure that if sanctions are lifted, they are not removed from entities that remain involved in supporting terrorism in the region.

The U.S. must maintain a robust dialogue with the GCC states to reach a common understanding, clear guidelines, and explicit commitments as to what will happen in the event Iran cheats on a nuclear agreement, as well as what Washington will do to prevent Iran from breaking out to a nuclear weapon once the terms of a deal begin to sunset. While addressing Saudi Arabia's fears of abandonment, the U.S. must also condemn its threats to develop nuclear weapons and press for confidence-building measures that would decrease the ease of weaponizing such a program.

The U.S. should follow through on the agenda laid out at Camp David for military training, regional coordination, and arms sales, for instance, creating a Foreign Military Sales office to ease the bureaucratic process for authorized Gulf-wide arms sales. We should also find ways of assisting the Saudi-led coalition with measures to reduce the unacceptable humanitarian consequences of the current air and naval embargo aimed at arms flows into Yemen.

Additionally, the U.S. should significantly boost its support to moderate Syrian rebels as a counterweight to violent extremists and the murderous regime, offering air cover where appropriate. At the same time, it is important that we persuade the Gulf states to keep support out of the hands of battlefield formations in the country that heavily feature al Qaeda. If they are not already doing so, the Treasury and State Departments should seek to impose terror sanctions on Jund al-Aqsa, the Army of Conquest, and Ahrar al-Sham. In Iraq, we should allot greater priority to getting the Abadi government to authorize and empower Sunni national guard forces while getting Iranian-backed militias off the front lines and under government control.

Combating Terror and Terror Finance:

America's Gulf allies have been overzealous in applying their new laws against terrorism and cybercrime when it enables them to expand the power of the state against domestic critics. Yet this delegitimizes the fight against real terrorists and exacerbates domestic grievances. We should push our allies to protect dissent and non-violent speech, which likely would require amending these laws outright, and to remove groups from recent terror lists that do not genuinely deserve to be on there. On the other hand, we should

push for the inclusion of U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations that have conspicuously been left off, including Lebanese Hezbollah, Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and the PFLP.

Yet America's terror finance challenge in the Gulf is largely one of underactive not overactive allies, states which refuse to take the sort of lasting steps that would end their status as permissive jurisdictions for the financing of terror. The number one action that American officials can take in this regard is to present a united front to these foreign governments, making clear across all levels of government that this sort of conduct could threaten the U.S.-Gulf alliance. U.S. officials should also communicate that this could undermine these governments' desire to become attractive centers for financial flows, even putting them at risk of sanctions as members of this committee recently warned in a letter to the administration.

Kuwait City and Doha in particular need to be hearing this message not just from Congress or the Treasury Department but also from the White House, State Department, intelligence community, Homeland Security, Commerce, the U.S. Trade Representative, and the Defense Department, particularly CENTCOM. Further, these officials should particularly focus on encouraging Qatar and Kuwait to charge, lock up, and convict those individuals on the U.S. and U.N. lists of designated entities.

Our government needs to innovate a greater range of policy options above and beyond simply complaining when allied governments refuse to take such punitive action against local terror financiers. We should borrow a lesson from our policies for dealing with drug lords, arms dealers, and even sports officials and consider steps like seeking extradition, which would be greatly embarrassing to these Gulf governments. When American officials are truly convinced that a Gulf citizen is a financier of terror and enjoying local legal impunity, we should consider privately threatening to seek extradition, then publicly calling for it, possibly up to the level of using military assets in the region to kill or capture the target as we do with other sorts of high-level terror operatives.

We need to be able to escalate our policy options when dealing with governments that shield terror financiers. At the most basic level, this means continuing to empower U.S. officials to speak publicly to keep the focus on negligent regimes. Treasury Department officials did this over the course of 2014 with regard to particularly bad cases of Gulf-based terror finance, characterizing the magnitude of currency flows and identifying instances of particular individuals who have been enjoying legal impunity.

Congress could find ways in which it could exert germane and appropriate pressure on these regimes to take action against operatives of U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs) on their soil. The original terms of the Export Administration Act of 1979 called for stricter licensing of dual-use items to countries that knowingly provide safe haven to operatives of such terrorist groups. My understanding is that this would include certain items we wouldn't want falling into the hands of Hamas, such as missile equipment, WMD precursors, or technology that could be used for cyber warfare, which

Hamas has been accused of waging against Israeli critical infrastructure from Qatari territory.

In 1996, Congress amended the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act to allow American citizens to sue foreign governments for acts of terrorism if they have been designated as state sponsors of terrorism. U.S. citizens were also permitted to sue retroactively for any act of terrorism committed in the prior ten years, enabling the family of a U.S. citizen killed in 1995 by PIJ to successfully sue the terror group's sponsor, Iran.

With this in mind, Congress could further amend the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act, allowing U.S. victims of terrorism to sue governments that provide safe haven to the operatives of FTOs for terrorist acts committed by those groups. Such an amendment could again apply retroactively. Judgments under such a provision would be easier to collect because several U.S. allies that host known officials from FTOs (such as Qatar, Turkey, and Pakistan) have greater exposure to the U.S. economy than pariah states like Iran. Such penalties could be germane, appropriate, and provide a powerful dissuasive impetus for foreign behavior change.

Religious Incitement:

We should call out our allies when they encourage the same sort of hateful religious invective that bolsters the recruiting narrative of terrorist organizations such as al Qaeda and the Islamic State. Human Rights First's March report on Saudi Arabia includes a blueprint on how the U.S. government can better address religious incitement and human rights abuses in the desert kingdom, and some of its recommendations apply to many other GCC states as well.[167] Many of these steps are areas where Congress can lead the way.

For instance, Congress could support U.S. visitor programs for religious leaders from the Gulf who do not have a personal record of religious incitement in order to help display for them how America handles religious tolerance and diversity. Congress could also encourage or require the executive branch to terminate Saudi Arabia's indefinite waiver from penalties under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 and replace it with a time-limited, non-renewable waiver instead to motivate Riyadh to finally implement past pledges on religious freedom. Congress could also order the State Department to publish the long-overdue results of taxpayer-funded studies that it withheld in 2012 and 2013 on religious intolerance in Saudi textbooks and Saudi Arabia's global export of such intolerance.[168]

---

[167] "How to Build a More Sustainable and Mutually Beneficial Relationship with Saudi Arabia: Blueprint for U.S. Government Policy," *Human Rights First*, March 2015. (http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/sites/default/files/Saudi-Arabia-Blueprint-final.pdf)

[168] David Andrew Weinberg, "Textbook Diplomacy: Why the State Department Shelved a Study on Incitement in Saudi Education Materials," *FDD Press*, March 2014. (http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/Textbook_Diplomacy.pdf)

More broadly, the U.S. government should raise concerns with our Gulf allies that sectarian incitement and discrimination ultimately enables Iranian subversion by increasing religious cleavages, marginalization, and violence. Additionally, Washington should be pressing our allies to shut down religious hate channels and websites that encourage violence against Shi'ites and adherents of other religions.

Protecting Rights and Reform:

The Saudi blogger Ra'if Badawi was sentenced to 1,000 lashes and ten years in prison for questioning the wisdom of the official religious establishment. Fifty of those lashes have been administered, and the remaining 950 hang over him like a sword of Damocles. His fate rests entirely in the hands of Western governments, namely whether or not they choose to speak up on his behalf. Tiny Finland had the guts to summon the Saudi ambassador and raise concern over his case.[169] As the GCC's superpower patron, we owe it to the people of the Gulf – and ultimately to ourselves – to learn a lesson from Helsinki. We should be more active in defense of Gulf activists under siege like Badawi and support their broader reform agenda.

In Bahrain, we are more responsible than ever for discouraging ongoing human rights abuses since our government has decided to lift the restriction on weapons for crowd control to Manama's military and national guard. The U.S. government should refuse to lift the remaining hold on sending such weapons to Bahrain's Interior Ministry until the regime's internal policies genuinely and significantly are improved, and American officials should consistently urge the regime to release prisoners of conscience, to hold accountable those responsible for abuses against demonstrators or detainees, to integrate Shi'a into the police and internal security forces, and to adopt a fair power-sharing arrangement with the political opposition, including through new, more equitable elections.

The United States should also get tough with security chiefs in the Gulf, some of whom are favored U.S. interlocutors in fighting al Qaeda but could be doing more to prevent the repression under their purview. American security agencies in particular should be emphasizing to their partners in the region that torture and other abuses ultimately threaten our ability to cooperate and feeds terrorism over the longer term. Congress could also exert more aggressive public oversight of U.S. security assistance to ministries or military units in the Gulf that are also the entities most responsible for human rights abuses and domestic repression.

Finally, President Obama should be raising human rights in all of his substantive dialogues with his counterparts in the Gulf. He should authorize the entirety of the U.S. government, including the intelligence community and military officials, to support the State Department in holding tough conversations with our Gulf partners about the

[169] Finland Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Finland summoned the Interim Chargé d'Affaires of Saudi Arabia to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs," January 20, 2015. (http://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/article/-/asset_publisher/suomi-kutsui-saudi-arabian-va-asiainhoitajan-kuultavaksi-ulkoministerioon?_101_INSTANCE_3qmUeJgIxZEK_redirect=%2Fen%2Ffrontpage)

necessity of stopping incitement and rights abuses while allowing more inclusive governance and political participation. In addition, he should consider instituting strategic dialogues with the various GCC states that include human rights and participation as one of the main tracks for regular, senior discussion.

America's relations with the six GCC monarchies are extremely important, but they are not on the right track. Unless they start moving their countries in the direction of heightened reform and decreased autocracy, until they start implementing the terms of the Jeddah Communiqué by clamping down on religious incitement and truly tackling the flow of terror finance, then the future of those ties is in doubt.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, Dr. Weinberg.
Dr. Katzman.

STATEMENT OF KENNETH KATZMAN, PH.D., SPECIALIST IN MIDDLE EASTERN AFFAIRS, CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE

Mr. KATZMAN. Thank you, Chairwoman Ros-Lehtinen, Ranking Member Deutch, distinguished subcommittee members for asking me to appear on behalf of CRS (Congressional Research Service) on this important topic. I will summarize my remarks and ask that my remarks be submitted for the record.

The United States has been a major actor and basically the guarantor of Gulf security for over 30 years. The United States still imports more than 15 percent of its oil from the GCC states. Containing a potential threat for Iran requires substantial cooperation with the GCC states. The GCC states express concern about how a final nuclear agreement with Iran might affect the region. They assert that broad sanctions relief will enable Iran to increase its assistance to regional factions in governments, such as President Assad of Syria, the Houthi rebels in Yemen, Shiite militia forces in Iraq, Lebanese Hezbollah, and hard line opposition factions in Bahrain. Sanctions relief could enable Iran to potentially enable Iran to modernize its armed forces, possibly to the point where Iran could deploy a large ground force across the Strait of Hormuz. Iran, too, now has been hampered by the lack of sea lift and ability to move across waterways.

The GCC leaders are concerned that a nuclear deal could lead to a broader improvement in U.S.-Iran relations, but gives Iran's views in the region increase weight on the U.S. decision-making apparatus. There is a perception in the Gulf that the United States, as a consequence of a nuclear deal, could come to view the Gulf region as secure and walk away and or reduce—substantially reduce its military presence in the Gulf. That is a huge concern that the Gulf leaders have.

There are, however, some possible benefits of a nuclear deal to the GCC. The GCC states conduct extensive trade with Iran, particularly the UAE. And economic growth in Iran would enhance, obviously, the economic—this trade and help the GCC economies. A nuclear agreement could, depending on what direction Iran goes after a deal, provide some movement, perhaps, on a political solution in Yemen and some regional energy projects that have been long discussed but have not moved forward because of sanctions, such as energy pipeline linkages between Iran and Kuwait, Iran and Oman, and Iran and Bahrain.

Iran and the UAE could potentially resolve their territorial dispute over the three Gulf islands, Abu Musa and the Tunb islands, which the Shah seized, and the Islamic Republic completed that seizure by taking Abu Musa in 1992, putting its forces, IRGC forces, on Abu Musa. The administration has sought to reassure the GCC leaders. We have talked about the GCC summit, which came out with the strategic partnerships stipulating five areas facilitating arms sales to the Gulf, increasing U.S.-GCC cooperation on maritime security, cyber security, counterterrorism, military exercises, U.S. training, and a renewed commitment to building a

Gulf-wide holistic missile defense against Iran's missile capabilities.

Gulf diplomats indicate to me and others that working groups on these stipulated areas have now been established in the foreign and defense ministries of the GCC states, and that U.S.-GCC discussions on these areas are becoming more systematic and structured. Previously, the U.S.-GCC strategic dialogue was only at the level of U.S. Defense—Defense Secretary and Secretary of State, and now it has moved into down the bureaucracy, more institutionalized.

Again, armed sales are a key to this relationship. Two of the countries, Kuwait and Bahrain are major non NATO allies. There have been substantial weapon sales to the Gulf states, obviously. And these armed sales have not only made the GCC states able partners, but in some way, they have emboldened the Gulf states. The Gulf states are flexing their muscles, so to speak, on regional issues. We have seen it in Libya, where the UAE conducted an air strike last year on a terrorist training camp without necessarily consulting the United States; Saudi Arabia has taken the lead in putting together this coalition that is intervening in Yemen with very minimal support from the United States, and perhaps the U.S. didn't think maybe this type of intervention was going to succeed.

So we have that against the Houthis. Obviously, the GCC states were helping the military Government of CC and Egypt at the same time the U.S. was, you know, denying some weaponry to Egypt. So the Gulf states are emboldened and are acting, perhaps, because they feel the U.S. is not acting on some of these key interests that they have. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Katzman follows:]

TESTIMONY

Statement of

Kenneth Katzman
Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs
Foreign Affairs, Defense and Trade Division
Congressional Research Service

Before

Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
House of Representatives

Hearing On

"The Gulf Cooperation Council Camp David Summit: Any Results?"

July 9, 2015

CRS REPORT
Prepared for Members and
Committees of Congress

I'd like to thank you, Chairwoman Ros-Lehtinen and Ranking Member Deutch, for asking me to appear on behalf of the Congressional Research Service on this important topic. I will summarize my remarks and ask that my full statement be submitted for the record.

Overview

The United States has been a major actor in the security of the Persian Gulf region since the early 1970s, and has served as a guarantor of Gulf security for over thirty years. It was during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, which spilled over to the Gulf states themselves, that the Gulf states began to turn to the United States to protect them from the two large Gulf powers Iran and, somewhat later, Iraq. It was in the early stages of that war that the six Arab monarchy states of the Gulf – Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and the Sultanate of Oman – formed the "Gulf Cooperation Council," or GCC. That 1981 alliance, which has security, economic, and political components, remains intact today despite numerous experts' predictions over the years that it would dissolve.

The security of the GCC countries is considered by many experts to be a vital U.S. interest. That is not only because the United States still imports more than 15% of its oil from the GCC states but also because about one-third of internationally-traded oil flows through the Strait of Hormuz. Additionally, Iran has shown its ability to support armed factions throughout the Middle East that oppose a multiplicity of U.S. allies and interests, and containing a potential threat from Iran requires a substantial degree of consistent cooperation from the GCC states.

- During the Iran-Iraq war, U.S. forces protected international shipping in the Gulf from the so-called "tanker war" between Iran and Iraq, and from Iran's attempts to disrupt international shipping through the firing of missiles and the laying of mines.

- In 1991, U.S. forces led a large coalition, including some Arab states, to end the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait by the forces of Saddam Hussein's Iraq. After that war, four of the GCC states formalized defense relations with the United States through bilateral defense agreements, and a fifth, Oman, renewed its pre-existing cooperation arrangements with the United States. Pre-existing U.S.-Saudi cooperation, although not enshrined in a formal overarching pact, was expanded as well.

- During the 1990s, all of the GCC states hosted U.S. and coalition forces that sought to contain Saddam Hussein, who remained in power despite Iraq's expulsion from Kuwait.

- In 1993, the Clinton Administration articulated a policy of "dual containment" of Iran and Iraq, and the policy depended heavily on U.S. defense cooperation with the GCC states.

- In 2003, the GCC states, particularly Kuwait, hosted the U.S. force that invaded Iraq and overthrew Saddam Hussein's regime.

- With Iraq's government no longer a significant threat to its neighbors, U.S.-GCC defense cooperation has focused on containing Iranian power and on applying economic and political pressure, backed up by the threat of force, to compel Iran to limit its nuclear program to aspects that have exclusively civilian purposes.
- Most recently, U.S.-GCC cooperation has also focused on trying to resolve regional conflicts on terms that benefit U.S. and GCC interests and on countering the threat from terrorist groups such as the Islamic State and Al Qaeda.

The Gulf States and Iran

To a substantial degree, all of the GCC leaders have publicly identified Iran as a potential threat. However, there are differences among the GCC states - and between some of the GCC states and the United States - over how best to deal with that threat. Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and the UAE have been consistently critical of Iran in public and have supported all U.S. efforts to exert economic and military pressure on Iran. All three have openly accused Iran of meddling in their internal affairs. Bahraini leaders have consistently accused Iran of stoking Shiite opposition since February 2011. The State Department report on international terrorism for 2013 stated that Iran has attempted to supply weapons to Shiite oppositionists there,[1] but the same report for 2014, released June 19, 2015, did not repeat that assertion.[2] Saudi Arabia has accused Iran of supporting Shiite opposition activists in the eastern provinces. The UAE has a specific territorial dispute with Iran over three islands in the Gulf – Abu Musa and Greater and Lesser Tunb island, dating to the seizure of the islands by the Shah's regime in 1971. The UAE and Iran subsequently agreed to share control of Abu Musa, but Iran expelled UAE security personnel from Abu Musa in 1992 and subsequently emplaced some defense equipment on it. Still, even those GCC states most critical of Iran maintain full diplomatic and normal trade relations with Iran. At the same time these states have enforced U.S. sanctions against Iran; in May 2015, Bahrain's Central Bank seized Future Bank, an Iranian-owned bank that has been sanctioned by the United States.[3]

The Sultanate of Oman, led by the ailing Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al Said, pursues a somewhat different course than the other GCC states. Sultan Qaboos asserts that consistent engagement with Iran is the preferred strategy for limiting the potential Iranian threat; he has been the only Gulf leader to exchange regular leadership-level visits with Iran. In March 2014, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani visited Oman, the only GCC state he has visited since taking office in August 2013. Oman brokered U.S.-Iran talks in 2013 that apparently facilitated the reaching of a November 2013 interim nuclear deal between Iran and the United States and five other major powers ("P5+1": United States, Russia, China, France, Britain, and Germany).[4] Oman has subsequently hosted P5+1 - Iran nuclear negotiations and its banks serve as a

[1] For text of the report for 2013, see: http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2013/224826.htm

[2] For text of the report for 2014, see: http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2014/index.htm

[3] http://www.cbb.gov.bh/page.php?p=cbb_places_future_bank_and_iran_insurance_company_into_administration

[4] Paul Richter. "Oman Sultan's Visit Reportedly a Mediation Bid Between Iran and U.S." *Los Angeles Times*, August 30, 2013; Shashank Bengali. "U.S.-Iran Thaw Began with Months of Secret Meetings." *Los Angeles Times*, November 24, 2013.

financial channel for the permitted transfer of hard currency oil sales proceeds to Iran under a 2013 P5+1-Iran interim nuclear agreement.[5]

Two of the other GCC states, Kuwait and Qatar, take intermediate positions. Both have joined GCC statements critical of Iran, but both maintain more regular high-level diplomatic engagement with Tehran than do Saudi Arabia, UAE, or Bahrain. Kuwait's Emir, Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir Al Sabah, visited Iran in June 2014, meeting not only with President Hassan Rouhani but also with the Supreme Leader, Grand Ayatollah Ali Khamene'i. The powerful speaker of Iran's Majles (parliament), Ali Larijani, visited Qatar in March 2015, and was allowed to meet with Hamas leaders who are in exile there.

The GCC states have all expressed concern about how a finalized P5+1-Iran nuclear agreement, still under negotiation, might affect the region. The GCC leaders assert that broad relief from sanctions under such an agreement would provide Iran with more resources and opportunities for assisting regional factions and governments that the GCC states oppose, such as that of President Bashar Al Asad of Syria, "Houthi" rebels in Yemen, Shiite militia forces in Iraq, and Lebanese Hezbollah.[6] The GCC leaders are also apparently concerned that a nuclear deal could lead to a broader improvement in U.S.-Iran relations that gives Iranian views on the region increased weight; and that the United States could come to view the Gulf region as secure and reduce its personnel and equipment deployed in the GCC countries.[7] Those who support these arguments assert that Iran's foreign policy is likely to become even more challenging for the GCC in the event of a nuclear deal. As examples:

- Sanctions relief could enable Iran to modernize its armed forces, potentially to the point where it has increased ability to move ground forces across waterways such as the Strait of Hormuz—and thereby further intimidate the GCC states.
- Iran could decide to increase its assistance to hardline opposition factions in Bahrain, which have thus far made little headway in challenging the government's control of the country.[8]

On the other hand, it is possible that a nuclear deal could benefit Gulf security. A nuclear agreement would give Iran an incentive to avoid actions that could provoke calls for the re-imposition or addition of international sanctions.[9] President Obama has argued that Iran has a strong national interest in avoiding re-imposition of sanctions or of military action as a potential consequence of pursuing "expansionist ambitions."[10] Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew has argued that Iran will likely use additional financial resources to rebuild its civilian economy, which has shrunk since 2012 as a consequence of international sanctions. And, the GCC states that all conduct extensive commerce with Iran, particularly the UAE, could benefit economically if Iran's economy resumes growth. A nuclear agreement also could strengthen Iranian moderates who seek to improve Iran's international reputation and potentially lead to increased U.S.-Iranian cooperation on some regional issues. Some examples of possible positive Iranian foreign policy outcomes—and other possible shifts—that have been identified in the event that a nuclear deal is finalized include:

[5] Assistant Secretary of State for Legislative Affairs Julia Frifeld. Letter to Senator Bob Corker, Chairman Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. June 17, 2015. Enclosure to letter: Department of State. Determination and Certification pursuant to the National Defense Authorization Act of FY2012. Undated.

[6] "Iran's Economy could Grow by 2 percent if Sanctions are Lifted," *Middle East Eye*, May 25, 2015.

[7] "Public Saudi Welcome for Iran Nuclear Deal Masks Private Unease." *Reuters*, April 3, 2015.

[8] Ibid.

[9] "Saudis Make Own Moves as U.S. and Iran Talk." *New York Times*, March 31, 2015.

[10] "President Obama Interview with Jeffrey Goldberg," *The Atlantic*, May 21, 2015.

- Depending on the Saudi perception of a post-nuclear agreement threat from Iran, Saudi Arabia and Iran could potentially cooperate on a political solution in Yemen.
- Iran and the United Arab Emirates, a key Gulf Arab state, might resolve their territorial dispute over Abu Musa and the two Tunb islands in the Persian Gulf.
- Iran could integrate more closely into regional energy solutions, for example by finalizing agreements, long under discussion, to build natural gas pipeline linkages with Kuwait, Oman, and Bahrain.

Camp David Summit: U.S. Efforts to Reassure the Gulf States

The Administration has sought to reassure the GCC leaders that the United States remains committed to Gulf security. The Administration has argued that a nuclear deal with Iran would benefit Gulf security by ensuring that, at least for the duration of the agreement, Iran could not easily produce a nuclear weapon. In his announcement of the April 2, 2015, framework nuclear accord with Iran, President Obama invited the leaders of the six Arab countries that make up the GCC to meet at Camp David "to discuss how we can further strengthen our security cooperation, while resolving the multiple conflicts that have caused so much hardship and instability throughout the Middle East."[11] In advance of the May 13-14, 2015, summit, the GCC leaders released a statement expressing hope that the framework agreement would "pave the way for a comprehensive final agreement," provided that such a final agreement meets several general criteria. The joint statement also expressed "aspirations" that "normal relations with Iran" could be "re-established based on mutual respect of the principles of good neighborliness and respect for the sovereignty of states."[12]

Expectations for the summit were dampened by the fact that only two of the six GCC leaders attended – Emir Sabah of Kuwait and Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani of Qatar. However, those countries whose top leaders did not attend still sent high-level decision makers, such as Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Nayef Al Saud. The UAE's de-facto leader Shaykh Mohammad bin Zayid Al Nuhayyan attended as well, substituting for the ailing UAE President Khalifa bin Zayid al-Nuhayyan. The joint statement issued after the summit announced a new U.S.-GCC strategic partnership and reiterated that it is U.S. policy to use all elements of U.S. national power to secure core U.S. interests in the Gulf and to deter and confront external aggression "against our allies and partners...." An annex to the joint statement says that the United States will increase security cooperation with the GCC states in the following ways: (1) facilitating U.S. arms transfers to the GCC states; (2) increasing U.S.-GCC cooperation on maritime security, cybersecurity, and counterterrorism; (3) organizing additional large-scale joint military exercises and U.S. training; and (4) stating a renewed commitment to a concept of a Gulf-wide ballistic missile defense capability, which the United States has sought to promote in recent years.[13] The statement also highlighted joint efforts to counter Iran's "destabilizing activities" in the region as well as a commitment to defeating the Islamic State and to countering violent extremism more broadly.

[11] The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Statement by the President on the Framework to Prevent Iran from Obtaining a Nuclear Weapon, April 2, 2015.

[12] "GCC Consultative Meeting issues Final Communique," *Emirates News Agency*, May 5, 2015.

[13] The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Annex to U.S.-Gulf Cooperation Council Camp David Joint Statement, May 14, 2015.

Some observers of Gulf politics suggested that GCC leaders were relatively satisfied with the outcome of the meeting.[14] Gulf diplomats indicate that working groups on the four stipulated issue areas have been established in the foreign and defense ministries of the GCC states, and that U.S.-GCC meetings on these issues are becoming more systematic, regular, and structured.[15]

Foundations of U.S. - GCC Military Cooperation

A key to the U.S.-GCC relationship is defense cooperation and the maintenance of a large U.S. military presence in the Gulf. U.S. officials assert that, as of 2015, there are about 35,000 U.S. forces in the Gulf region. Most of them are stationed at various Gulf state facilities to which the United States has access, in accordance with Defense Cooperation Agreements (DCAs) and related agreements between the United States and each GCC country. Some of the U.S. force is aboard a U.S. aircraft carrier task force that is in the Gulf region virtually continuously. The DCAs reportedly stipulate modalities of joint cooperation, provide for the United States to preposition substantial military equipment, and provide U.S. access to Gulf state military facilities.[16]

The Defense Department has stated that continued major U.S. arms sales to the GCC countries are necessary to improve their air and naval capabilities and their interoperability with U.S. forces, as well as to improve border and maritime security. The United States has continued to agree to major sales to virtually all of the GCC states, including such equipment as combat aircraft, precision-guided munitions, Littoral Combat Ships, radar systems, and communications gear. According to the Defense Security Assistance Agency of the Department of Defense, the United States has proposed over $90 billion in arms sales to the largest GCC arms buyer, Saudi Arabia, since 2010.[17] Two of the GCC countries, Kuwait and Bahrain, have been named as "Major Non-NATO Allies" (MNNA), which qualify countries so designated to purchase sophisticated U.S. arms normally sold only to U.S. NATO allies. However, some arms sales to Bahrain have been withheld because of the government's use of force to suppress Shiite unrest there. Most of the GCC countries are wealthy states easily able to purchase weaponry using national funds. The two least wealthy GCC states, Bahrain and Oman, receive small amounts of U.S. military and counter-terrorism/border security assistance - Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and Non-Proliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining and Related (NADR) funds.

In addition, even though the GCC states are large buyers of U.S. and other military equipment, commentators often question the level of training and expertise of the Gulf military forces. Some of the GCC states rely heavily on foreign troops in their ranks, such as Pakistani troops serving under contract. The UAE has reportedly contracted with private security firms to develop certain elements of a force that can be used for internal security and other purposes.

U.S.-GCC defense cooperation has the following outlines:[18]

---

[14] Author conversations with observers from the GCC region. May-June 2015.

[15] Ibid.

[16] The texts of the DCAs and related agreements are classified, but general information on the provisions of the agreements has been provided in some open sources, including http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub185.pdf.

[17] See: CRS Report RL33533: Saudi Arabia: Background and U.S. Relations, by Christopher M. Blanchard.

[18] The U.S. deployments in the Gulf are discussed in greater detail in CRS reports on the individual GCC states. Information in this section is derived from author visits to the GCC states since 1993 and conversations with U.S. and Gulf state diplomats. See

- *Saudi Arabia*. The United States does not have a DCA with Saudi Arabia. Nonetheless, a few hundred U.S. military personnel are in Saudi Arabia training its military, the Saudi Arabia National Guard (SANG), and Ministry of Interior forces. The Saudi armed forces have over 225,000 active duty personnel, with about 600 tanks, of which 200 are U.S.-made M1A2 "Abrams" tanks. Saudi Arabia is a very large buyer of U.S. weaponry, and the Saudi Air Force relies heavily on the U.S.-made F-15.

- *Kuwait*. The United States has had a DCA with Kuwait since 1991, and about 13,000 U.S. Army personnel are stationed there, in part providing the United States a ground combat capability. U.S. forces operate out of such facilities as Camp Arifjan, south of Kuwait City, where the United States prepositions ground armor including tanks. U.S. forces train at Camp Buehring, about 50 miles west of the capital, and operate in other facilities such as Shaykh Jabir Air Base and Shaykh Ali al-Salem Air Base. Kuwait has a small force of over 15,000 active military personnel. It relies almost exclusively on U.S. equipment, including the M1A2 Abrams tank and the F/A-18 "Hornet" combat aircraft.

- *Qatar*. The United States has had a DCA with Qatar since 1992 and signed an updated version in December 2013. About 5,000 U.S. forces, mostly Air Force, are in Qatar, manning the forward headquarters of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), which has responsibility for the Middle East and Central Asia; a Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) that oversees U.S. combat aircraft missions in the region; the large Al Udeid Air Base, and the *As Saliyah* army prepositioning site where U.S. tanks are prepositioned. Qatar's armed force is small with less than 12,000 active military personnel. Qatar has historically relied on French military equipment, fielding AMX-30 tanks and Mirage combat aircraft. In May 2015, during a visit to the Gulf by French President Francois Hollande, Qatar agreed to buy 24 French-made Rafale fighter jets worth about $7 billion.[19] However, as discussed below, Qatar has ordered U.S.-made sophisticated missile defense systems.

- *UAE*. The United States has had a DCA with UAE since 1994. About 5,000 U.S. forces, mostly Air Force and Navy, are stationed in UAE, operating surveillance and refueling aircraft from Al Dhafra Air Base, and servicing U.S. Navy and contract ships which dock at the large commercial port of Jebel Ali. The UAE armed forces include about 63,000 active duty personnel. Its ground forces use primarily French tanks such as the Leclerc purchased in the 1990s and the AMX-30, but the core of its Air Force is the F-16. The UAE has stated that it wants to buy the F-35 "Joint Strike Fighter," but U.S. officials have stated that the system will not be approved for sale to the GCC for at least several years.[20] That policy appears to be based at least in part on the U.S. stated commitment to maintain Israel's "Qualitative Military Edge" (QME) over any of its Arab neighbors, even though the GCC and Israel are aligned on many issues, particularly Iran.

---

also: International Institute for Strategic Studies, "The Military Balance, 2015."

[19] France and Qatar Seal $7 Billion Rafale Fighter Jet Deal. Reuters, April 30, 2015.

[20] "No Near Term F-35 Sales in Gulf Region: Pentagon." Reuters, February 22, 2015. http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/02/22/us-defence-gulf-f-idUSKBN0LQ07Q20150222

- *Bahrain*. The United States has had a DCA with Bahrain since 1991. About 6,000 U.S. personnel, mostly Navy, operate out of the large Naval Support Activity facility that houses the U.S. command structure for all U.S. naval operations in the Gulf. U.S. Air Force personnel also access Shaykh Isa Air Base. Bahrain has the smallest military in the Gulf, with only about 8,000 active personnel, but it has internal security forces under the Ministry of Interior with about 11,000 personnel. The United States has given Bahrain older model U.S. M60A3 tanks and a frigate as "excess defense articles," and the country has bought U.S.-made F-16s with national funds.

- *Oman*. The United States has had a "facilities access agreement" with Oman since April 1980. Under the agreement, U.S. forces, mostly Air Force, have access to Omani air bases such as those at Seeb, Masirah Island, Thumrait, and Musnanah. A few hundred U.S. forces serve at these facilities. Oman's armed forces have about 43,000 military personnel that have historically relied on British-made military equipment. The United States has provided some M60A3 tanks as excess defense articles, and Oman has bought F-16s using national funds.

Promoting Greater GCC Defense Integration

The United States has consistently sought to promote defense cooperation among the GCC states. The GCC has had a small Saudi-based combined force, called Peninsula Shield, since the mid-1980s, but it is generally more a reserve force than a standing military. In the past few years, the GCC leaders have formally supported suggestions by Saudi Arabia to form a unified GCC military command structure, but similar proposals have been discussed within the GCC for at least two decades with minimal implementation to date. The United States has sought to promote that concept by attempting to deal with the GCC countries as a bloc, rather than individually, but suspicions and grievances among the GCC states has precluded progress on that concept to date.

A cornerstone of the U.S. effort to promote greater GCC defense cooperation is an initiative to develop a coordinated Gulf state missile defense capability. Then Secretary of Defense Hagel emphasized the joint missile defense vision during his December 2013 and May 2014 visits to the Gulf, including stating that the United States prefers to sell related equipment to the GCC as a bloc, rather than individually. As part of this effort, there have been several recent missile defense sales including PAC-3 sales to UAE and Kuwait and the advanced "THAAD" (Theater High Altitude Area Defense system) to UAE and Qatar. In September 2012, it was reported that the United States was putting in place an early-warning missile defense radar in Qatar that, when combined with radars in Israel and Turkey, would provide a wide range of coverage against Iran's missile forces.[21]

Increased GCC Foreign Policy Assertiveness

U.S. efforts to strengthen the defense capabilities of the GCC states might also have contributed to the increased foreign policy assertiveness of several of the GCC countries, particularly UAE, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. Some of the GCC states, particularly Saudi Arabia and UAE, appear to want to take

[21] David Sanger and Eric Schmitt, "To Calm Israel, U.S. Offers Ways to Restrain Iran," *New York Times*, September 3, 2012.

stronger action against certain Islamist militant movements and Iranian allies and proxies than that advocated by the United States. Either reluctant or unable to persuade the United States to take actions some of the GCC states advocate, several of the GCC countries are utilizing their capability to act militarily without the United States. The GCC states also have substantial wealth with which to promote their interests through means other than direct military action, including funding armed factions in the region. The net effect is that some of the GCC states have been taking some military actions that are not necessarily coordinated with the United States, or that go beyond U.S. policy in the region. There have also been splits among some of the GCC countries as they have sought to act in the region. Examples include:

- *Libya*. Qatar and UAE both strongly supported U.S. policy in 2011 by playing significant roles in support of operations to support rebels that overthrew then-leader Muammar al-Qadhafi in 2011. Subsequently, Qatar and the UAE reportedly supplied rival governments, with Qatar backing the Tripoli-based Libya Dawn coalition, and the UAE supporting the Operation Dignity faction based in the eastern city of Tobruk. Press reports suggest that President Obama encouraged leaders from Qatar and the United Arab Emirates to settle their differences concerning the ongoing civil conflict and political dispute in Libya.[22] According to a U.S. National Security Committee spokesperson, "All leaders at Camp David decided to move in concert to convince all Libyan parties to accept an inclusive power-sharing agreement based on proposals put forward by the UN and to focus on countering the growing terrorist presence in the country. There was a shared recognition that there is no military solution to the conflict, and that it can only be resolved through political and peaceful means."[23] In 2014, in concert with Egypt, the UAE undertook an airstrike against a militant Islamist faction in Libya.[24] The UAE reportedly did not inform the United States before undertaking the strike, and U.S. officials reportedly indicated after the strike that they viewed outside military action in Libya as counterproductive to efforts to promote a political settlement there.[25]
- *The Islamic State*. Several GCC countries are contributing military forces in support of Operation Inherent Resolve, specifically through participation in military strike operations against Islamic State targets in Syria. However, two sets of strategic differences may be limiting further U.S.-GCC cooperation on efforts in Iraq and Syria. First, relations between Iraq's government and the Sunni Arab Gulf states have been consistently strained in the post-Saddam Hussein period, in part because Iraq's government has been dominated by Shiite factions politically close to Iran. Arab Gulf leaders remain critical of Iran's role in Iraq and may remain reluctant to offer support via Iraq's central government or prefer to work directly with Sunni Arab or Kurdish leaders. Military strikes by Gulf forces in Iraq could prove controversial among GCC citizens to the extent that they may be seen as empowering Shiite elements in Iraq. In Syria, some GCC leaders' views on the relative priority of combatting the Islamic State and other extremist groups versus removing the Asad government may continue to place limits on the willingness of GCC partners to support U.S. initiatives.

[22] Akbar Shahid Ahmed, "Obama Brokered A Secret Deal Between 2 Arab States That Could Help End Libya's Civil War," *Huffington Post*, June 17, 2015.

[23] Alistair Baskey quoted in Ahmed, Obama Brokered…." June 17, 2015.

[24] http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/26/world/africa/egypt-and-united-arab-emirates-said-to-have-secretly-carried-out-libya-airstrikes.html?_r=0

[25] Ibid.

- *Syria.* Even though the GCC countries have supported U.S. policy against the Islamic State in Syria, some of the GCC countries are taking actions beyond that being taken in that country by the United States against President Bashar al Asad. The United States and the GCC countries have called for Asad's removal, but the United States has articulated the conflict against the Islamic State forces there as a higher priority at this time than attempting to force Asad from power. The GCC states assert that Asad is a key instrument of Iranian influence in the region and strongly oppose his military efforts to suppress rebellion by much of Syria's majority Sunni population. Several of the Gulf states, particularly Saudi Arabia and Qatar, have apparently taken significant steps to try to achieve that result. The two countries reportedly have transferred significant funds and quantities of arms to separate and sometimes competing armed rebel groups in Syria. More recently, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and other regional rebel supporters have increased their coordination, and are cooperating with U.S. programs whose stated goal is to support forces in Syria against the Islamic State organization there. Wealthy private individuals in some of the GCC states, including Kuwait, whose government has apparently not become involved militarily in Syria, reportedly have raised monies for extremist Islamist rebel factions in Syria. U.S. officials have called on the GCC countries to shut down such private funding channels.
- *Yemen.* With respect to the internal conflict in Yemen between the Zaydi Shiite "Houthi" rebellion and the government of Abdu Rabbo Masour Hadi, Saudi Arabia has led a military intervention that the United States was apparently reluctant to support. The United States is providing logistical support to the Saudi-led coalition and deploying naval ships to deter Iran from arming the Houthi forces. U.S. officials deemed it important to publicly support the Saudi military operations against the Houthis, but as the operation has continued over time, Yemen has become increasingly unstable, creating opportunities for extremists such as Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and the Islamic State to increase their influence. Moreover, the conflict has enflamed Saudi-Iranian tensions, leading to confrontational statements between respective Saudi and Iranian government officials as well as near maritime clashes between Saudi and Iranian vessels in the Gulf of Aden.[26]
- *Egypt.* Some of the GCC states were critical of the U.S. backing for the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak as the 2011 popular uprising in Egypt gained strength. The UAE and Saudi Arabia, in particular, opposed the election of a leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, Mohammad Morsi, as President in July 2012. The two supported the Egyptian military's ouster of Morsi in July 2013 and the subsequent election as president of General Abdel Fatah El-Sisi. Within weeks of Morsi's ouster, Saudi Arabia assembled a $12 billion GCC aid package to financially stabilize the military-led government in Cairo. Since then, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Kuwait have given billions more. The aid to Sisi contrasted with U.S. policy, which held up arms deliveries until March 2015 because of the military takeover.

Human Rights in the U.S.-GCC Relationship

Some might argue that U.S. reliance on strategic cooperation with the Gulf states has caused it to mute criticism of human rights abuses in the GCC countries. Over the past several years, several of the GCC leaders, including Amir Tamim of Qatar, Amir Sabah of Kuwait, and acting UAE leader Mohammad bin

[26] For detailed information on the current situation in Yemen, see CRS Report R43960. Yemen: Civil War and Regional Intervention, by Jeremy M. Sharp.

Zayid al Nuhayyan have held talks in Washington, D.C. with President Obama. The communiques issued after all these meetings discussed regional issues such as the Iran nuclear deal, the Islamic State, and the situation in Syria; there was no mention of discussion of human rights issues in any of these announcements.[27]

On the other hand, U.S. documents on human rights, such as the annual U.S. State Department report on human rights conditions in countries around the world, describe serious human rights problems in each of the GCC countries and notes the denial of basic political rights in each, especially the right of citizens to change their government. All of the GCC states are led by hereditary monarchies, with varying degrees of popular input into governance. All GCC leaders appoint cabinets in their respective states, and many of the cabinet positions are held by members of the ruling family. All the states have established consultative assemblies that can review government draft legislation, but only that of Kuwait is fully elected by the population. None of these bodies, even the Kuwait National Assembly, has the powers of a Western legislature. Consultative assemblies in Saudi Arabia and Qatar are fully appointed, and bi-cameral assemblies in Bahrain and Oman have elected lower houses and appointed upper houses. Qatar announced plans to hold elections for its consultative body several years ago, but elections have not been held, to date. The UAE's consultative assembly, which includes representative of all seven of the federation's emirates, is partly elected and partly appointed. These bodies have deliberated their government's policies on regional issues, but generally have not been major factors in shaping foreign policy. Over the past several decades, U.S. officials have urged the GCC countries to devolve additional powers to these consultative bodies, but have not made U.S. relations contingent on progress.

A trend that has attracted U.S. criticism of several of the GCC states by U.S. and international human rights groups is the increasing number of prosecutions of opponents who use newspapers and social media to criticize the government and mobilize demonstrations. Several of the GCC states have adopted new laws providing for jail terms for offenses usually termed "insulting the leadership." The adoption of counterterrorism legislation identifying certain acts and groups as treasonous has provided a wider basis for prosecutions of bloggers, opposition activists using social media, and other domestic critics of the GCC governments. U.S. and outside human rights reports also routinely cite all of the GCC states for failing to take sufficient action to stop human trafficking, for limitations on women's rights, and for abuses against the large foreign worker populations in all of the GCC states.[28]

There has been an expectation that generational leadership change in the GCC states might lead to improvement in their human rights practices. Amir Tamim of Qatar took power in 2013, and the Saudi leadership is in the process of generational change from the sons of the founder of the Kingdom, to his grandsons. Mohammad bin Zayid al Nuhayyan, the third son of UAE founder Shaykh Zayid bin Sultan al Nuhayyan, is likely at some point formally to replace his infirmed elder brother, UAE President Shaykh Khalifa bin Zayid al Nuhayyan.

Bahrain's human rights practices have attracted the most U.S. and international attention in recent years. Bahrain is the only GCC state with a majority Shiite population, but it is ruled by the Sunni Al Khalifa family. It is the only GCC state that faced sustained unrest related to the 2011 uprisings in the Arab world. Kuwait and Oman faced some unrest related to the "Arab Spring," but demonstrations waned as

[27] https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/09/13/remarks-president-obama-and-amir-sabah-al-sabah-kuwait-after-bilateral-m

[28] The most recent State Department country reports on human rights, for 2014, can be found at: [http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/#wrapper]

the governments were able to use government largesse, some compromise, and some repression against its opposition.

The Bahrain uprising that began on February 14, 2011, has not achieved the goals of Shiite oppositionists to establish a constitutional monarchy. Public unrest has diminished since 2012, but occasional large demonstrations, opposition boycotts of elections, and continued arrests of dissidents counter government assertions that Bahrain has returned to normal. The government has enacted some reforms, but these have not substantially diluted its authority or satisfied the opposition. The government's use of repression to counter the unrest has presented a policy dilemma for the Obama Administration because of Bahrain's role as a pivotal strategic ally. The Administration has held up some sales to Bahrain of arms, particularly those that could be used for internal security purposes, and has somewhat reduced Bahrain's Foreign Military Financing (FMF) assistance. However, on June 30, 2015, the Administration announced it would proceed with the sale of Humvees, small arms, and other equipment to Bahrain – a sale that was put on hold in October 2011 because of the government's use of force against protesters. Sales to Bahrain's Interior Ministry remain suspended.

Table 1. Military Assets of the Gulf Cooperation Council Member States

	Bahrain	Kuwait	Oman	Qatar	Saudi Arabia	UAE
Total Manpower	8,200+	15,500+	42,600+	11,800	227,000+	63,000
ARMY and NATIONAL GUARD						
Personnel	6,000	11,000	25,000	8,500	175,000	44,400
Main Battle Tanks	180	293	154	39	600	467
AIFV/APC	225	789	206	230	3,011	1,957
Artillery	151	218	233	91+	771	579+
Attack Helicopters	-	-	-	-	15	-
SAMs	91	136+	48	75	1,805	N/A
NAVY						
Personnel	700	2,000	4,200	1,800	13,500	2,500
Destroyers /Frigates	1	-	3	-	7	-
Submarines	-	-	2	-	-	10
Patrol/Coastal Combatants	64	52	46	23	83	141
Amphibious Landing Craft	1	4	-	-	8	-
AIR FORCE						
Personnel (Air Defense)	1,500	2,500	5,000	1,500	20,000 (16,000)	4,500
Fighter Aircraft	33	39	15	12	261	138 (18 JAC)
Attack Helicopters	28	16	-	8	-	37 (JAC)
MISSILE DEFENSE						
Patriot PAC-2	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
Patriot PAC-3	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
THAAD	-	-	-	Ordered	-	Ordered

Source: Compiled by Hector Piña, Research Assistant, and Susan Chesser, Information Research Specialist, using *The Military Balance*, 2015, Vol. 115, current as of February 10, 2015, published by the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

Notes: AIFV= Armored Infantry Fighting Vehicle, APC= Armored Personnel Carrier, SAM= Surface-to-Air Missile, THAAD= Terminal High Altitude Area Defense

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much. Excellent testimony. And I will begin the question-and-answer period.

This morning our full committee held a hearing on Iran, and some of the witnesses pointed out that the U.S. is no longer seen in the region as upholding our commitments to protect our partners from foreign aggression. So my first question to you, gentlemen, is even if the U.S. signs some sort of security cooperation agreement with the GCC countries, do they believe that we will uphold that commitment or have we lost trust with the GCC? You can keep the answers short, because I have several.

Mr. EISENSTADT. I think the important point is I think they don't know. And I think the fact of the matter is that in light of U.S. behavior in recent years, the red line with regard to the Syrian CW and the initial U.S. red lines with regard to Iran's nuclear program and how those red lines have kind of moved in the course of negotiations, I think they probably have questions about the validity of any commitments that the United States provides.

Plus I would just point, in terms of the joint statement that was made at the Camp David Summit, it was—as these kind of commitments go, it was a very kind of bland and—kind of statement that I think from the point—you know, that kind of reference U.N. Charter as kind of the grounds for U.S. support for its allies. And you know, it wasn't the treaty that was passed by Congress, although I am not sure that would—that is the way to go either. So I think they probably have a lot of questions. But the problem is, from their point of view, they don't really have anywhere else to go at this point.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you. I know that some of you might want to participate in this. Let me ask you some other questions, and you can still answer it that way.

At Camp David, the GCC needed to hear that the United States is committed to the Middle East region and committed to stopping Iranian expansionism. But instead, they received assurances about arms deals and general defense cooperation, as important as they may be. But we must ensure that sales of advanced weapon systems to the GCC are consistent with our larger goals, objectives and policies, including human rights concerns, maintaining Israel's qualitative military edge and also addressing the underlying problems that the GCC has beyond the surface level.

And should a deal be finalized, we all know that Iran is not going to stop its destabilizing activities against the U.S. and against the GCC interests in the region. So what credible actions are the GCC countries asking from us in order to ease their anxieties about developments in the region, and what alternatives do you suggest in order to combat Iranian aggression and repair this difficult and already harmed GCC relationship?

Mr. MCINNIS. Thank you. What I would add, and following up in the context of your previous question, Chairwoman, is that the GCC countries in conversations I have had with leaders there, indicate that it is more the issue that the United States is not one to understand the personal relationship issue. I think that we tend to underestimate how much they value personal commitments. When they see the President breaking red lines or, you know, even if there are rational policy reasons for it, with personal relationships,

it is really hard for the Gulf leaders to rebuild those. And I think we tend to be too callous about that.

The second thing is I think that the GCC leadership does not think that we understand the Iranian threat adequately, and that we do not understand the existential problems that the GCC feels it faces. It thinks that the United States underestimates the destabilizing internal threat that Iran poses to them. I think this is a real key problem. I think the President was very dismissive of that issue at Camp David. And I think because of that, bearing in mind the human rights concerns, we do need to increase our capacity to work on counterterrorism issues with the GCC countries, because their fears of internal instability, frankly, trump all decision-making. We have to be sensitive to that in making them feel reassured that we are there to strengthen overall security in the region, while at the same time, we do want them to change certain policies.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much. And let me continue, and you can answer whichever ones you like.

I am concerned, as you have heard me say, that the sale of advanced weapon systems to GCC countries is contributing to a conventional arms race in the region, and that we are running into the risk of diminishing Israel's qualitative military edge, which is still a U.S. law whether the administration wants to enforce it or not. What kind of weapons can we expect to see the U.S. offer GCC countries in the months ahead beyond those deals that are already pending, and how would this impact Israel's qualitative military edge, and will GCC countries look toward Russia or China to fulfill their military needs? And if so, what kind of threat does this pose to our security interests in the region?

Mr. WEINBERG. So I think at the Camp David Summit, one of the measures that was a constructive U.S. proposal for addressing some of these concerns, both QME—rather, that doesn't undercut QME, but is still a constructive thing we can do for our Gulf allies, is the creation of a Foreign Military Sales office specifically devoted to GCC-wide sales.

So this is something that could decrease bureaucratic hurdles while not necessarily providing new weapon systems that would be problematic. The U.S. did not provide promises to give the Gulf states the F–35 joint strike fighter. It did not provide, as far as I am aware, commitments for improved bunker busters. These are two things that the Israelis would be very uncomfortable about.

I think it is important to recognize that, indeed, the Gulf states are not going to be reassured by forward U.S. deployments or arms sales alone. They need to know that the U.S. has their back when it comes to Iran's destabilizing regional activities or else otherwise they are basically on their own when it comes to using those American weapons.

One area where the Russians have been turning to—the Saudis have been turning to the Russians, have been reports that they are seeking the S–400 missile system. They also likely are seeking from the United States countermeasures against the S–300 that the Iranians recently acquired. And that is going to be a real challenge going forward without that undermining QME.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I agree. And, Dr. Katzman, I am going to ask one more question, but you can answer whichever one I have al-

ready posed. While we contemplate additional GCC arms sales, we must ensure that we aren't losing sight of our commitment to human rights in the region. How can the U.S. continue to promote human rights in the Gulf, where the political, social, and religious repression is some of the worst in the world, while maintaining our strategic partnership? This a difficult dance for us, isn't it?

Mr. KATZMAN. Well, actually, I would say a lot of the human rights groups were somewhat upset a few weeks ago when the U.S. announced it was going to proceed with an armed sale to Bahrain that had been held up on human rights grounds in 2011. This was a September 2011 sale of basically Humvees, tow missiles, anti tank weaponry. And the administration stated that Bahrain had been improving its human rights record.

I think what I have heard, many in the region saw it, really, as a way of implementing the Camp David commitments to release certain armed sales that the GCC states wanted and to show that the U.S. is implementing Camp David. So the human rights question in the Gulf is a very difficult question. You know, the Summit, human rights were barely mentioned at the Camp David Summit. And this almost didn't come up at all. We have had several leaders visit in the past 2 years. The Emir of Kuwait has been here. Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed, who is the defacto leader of UAE has been here, Sheikh Emir Tamim of Qatar has been here, and the communiques based on the meetings that have gone on, barely have mentioned human rights at all. So these are some issues that some of the human rights groups are raising.

Now, I just—I wanted to just comment on the QME issue. You know, again, Israel and the GCC states have the very same position on a lot of regional issues right now. So I think—and the Israelis and the GCC states are talking about a broad range of security issues that they never even talked with each other about at all previously. So, you know, to some extent that, perhaps, puts context to the QME discussion.

I would also say in terms of the Iran deal, let's—for 35 years the United States has not talked to Iran at all. So the only message the U.S. was getting about Gulf security, the region, was from the Gulf states. Now, the United States is getting Iran's point of view. The U.S. does not always necessarily put much weight on it, but at least the U.S. is hearing Iran's point of view. And what I am understanding from Gulf officials, is that has caused a problem because now they know that the U.S. is at least hearing Iran's point of view, which is mainly to complain about them, the GCC states.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much. Thank you for excellent answers to my rambling questions.

And Mr. Deutch is recognized for his question and answers.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you, Madam Chairman. We discussed earlier today in an Iran hearing an issue that I would like to get this panel's thoughts on. We have—as these talks in Vienna move on, and as we move forward to see whether there is a deal that can be made, one of the big—the biggest issues is what sanctions relief would mean to Iran, what they would do with the $150 billion that they would then have access to. And the argument has been made that it would more likely be used for domestic purposes, that it would not be, despite our concerns, that it wouldn't be used, that

sanctions wouldn't be used to fuel regional mischief to fund terror, to do all the things that we worry so much about the Iranian regime for. What—how do the Gulf states view this? What is their—how do they view this? What evidence do they use to draw their conclusions? Any of our panelists.

Dr. Weinberg, you seem anxious to answer.

Mr. WEINBERG. So I think there is an interesting comparison with how our Israeli allies view the Iranian threat that they face and how our Gulf allies view it. I think for our Israeli allies, the existential question is the nuclear one, and the IRGC issue is another major concern. I think for the Gulf states, the nuclear issue is a very major concern, and the nuclear component is the existential question for them. They basically see it as a core threat to their rule. And so when they see that Iran, in the last calendar year, increased its public budget allotment for the IRGC by 48 percent when Iran is under crippling sanctions——

Mr. DEUTCH. I am sorry, Dr. Weinberg, to what amount?

Mr. WEINBERG. I don't have the numbers offhand, but you we can submit that for the record.

Understandably, when they see that the IRGC is undoubtedly going to share in some portion of the windfall, I mean, even supporters of the Iran nuclear deal acknowledge that. It would be folly to say that they are not going to get any of the money. The question is how aggressive will they be with that money, and nobody in the Gulf is putting money on more moderate.

Mr. DEUTCH. Right. So let me be more specific.

Mr. WEINBERG. Sure.

Mr. DEUTCH. There are those who have argued that, in response to what I believe are valid concerns in line with your response to my question, that we don't really believe that more of their—that they would use much of this money to fund the IRGC to engage in the nefarious activities that they do around the world, because they have been able to do it already with a small amount of money, which I have a hard time really wrapping my head around. Because if they have been successful with a small amount of money, then why wouldn't they—Dr. Katzman, why wouldn't we expect that some part of that $150 billion, whether 1 billion or 5 or 20, would be used? And if so, what could all of that additional money be used for?

Mr. KATZMAN. Congressman, I agree with that question and the way you framed it. The issue—I would take some, perhaps, difference on the—Iran is having trouble. Iran is not having success universally. Yes, they have had some success in places. They are having tremendous trouble in Syria right now. I am not convinced in my analysis that more money would necessarily bring them to success in Syria where they seem to be having grave difficulty in Syria. Hezbollah is taking very large casualties in Syria. I am not convinced that there was—I was at a discussion the other day about Iran might give Hezbollah $1 billion, theoretically, of this money they are going to get. What would Hezbollah do with the billion—that is the thing. They are losing a lot of men; very tough to recruit; Hezbollah doesn't necessarily believe in fighting all over Syria, just on the border.

So, yes, they would have more resources, but I think Iran is having a lot of problems in the region. They are having success in places, but they are also having problems.

Mr. DEUTCH. My question isn't whether—I am not asking you to anticipate whether they would be successful in how they spent the money. My question is, is it realistic to believe that if they have access to $150 billion, that given this regime, some significant amount of money would go to fund terrorists, and that some significant amount of money would go to wreak havoc in the region? Mr. Eisenstadt.

Mr. EISENSTADT. If I could just piggy back on Ken's comments. I agree with what he is saying, that Iran's allies in Syria are overstretched. We have seen them. They have been using recently Afghani Shiites and Pakistani Shiites. I think that is the answer. In the past, their preference has always been to fight to the last Arab proxy. Having money enables them to hire on additional people. They are now expanding their recruitment base to Afghan and Pakistanis. And more money means greater ability to recruit people. Now, whether they will be effective or not is another question. But I think, given the fact that they have committed their own people to combat for the first time in Iraq and Syria, and they prefer not to do that, they prefer to fight the proxies, money gives them additional resources to gain additional proxies.

Again, I don't know if it will translate into greater effectiveness, but I think you can say that given the situation they are in, that that provides them potentially a new lease on life, at least in the short run.

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. McInnis, do you agree?

Mr. MCINNIS. I would agree with that. And what I would add is that the strain that we are discussing on the Iranians' expeditionary activities right now is very significant. And when you think about what they are having to give to Assad to kind of keep him afloat, the amount of money that is coming in that can help offset some of those negative things on their budget right now allows them to kind of do what they want to do. Frankly, especially what I consider to be the more expansionist activities in Yemen, for example, that is something that makes me worried. If they can kind of hold the fort better in Syria and Iraq, the additional money coming in allows them to expand what they are trying to do in very, sometimes, odd ways inside Yemen to really pressure the Saudis.

And I think what the Iranians have been looking for just as the Iranians always fear that we are surrounding them or trying to surround them—the Iranians are trying to surround Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. That is the reason why you saw the recent exposure of the plot in Jordan that just came to light recently. When you look at their activity in Iraq, Jordan, Yemen, Bahrain, and potentially other places, the Iranians have kind of a latent capacity surrounding Saudi Arabia and the Emirates. And I think that is the concern. If they can hold the fort better in Iraq and Syria with additional money, it allows them to put greater pressure on the Saudis.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thanks.

Madam Chairman, I just—I appreciate the input from our panelists. And as we move forward in these talks, this is very helpful,

because a sober analysis of the potential outcome of this negotiation, I think, requires us to acknowledge that in all likelihood, sanctions relief, if and when it comes, is going to result in more money. However it is spent, it is going to result in more money creating more problems in the region. I just think that, perhaps, has not been part of the discussion as much as it should have, and I hope that with this from our panelist, we will have an opportunity to inject into it today.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Deutch. We turn to Mr. Boyle of Pennsylvania.

Mr. BOYLE. Thank you. I wanted to, just a quick follow-up on the last point that Ranking Member Deutch was making. Unfortunately, we have a terrible history in this part of the world of funding and of sending armaments for one purpose, and then suddenly seeing those armaments used by a different group in a completely different purpose and reminded of that each and every day by the activities of ISIS. But the two questions I wanted to ask, though, weren't really on this point.

The first, though, I think it was Dr. Katzman, you raised it in your opening statement. One of the unintended consequences, positive unintended consequences of this protracted negotiation that P5+1 has had with Iran is that we finally found something that would bring the Gulf—the GCC states and Israel a little closer together and cooperating. I am just wondering if you see this—this is—you know, it is not completely possible to accurately predict this, but I am interested in your sense of whether or not this is a temporary phenomenon, or this actually could be the beginning of a permanent improving of relations and actually working together?

Mr. KATZMAN. I will address it further. Thank you.

The way I would frame it is the GCC and Israel still have a huge difference of opinion on certain regional issues, mainly the Palestinians, Arab-Israeli dispute. But I think they see that as sort of an emotional and political dispute. On Iran, they have a strategic agreement. Israel and the GCC have an exact same strategic analysis, and they have a strategic alignment that Iran is the key threat to the region; Iran cannot have a nuclear weapon; Iran must be contained and deterred, and so that has brought a level of strategic dialogue, as quiet as it is, between Israel and the GCC, as has ever been witnessed really, since Israel was formed.

Mr. BOYLE. Right. So the follow-up, I am more on—if we can project, and once, let's say, whether an agreement is reached or not, the Iranian nuclear negotiations are now, one way or the other, no more, we are into the fall, we are into next year, I am interested in your view to project forward, whether or not you think this could be the beginning of a longer shift, or this is simply a one-time, all about Iran, and then go back to business as usual?

Mr. KATZMAN. It depends. I think if Iran goes back in the direction that I think most of us think, which is they will use the resources to continue to try to expand their influence in the region, then I think that basis of strategic cooperation would continue.

Mr. WEINBERG. If I may offer a different perspective on this. I am much more pessimistic in this regard. I went on to the Saudi state news channel's Web site recently, and there was an article in which they talk about alleged Israeli overflights in Lebanon. But

the way in which they talk about these are the "enemy" Israeli Air Force. When you look at these sorts of preachers whom the Saudi king has surrounded himself with, on the official state Ulema council, some of the other preachers whom he hugs and kisses, these people have a long record of inciting against Christians and also inciting against Jews.

And there was recently much talk about an unofficial dialogue between a former Israeli official and a former Saudi official. So what? I mean, this was, as I understand it, a very unofficial level, and it was covered in a much lesser level in Saudi press as it was than it was in the Israeli press. I don't think the Saudi Government is really in a position to do anything beyond the security—the quiet security and strategic intelligence coordination which was already going on a decade ago.

Mr. BOYLE. Thank you. I would just add, Dr. Weinberg, your opening remarks, I was very much listening. And I think it is worth repeating the reminder that a number of these states that we can cooperate with on a number of strategic areas still are pretty large funders of anti-American and anti-Semitic rhetoric and hate. And that is something that we had better always keep in both the back and the front of our minds. Thank you.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you very much, Mr. Boyle. And Mr. Clawson is going to take over for me. Meanwhile, I will recognize Mr. Connolly.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you, Madam Chairman. You are so kind. Thank you, Mr. Clawson. Mr. Clawson, if you wish to go, I, of course, would defer to you. Okay. Thank you very much. Welcome to our panel. Fascinating discussion. If I understood what Dr. Weinberg just said to Mr. Boyle, Mr. Katzman, he was saying, let's not overstate this, you know, level of cooperation, that the enemy of my enemy is my friend kind of status that has descended on the GCC and its relations with Israel. Did I get that right, Mr. Weinberg? I did?

Mr. WEINBERG. You did.

Mr. CONNOLLY. So, Dr. Katzman, you disagree, you think actually it is of a different elevation than in the past and worthy of some note?

Mr. KATZMAN. Yes. I mean, I am not disputing what Dr. Weinberg is observing. But I think a lot of it is the basic culture and approach of the population and people way below the leadership level in the GCC. And I tend, perhaps, because of my background or whatever, to give more weight to what is going on at the government-to-government level and to not necessarily look at each cleric. These clerics have been around, Youssef al-Qaradawi is in Qatar. He is one of the most inflammatory clerics in the Islamic world. He is in Qatar. There were 9/11, there were al-Qaeda activists who transited through Qatar before 9/11. These things go on.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Right. But, I mean, take Qatar, for one example. I mean, there is all kinds of behavior we could decry and call out and not like. On the other hand, they have actually been useful interlocutors in some other situations, including on behalf, well, de facto on behalf of Israel. Is that not correct?

Mr. KATZMAN. Qatar has also been very helpful in Afghanistan. Without Qatar, we probably would not have gotten Mr. Bergdahl back. They are interlocutors on any number of issues absolutely.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Okay. So we have a mixed record of behavior. We would like everyone to be perfect and do what we think is in everybody's best interest. But it is a problematic area at best, the Gulf. I want to go back to sort of the origins of this hearing. So, Dr. Katzman, the GCC reps were invited to Camp David to meet with the President and his team, is that correct? And what was your understanding of the purpose of that summit or that meeting, set of meetings?

Mr. KATZMAN. Well, the summit was announced simultaneously when President Obama briefed the Nation on the April 2 tentative nuclear accord with Iran, the framework accord. So it was in connection to that certainly.

Mr. CONNOLLY. As a longtime analyst and observer of the region, were those productive meetings from your point of view?

Mr. KATZMAN. From everything I have heard, the Camp David summit was more productive than was anticipated. There were very low expectations. Only two of the heads of state attended. King Salman and then King Hamad of Bahrain pulled out, you know, about a day before. So there were very low expectations. And my understanding is the summit far exceeded the expectations.

Mr. CONNOLLY. In far exceeding the expectations, is an element of that a sense of reassurance by the GCC that the United States was actually quite serious about what it was trying to achieve in the Iran nuclear negotiations? Because I assume that was the big elephant in the room.

Mr. KATZMAN. Yes. I mean, I think the GCC statements on the nuclear deal have evolved. And I think it has been somewhat more positive, not outright positive, but more positive than they were before the Camp David summit on the nuclear deal. Yes, they have become more positive on it, yes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Do you feel that the United States was successful in providing reassurances, both in terms of their collective security and in terms of where we are headed in this relationship with Iran?

Mr. KATZMAN. That is my understanding, yes, sir.

Mr. CONNOLLY. You know what? My first trip to the Gulf was in the early 1980s to mid 1980s. I was there right after the revolution in Iran and when we reflagged the Kuwaiti oil tankers. And what struck me and surprised us when we went, we were expecting all the Gulf, the GCC nations, I keep on wanting to say G7, forgive me, GCC nations to be really as preoccupied as we were with the Ayatollah Khomeini and the revolution in Iran and the threat that posed to the region and so forth. They weren't particularly focused on that. In the 1980s, they were focused on Iraq and Saddam Hussein. I might just observe that the preoccupation with Iran today is logical. They are the big menace now that Iraq has been defenestrate, and Saddam Hussein is no more. And it is perfectly understandable, and it has to be dealt with, but it is not a unique—I mean, depending on who is strong at any given moment in the region, that is who GCC members are going to be concerned

about, given size and proximity and the nature of the military threat.

So it has to be dealt with. It can't be minimized. But I think some of the rhetoric we have heard about broken relationship and lacking credibility and fractured this and fractured that, I don't think so. And I would agree with your characterization, Dr. Katzman. Actually, the meeting at Camp David turned out, press expectations notwithstanding, more successfully than one might have expected. And I think reassurances apparently were made that were well received. I don't want to overstate it, but I would hardly call that a fractured relationship in the Gulf between them and the United States. With that, I yield back, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Mr. CLAWSON [presiding]. Thank you. Sorry for coming late, gentlemen. We appreciate you coming in today. I was in a subcommittee on Africa. So we get double booked here. So it certainly wasn't meant to be any kind of disrespect. So if any of my questions or comments are repetitive, I ask your forgiveness for my absence. When we voted last year and again this year on our country's, my country's, your country's involvement in the Syrian conflict, I voted no, because it felt like, to me, another bad war with very limited chances of any meaningful success, with the possibility of acceleration of our involvement, and one more kind of no-win situation in that part of the world.

And I don't like sending my own sons and daughters of my constituents to die in faraway places without a meaningful payback. And as the son of my oldest sister prepares for his second tour in Afghanistan, in a face-to-face war with the enemy, I just have a hard time getting there unless I see victory in the cards, which I would love to see. Then when I think about the backdrop of this Iranian deal, I say to myself sanctions go away, these guys get more money to fight us in places like Afghanistan and Syria and other places. The Gulf states, by and large, are going to sit it out. And a big mess just got messier.

Am I being overly pessimistic here? I look now at the money we have spent in Syria and where we are, what, a year, almost a year later, $1 billion, 60 people trained or whatever, and this feels like a sinkhole of money, lives, and confidence that will only be made worse if this deal goes through.

So I know you are going to tell me why I am mistaken. So I turn it over to you all to give the counterpoint here. Remember, we are going to come back in 6 months and we are going to do a business review and see if it really has gotten any better here. With that, I yield to whoever would like to answer first.

Mr. EISENSTADT. Mr. Chairman, actually I share a lot of your concerns. I think one of the challenges we face in dealing with the challenge posed by ISIL in Iraq and Syria is basically our strategy is contingent on our allies' policies, and what I am talking about with regard to the Iraqi Government and their willingness to engage in Sunni outreach and create an inclusive political system, which flies in the face of the zero-sum politics which tend to dominate Iraqi politics and the politics not all the countries in the region, but many of the countries in the region.

But the challenge we face is that we have seen what happened in Syria as a result of 3 or 4 years of non-engagement, and that it creates a vacuum that is then filled by extremists. And, in fact, the failure of the United States to engage earlier in Syria created, and tried to create, tried to create, we have to acknowledge there is no guarantee that our efforts to create a moderate opposition will succeed. But our efforts to try to create a third way could then perhaps suck away resources and manpower that are now going to al-Qaeda affiliates and ISIL. So the challenge is to find the right balance.

I agree, I don't want Americans on the ground engaged in combat again. But, on the other hand, walking away or disengaging, we have seen what has happened. We still have vital interests there. What happens in this part of the world has implications for, first, our allies, but it is already we are seeing that ISIL is influencing people here to act as lone wolves and engage in attacks. So the challenge is finding the right balance. And I actually share the administration's concerns and I support a light-footprint approach, though I would say that it would have to be, doing a light-footprint approach that entails more than the administration is doing. But, again, the challenge is finding the right balance because we have seen what happens when we don't engage. But then our allies also do things, act on their impulses which are not always the healthiest ones and sometimes they have supported groups that are either al-Qaeda affiliates, or very close to being, you know, they are kind of extremist in their orientation. And that is not good either.

Mr. CLAWSON. Do you think that lifting sanctions will put more guns into the wrong hands in the region?

Mr. EISENSTADT. That is one of the dangers of that course of action. And the problem is, we will never be able to square the circle with all the, you know, there are so many moving parts with regard to our policies in this part of the world, that you are never going to be able to iron out all the contradictions in U.S. policy. You can manage them.

So I am supportive of a deal with Iran that advances our interests. It will remain to be seen if the deal we get actually does that. But while doing that, and if that entails sanctions relief, as it necessarily would have to, we have to find ways to mitigate that by doing other things, like I said, while extending a hand to Iran, we still also have to push back against Iranian efforts to expand their influence and to engage in proxy warfare in the region. That is also a driver of ISIS.

Iran's involvement in Syria and Iraq also empowers ISIS. So I know it is like, you know, sometimes it makes my head explode too when I try to think of all this stuff because it really is almost impossible to iron out all the contradictions. But you need to try to manage it. And walking away, we have seen what happens when we are not engaged.

Mr. MCINNIS. I would just add on that point that, and we have been talking about this in general, but there needs to be recognition that what is happening in the region is, yes, their role. The mistakes of U.S. strategy and policy have helped create the problems we have there right now. But the real issues are what the other regional states have done. And you look at what Iran's strate-

gies have been in the region. They have been, aside from our own concern about what they are trying to achieve, even for their own purposes what they are trying to do has created enormous amounts of failure, at least right now. And that what they are facing is the fact of what they have done in Syria and what they are doing in Iraq is not necessarily succeeding.

At the same time, our allies within the GCC, they are not nearly as sophisticated on these types of asymmetric proxy warfare efforts that Iran is able to do, which it is kind of failing at right now. But they are also in a position where the Saudis traditionally and the Emiratis and others, they throw money at groups and they fund these types of efforts, but they don't actually know how to build governance or build effective fighting forces. We have to recognize the limits of the players there. If we are going to leave, kind of withdraw and just kind of let this play out, we have to recognize the limits of the players there.

And the fact that if we are going to make this work, if this is going to keep ISIL from becoming a worldwide problem for us, we are going to have to find ways to work with our allies in particular to learn how to fight these wars better. And that is one of the reasons why the encouragement that we saw, perhaps, from Camp David, that we need to start creating these types of Arab rapid reaction forces or help them train better how to build and work with fighting forces in other countries. People talk about: Should Saudi Arabia create its own version of the Quds force? I don't know. That is a really tough question.

But this is something where we have to recognize the limits of what we have there. The other issue when it comes to the sanctions relief, and I hit this on my earlier points but wanted to hit it again, on the conventional side is a huge problem, especially if we start seeing a relaxation of the conventional arms embargo or the missile technology control regimes. Those are things that could happen in a deal. And if that happens, we could see a real shifting of the conventional balance of power in the Gulf in a direction that is dangerous for the U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, in addition to the pressure it is going to put on our Gulf allies and accelerate the conventional arms race that the chairwoman was mentioning earlier. So I think on both the asymmetric fight, the proxy fight, and the conventional fight, the potential nuclear deal is a real disaster for us.

Mr. WEINBERG. You had mentioned the fight in Afghanistan. And I just want to note a terror finance case that relates. There was an organization known as Revival of Islamic Heritage Society in Kuwait which has branches all over the world, including in Pakistan. The United States first sanctioned the Pakistan branch and another regional branch, and several years later, sanctioned the headquarters in Kuwait as well. And, yet, indications suggest that the Kuwaitis have never taken significant action against RIHS within their own territory, even though we believe that it was functioning, including in Pakistan, as a channel for funds to al-Qaeda in South and Central Asia. The reported office director of the Pakistan office, both before and immediately after it was under U.S. sanctions at the time, was a Jordanian national named Khalil al-Zeer, who then, for many years, went on to be the executive direc-

tor of a prominent charity in Qatar named the Eid Bin Muhammad Al Thani Charitable Society. One of the founding board members of the Eid Bin Muhammad Al Thani Charitable Society, was recently sanctioned by the United States and the United Nation on charges of providing up to $2 million a month to the organization we now know as ISIS. Alzeer left the country in 2014. And the organization threw him a going-away party.

The most recent State Department counterterrorism country report said that one of the positive steps that Qatar took against terror finance was to deport an individual who was a terror financier of Jordanian nationality who worked at a Qatari charity. Could it be Khalil al-Zeer? It could. Could it be somebody else? It could. Regardless of who that individual is, the fact is that Qatar's supposedly positive step that the administration is citing for fighting terror finance is to deport somebody rather than arrest them and try them. That they did the same with Hamas financiers according to the Christian Science Monitor quite recently. And that Kuwait is doing the same with alleged Nusra Front financiers as well.

Arresting them and releasing them is very worrisome. And until we get at this problem of seed funding going to terror groups throughout the world from primarily Gulf private financiers in these early stages when we get these start-up terror groups, it is going to be extremely hard to keep these conflicts from getting to the point where we need to go in, or our allies need to go in militarily and take on the problem when they have conquered territory.

Mr. CLAWSON. You are making the point to me that, the way I would put it, we are undermanaging our foes, in this case, Iran, and we are undermanaging our so-called friends.

Mr. WEINBERG. Yes.

Mr. CLAWSON. And my second conclusion on that is we are not helping Israel enough because they are right over there. And, you know, words like what you just said lead me to believe that if I were them, I would want a few extra weapons if everybody around me was arming like this. Dr. Katzman?

Mr. KATZMAN. Thank you. I mean, again, I wouldn't dispute everything Dr. Weinberg is saying. But I would also note Kuwait is hosting the headquarters for our anti-ISIS mission right now. I would point out also that Qatar is hosting forward headquarters for U.S. Central Command. Yes, there are these actors in the Gulf states. We are not disputing that. There was an minister in Kuwait for the Awazem tribe, Al Ajmi, who was allegedly posting, making posts on Twitter and raising money for al-Nusra I believe. And the Kuwaitis fired him. Now, they didn't necessarily arrest him, they didn't punish him. But they did take him away from his ministry.

So the issue is to get at some of this, what Dr. Weinberg is talking about, would probably require a level of U.S. intrusiveness into the internal dynamics, tribal dynamics, political dynamics. It would require a level of intrusiveness that might interfere with our broader strategic plan in the Gulf.

Mr. CLAWSON. Okay. I really have to cut it off because we have got to go. I thank all of you for your participation and your patience as the committee comes and goes. But these are obviously life-and-death kind of stuff. So I appreciate your contributions today.

[Whereupon, at 3:41 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

Material Submitted for the Record

SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128

Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), Chairman

July 2, 2015

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held by the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at http://www.ForeignAffairs.house.gov):

DATE: Thursday, July 9, 2015

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

SUBJECT: The Gulf Cooperation Council Camp David Summit: Any Results?

WITNESSES:

Mr. Michael Eisenstadt
Kahn Fellow
Director
Military and Security Studies Program
The Washington Institute for Near East Policy

Mr. J. Matthew McInnis
Resident Fellow
American Enterprise Institute

David Andrew Weinberg, Ph.D.
Senior Fellow
Foundation for Defense of Democracies

Kenneth Katzman, Ph.D.
Specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs
Congressional Research Service

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON *Middle East and North Africa* HEARING

Day *Thursday* **Date** *7/9/2015* **Room** *2172*

Starting Time *2:19 p.m.* **Ending Time** *3:41p.m.*

Recesses *0* (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____)

Presiding Member(s)
Chairman Ros-Lehtinen

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session ✓
Executive (closed) Session ✓
Televised ✓
Electronically Recorded (taped) ✓
Stenographic Record ✓

TITLE OF HEARING:
The Gulf Cooperation Council Camp David Summit: Any Results?

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:
Chairman Ros-Lehtinen, Reps. Chabot, Weber, Clawson, Deutch, Connolly and Boyle.

NON-SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: *(Mark with an * if they are not members of full committee.)*

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes ✓ **No** ☐
(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*
SFR - Rep. Connolly

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____
or
TIME ADJOURNED *3:41 p.m.*

Subcommittee Staff Director

Statement for the Record
Submitted by Mr. Connolly of Virginia

The United States' relationships with the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have long been defined by defense partnerships and shared security interests. However, these strategic relationships do not exist to perpetuate hostility with external enemies. Rather, they serve as a means for deescalating conflict and cooperating on regional issues. This multilateral charge is more difficult than asserting unilateral defense prerogatives. However, collaboration, dialogue, and an eye towards enduring security objectives such as governance reforms constitute a more sustainable path to regional stability. It is with these tenets and objectives of the U.S.-GCC relationship in mind that President Obama convened the GCC Camp David Summit in May.

The GCC countries are at the confluence of multiple conflicts that are destabilizing the Middle East and they have yet to find a united front within the Council or with the U.S. on some of the most pressing security concerns facing the region. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar have provided military support to competing governments in Libya. Rival Syrian rebel factions have received support from GCC countries, and across the Council there are varying levels of material support for military operations in Yemen.

However, there is a reason invitations to the Camp David Summit were extended on the occasion of the announcement of a political framework for a nuclear deal with Iran. Iran is playing a documented and subversive role in Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Iraq, and GCC countries have been vocal in their concern regarding a nuclear deal's potential to advance Iran's regional ambitions. That is why, for the purposes of aligning expectations for the nuclear negotiations, it is not insignificant that the U.S.- GCC Camp David Joint Statement concluded that "a comprehensive, verifiable deal that fully addresses the regional and international concerns about Iran's nuclear program is in the security interests of GCC member states as well as the United States and the international community."

Discord with the GCC countries is hardly a demonstration of a lack of leadership or proof positive that the U.S. is acting against its own interests. If disagreement can lead to engagement, reconciliation, and cooperation, then the collaborative relationships the U.S. has built with GCC countries are serving their vital purpose. The Summit Joint Statement brought that dynamic into full view with provisions on the protection of human rights, fighting Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, further coordination on Operation Decisive Storm in Yemen, and resolving to jointly counter Iran's destabilizing actions in the region.

I look forward to hearing from the witnesses on how engagement at the Camp David Summit can be developed into concrete U.S.-GCC harmonized policies that address threats to security and stability in the Middle East and North Africa.

○