

DEFENSE & INTELLIGENCE PROJECTS

# A SAUDI ARABIAN DEFENSE DOCTRINE:

Mapping the expanded force structure the Kingdom needs to lead the Arab world, stabilize the region, and meet its global responsibilities

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Cover photo: A Royal Saudi Air Force F-15E Strike Eagle aircraft takes off on a training mission, Jan. 27, 2011. (USAF / Senior Airman Brett Clashman)

# Acronyms & Abbreviations

<b>KSA</b>	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
<b>SDD</b>	Saudi Defense Doctrine
<b>NSC</b>	National Security Council of Saudi Arabia
<b>GIP</b>	General Intelligence Presidency of Saudi Arabia (main foreign intelligence service)
<b>MOI</b>	Ministry of Interior of Saudi Arabia
<b>MOD</b>	Ministry of Defense of Saudi Arabia
<b>RSAF</b>	Royal Saudi Air Force
<b>RSADF</b>	Royal Saudi Air Defense Force
<b>RSLF</b>	Royal Saudi Land Forces (Army)
<b>RSNF</b>	Royal Saudi Naval Forces (Navy)
<b>SANG</b>	Saudi Arabian National Guard
<b>SMF</b>	Strategic Missile Forces
<b>KFCRIS</b>	King Faisal Center for Research & Islamic Studies
<b>KACST</b>	King Abdulaziz City for Science & Technology
<b>CERT</b>	Saudi Computer Emergency Response Team
<b>NCES</b>	Saudi National Center for Electronic Security
<b>NIC</b>	Saudi National Information Center
<b>SPA</b>	Saudi Press Agency
<b>GCC</b>	Gulf Cooperation Council of the Arab Gulf States
<b>UAE</b>	United Arab Emirates
<b>MENA</b>	Middle East & North Africa Region
<b>AQAP</b>	Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula
<b>PRAC</b>	Prevention, Rehabilitation & Aftercare Anti-Radicalization Campaign in KSA
<b>UNSC</b>	United Nations Security Council
<b>OPEC</b>	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
<b>JODI</b>	Joint Data Initiative, International Energy Forum
<b>NASA</b>	US National Aeronautics Space Agency
<b>EIA</b>	Energy Information Administration, U.S. Energy Department of Energy
<b>NPT</b>	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
<b>WMD</b>	Weapons of Mass Destruction
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product (size of economy) of a given nation
<b>MAD</b>	Mutually Assured Destruction (nuclear theoretical paradigm)





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# Preface

This study posits what a Saudi Defense Doctrine (SDD) could offer to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) as it navigates its new position as the regional Arab leader and a world power. The suggested military posture is based on the philosophical underpinnings of the German Schlieffen Plan of World War I and its theoretical scenario that allowed the contemporaneous German Empire to fight a war on two opposite fronts simultaneously. This SDD predicts that KSA might find itself in such a situation over the medium to long term. Thus, KSA's military development should prioritize a deployment strategy across its large territory to address two potential concurrent conflicts and protect the homeland as it simultaneously safeguards strategic allies. In order to execute such a strategy, it is necessary to map out a plan for KSA's military development and enhancement.

This assessment, presented solely as my own opinion as a scholar of strategic affairs, is an exercise in what could become years from now a white paper on strategic doctrine for KSA. **It should in no way be construed as an official government paper, nor interpreted as the official opinion of the Saudi government or any of its affiliated agencies.**

In its presentation of Saudi defense capabilities and suggested strategic shifts, this document does not reveal any government confidential information nor does it use any specific current numbers on the Saudi military establishment. Instead, it proposes a realistic estimate of what KSA's military capabilities could be within five years. These figures are based on the projected increase of defense obligations and expectations in the next five to ten years concomitant with the Kingdom's new role and responsibilities in the international community.

While this strategic doctrine document does not include an estimated cost of the proposed militarization program, KSA has already committed over \$150 billion to principles identical to those expressed in this doctrine. Of that \$150 billion, \$100 billion comes from programs involving US companies—a number expected to increase to about \$250 billion over the next five years. It is clear the Saudi government has financially committed to the enhancement of KSA's inevitable role and responsibility on the international scene.

KSA must access—and then accept—these new political, martial, and financial responsibilities if it wishes to consolidate its centrality on a global scale. This is not only essential in order to help the Saudi state develop and enhance its ability to adapt to the ever-changing political, security, and economic realities across the world. In addition, a realistic assessment of Saudi capabilities and a pronouncement of its potential, as seen from within, will help counter the widespread misconception that KSA is a fragile state with its future at the mercy of foreign powers.

I hope that this assessment is just the first step in a much longer journey toward the understanding of KSA and its national security doctrine in this new world. I produced this assessment with the intention that it will generate debate and constructive criticism in order to progress the project from an initial paper into a full-fledged book-length white paper next year. Therefore, all feedback is welcome.

Before moving on to the actual report, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the people who supported

me throughout the yearlong assessment of Saudi strategy and defense prerogatives. My sincere thanks to Professor Graham Allison, Director of the Belfer Center for Science & International Affairs; Dr. Gary Samore, Executive Director of the Belfer Center; University Professor Joseph Nye and, last but not least, Brigadier General (USA Ret.) Kevin Ryan, Director of Defense & Intelligence Projects at the Belfer Center—it is their many valuable contributions that buttress the document you are about to read.

I also must profusely thank HRH Prince Turki Al Faisal; the idea for this project came to me several years ago when I worked for His Royal Highness during his tenures as the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to the UK & Ireland, and then to the U.S. His comments and suggestions on this document's earlier drafts have been invaluable and I am extremely grateful to him. I would also like to mention Dr. Saud Al Sarhan and the research team he heads at the King Faisal Center for Research & Islamic Studies (KFCRIS) for all the support they have provided me since my appointment at the Belfer Center.

I am also deeply grateful to HRH Navy Captain (Ret.) Prince Sultan bin Khaled Al Faisal for sharing his outlook and strategic thinking on the future developments of the Royal Saudi Naval Forces. Prince Sultan's experience as the Special Forces Task Force Commander with two battalions under his command during the Houthi war in 2009 made his guidance to this document all the more important.

Furthermore, I owe a debt of gratitude to all the officers, officials, academics and journalists-commentators in the Kingdom that have helped me research and better understand Saudi strategic planning and thinking.

Additionally, my special appreciations go out to Professor Meghan O'Sullivan; Senior Fellow David Ignatius; Professor Mathew Bunn, Co-Principal Investigator of the Project on Managing the Atom at the Belfer Center; Dr. Steven Miller, Director of the International Security Program and Co-Principal Investigator of the Project on Managing the Atom; Dr. Martin Malin, Executive Director of the Project on Managing the Atom; and the entire team and national security fellows for the numerous discussions and debates that have helped me tremendously in writing this document.

From outside the Harvard community, I would like to thank my PhD thesis advisors, Professors Yezid Sayigh and Anatol Lieven from the Department of War Studies at King's College in London; Professor Shai Feldman, Director of the Crown Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Brandeis University; and Dr. Anthony Cordesman, Chair of the Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy at the Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS), for their invaluable advice and guidance.

Finally, I would like to thank Josh Burek, Director of Communications & Outreach; Sharon Wilke, Deputy Communications Director; and Andrew Facini at the Belfer Center for their instrumental work in putting together and rolling out this document.

# Introduction

This proposal for a Saudi Arabian Defense Doctrine (SDD) hopes to initiate an essential internal reform effort that responds to the shifting demands of today and the potential threats of tomorrow. In the last decade, the world has watched as regime changes, revolutions, and sectarian strife transformed the Middle East into an unrecognizable political arena plagued by instability, inefficiency, and failing states. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA)—the Arab world’s central power and last remaining major Arab heavyweight on the international scene—has emerged as the ipso facto leader responsible for regional stability and development.

If the Kingdom is to consolidate its place as the regional Arab leader and help its neighbors fight for stability, it must be well organized and well prepared for the upcoming challenges it will face, both outside its borders and from within. KSA must revisit its own national defense and military strategies in order to institutionalize its defensive and strategic initiatives.

Therefore, this assessment proposes a Saudi Defense Doctrine—with a five-year implementation plan softened by a ten-year grace period—that will articulate its defensive doctrine, analyze its strategic goals, and identify potential military threats. This is a proactive SDD, responding to the shifting political arena—most specifically the decline of Western interventionism and the rise of Saudi leadership—in order to deliver two necessary objectives of survival and security: 1. to protect KSA against internal threats such as extremism and terrorism; and 2. to protect the Arab world from instability created by hegemonic politics, power struggles, and sectarian divides, thus maintaining order in the Middle East & North Africa (MENA) region.

In order to fulfill these necessary objectives, this doctrine outlines seven parallel goals to better structure the nation’s intent. The seven goals of the SDD are as follows:

1. Defend the homeland
2. Succeed in counterterrorism efforts
3. Bolster the defense of partner states
4. Prevail in power projection missions
5. Deter the spread of weapons of mass destruction
6. Establish two separate commands for cyberspace and space
7. Strengthen inter-agency partnerships

While all of these goals will require economic and political action, it is the defense efforts that will anchor its success. As such, this proposed SDD represents an initiative to strengthen Saudi military strategy to protect the country from internal as well as external threats and rebalance regional power dynamics in order to increase stability in the Middle East and the wider Muslim world.

This is the right moment for KSA to strengthen its defense design, and the necessity of an SDD only grows with time. KSA faces a complex, uncertain, and ever-changing regional landscape. The decline of Western power in the region, the spread of weapons of mass destruction, the rise of technology and a new cyber-arena, and a series of sectarian divisions and extremism will continue to pose profound challenges to regional and international order.



It is paramount that KSA evolve with these changes and end 2014 with a revised outlook at its defense policies. With the influence of the U.S. and the main European powers slowly receding in the Middle East, KSA must adopt a Muslim-centric viewpoint and rise to the challenges of its region to accept responsibility as a strong and sustained state that can help achieve stability. KSA is the only Arab nation able to afford and sustain large-scale strategic and defense programs as well as stabilize regional unrest. As such, KSA faces an obligation to reform itself to fulfill its responsibility as the indispensable regional leader as well as the ultimate regional defender.

While this report offers suggestions to the state regarding the format, focus, and execution of such a strategic doctrine, it mostly hopes to initiate a debate on Saudi military strategies both at home and within the region. As such, constructive criticism of this work is not only accepted but encouraged, cradling the hope that collaboration and conversation will lead to the best proposal possible: one that could be officiated as the first comprehensive Saudi Defense Doctrine.

**Map 1 – Political Map of Saudi Arabia**



Source: [www.ephotoPIX.com](http://www.ephotoPIX.com)

**Map 2 – Saudi Arabia's Land and Sea Borders**



Source: U.S. Government



# Goals

As mentioned above, the Saudi Defense Doctrine (SDD) offers seven goals that will help the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) succeed in its two primary survival and security objectives: to protect against internal and external threats, and to mitigate unrest in the Arab and Muslim worlds.

The following section details the seven goals, listed earlier, as well as the obstacles that KSA must overcome to achieve those set goals through military strategies. The discussion organizes each goal into smaller sub-goals in order to tease out the nuances and complications of each mission and strategize accordingly. By thoroughly examining the current situation in KSA and the extent to which it has and has not already contributed to the realization of these essential goals, the SDD sets out to identify the vulnerabilities and opportunities within its current defense mechanisms and reform them to better serve and protect the Kingdom.

## Goal I – To Defend the Homeland

The first goal for Saudi survival is to defend the homeland and protect its borders against potential tensions, aggressions, and any other neighboring problems that could spill across state lines and challenge the nation-state. This goal should be divided into three sub-goals based on geography: defending the northern border; defending the southern border; and defending the surrounding sea-lanes.

Saudi relations with its northern neighbors Jordan, Iraq, and Iran range from extremely close to tenuous to highly precarious. Based on the current political climate, the KSA border control and military has already begun to prioritize presence along the Saudi-Iraqi border in the north. During the first and second Gulf War, KSA had to primarily regulate Iraqi refugees as well as arms smugglers entering the country, but the collapse of the former Iraqi regime has changed the nature of this border threat. Terrorist cells have emerged in the power vacuum, and Iraq has also transformed into a popular gateway country for drug smugglers. Increased border control in the north is imperative to defend the homeland against terrorist infiltration, violence, and drug-related crime.

Iraq is considered a much larger threat than KSA's other northern neighbor and close strategic ally, Jordan, due to the former's alliance with KSA's biggest regional competitor, Iran. In fact, Iran indirectly sponsored an attack from an Iraqi Shia militia known as the Al Mukhtar brigade, which dropped six mortar bombs onto KSA's northwestern fringe. While the assault caused no injuries or significant damage, it was sent as a warning against Saudi regional diplomacy and gives proof that non-state armed groups can reach KSA border stations and patrols. This sort of unsolicited aggression on the northern border evinces how imperative strengthened military strategy is to homeland defense.

The defense issues surrounding the Saudi southern border are predominately concentrated in Yemen, inarguably KSA's most contentious abutting country. KSA should continue to monitor the riots and tribal insurrection within Yemen, the rise of Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), and the influx of illegal immigrants hoping to escape the instability and poverty of Yemen through

the Saudi border.

The Houthis present a serious strategic as well as physical threat to KSA (See Map 3). The Saudi-Yemeni border proved itself a battleground for Saudi troops and the Yemeni Shia rebellion in 2009, and the 2010 ceasefire has not fully alleviated the tension. As it stands, the Houthis still control a number of northwestern border areas in Saada, Jawf, and Hajjah, and are looking to expand their regional presence with access to the Red Sea. Even if the Houthi attempt to consolidate power doesn't re-spark violence between the two groups, the actions and expansion of the Iran-backed Houthis have serious ramifications for Saudi sectarian relations and overall regional hegemony. As such, Saudi defense on the southern border is integral to the goal to defend the homeland. Most importantly, however, all defense measures KSA makes against Yemen should be taken tactfully and thoughtfully, as relations between the two are historically troubled.

### Map 3 – Saudi/Houthi Area of Conflict in Yemen



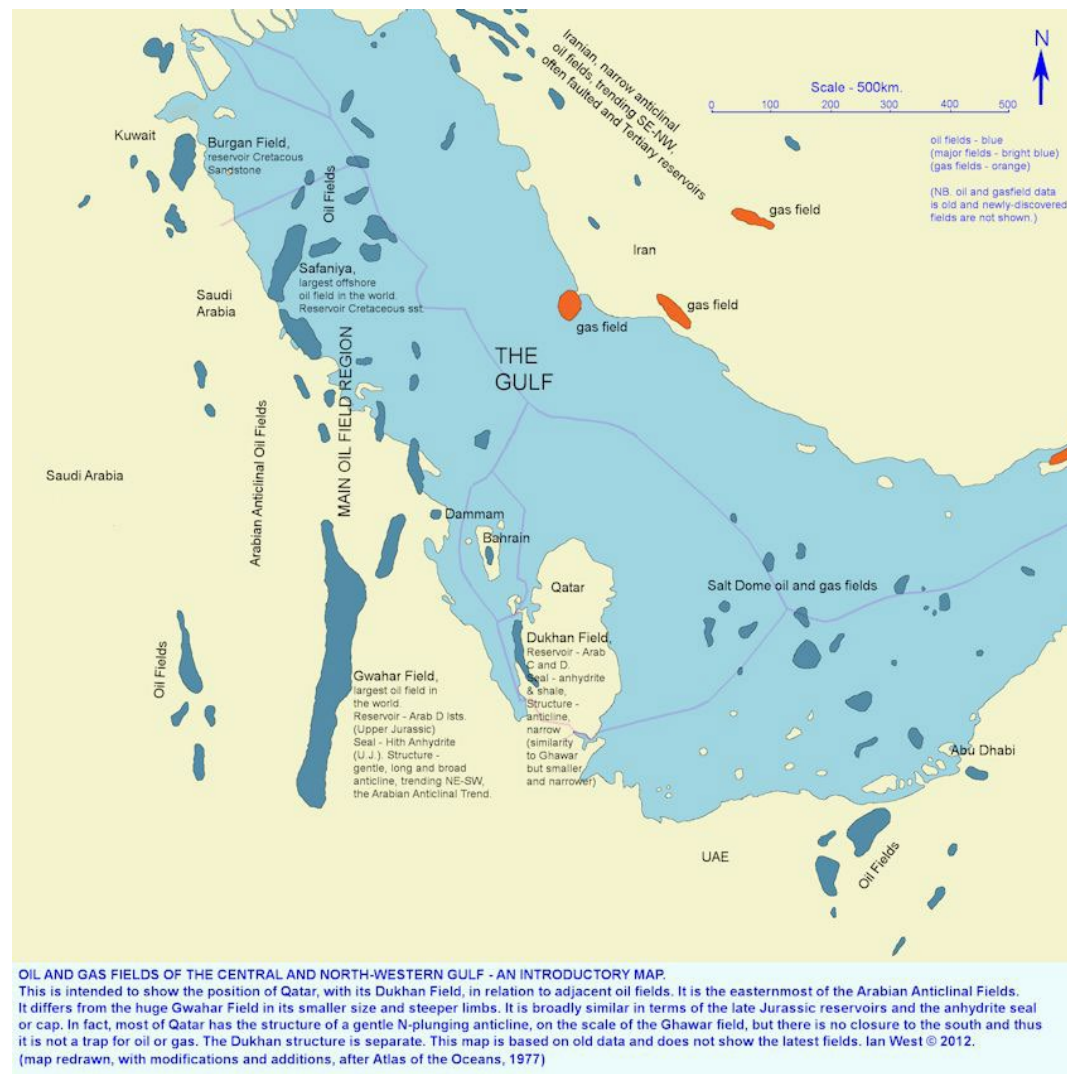
Source: The Economist

Finally, in order to defend the homeland in its entirety, KSA must reconsider its maritime surveillance and defense measures for its surrounding sea-lanes, as well as capitalize on its air force as a protecting power. The Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF) and Royal Saudi Air Defense Force (RSADF) remain integral to KSA homeland security, and KSA is establishing a highly sophisticated and advanced offensively and defensively capable air force. RSAF can be used both to maintain stability across the Middle East, as well as protect its own offshore oil fields, trading choke points, and overall national territory. It should be re-emphasized that on June 5, 1984, two Iranian F-4 fighters crossed the “Fahd Line” delineated air defense zone to potentially attack a Saudi target and were immediately intercepted and shot down by two Saudi F-15s. This show of force completely eliminated any credible Iranian air threats to this day and Tehran has never again attempted to penetrate KSA air space.



The successful “Fahd Line” established in April 1984 over the offshore oil fields in the Gulf (see Map 4) should be expanded to cover the Saudi coast on the Red Sea as well. Activating preventive air power around the Red Sea could block Houthi access to the coastline, and protect KSA borders against the area of conflict demarcated on Map 3. The RSAF should also continue its defense over the Gulf to protect its gas fields and massive energy offshore infrastructure.

**Map 4 – Main Saudi Onshore & Offshore Oil Fields**



Source: University of Southampton

KSA’s economy is dependent on the sea; in addition to the country’s enormous and essential maritime trade, some of the Kingdom’s largest and most productive oil fields are offshore. These assets are all the more vulnerable because KSA does not control the water’s choke points or entrances. Additionally, these channels are major targets for terrorists due to the countless refineries, pipelines, offshore oil facilities, and trading posts that contribute significantly to the national and global economy. As such, piracy has become a popular tactic for terrorist organizations in the Gulf of Aden, the entry point to the vital Bab Al Mandab gateway into the Red Sea—a tactic KSA must

be prepared to defend itself against. Again, KSA must look to maintain its air force in order to keep choke points clear for trade and monitor the entrances.

In short, KSA, through the Royal Saudi Naval Forces (RSNF), needs to protect its freedom of navigation from maritime aggressors and maintain naval parity on both sea-lanes and have a strategic presence in the Suez Canal Bab Al Mandab and Strait of Hormuz zones as well as in the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea.

## **Goal II – To Maintain Success in Counterterrorism Efforts**

The Saudi defense mechanism should further pursue the survival of the state through a second goal: to consolidate its success in counterterrorism efforts. This goal should be approached through three separate agendas: defending against terrorist attacks at home; defending against terrorist attacks abroad; and defending against the dissemination of extreme rhetoric and terrorist ideology, both at home and abroad.

It is not a strategic secret that KSA prioritizes its defense against terrorism; since the discovery that 15 of the 19 September 2001 hijackers were Saudis, paired with the Riyadh attacks in May 2003, KSA has significantly upgraded and expanded its security and intelligence organs to respond to the rise of terrorism at home and abroad. It is a particularly vulnerable terrorist target due to its role as the world's largest oil exporter and holder of spare capacity (See Table 1). An attack on KSA would not only undermine its security and stability, but would also economically weaken the international monetary system that is heavily dependent on the stable and sustained free-flow of Saudi oil.

The risk of an attack on Saudi oil infrastructures was made salient in 2006 when KSA thwarted a bombing at Abqaiq, the world's largest petroleum processing complex. KSA's security services were able to prematurely detonate the bombs and avoid an outright attack on the oil facility. This attack made it clear that KSA needs to prioritize the defense of its land—and its oil facilities—from terrorist attacks.

The other major targets for terrorist groups are the Two Holy Mosques in Makkah and Madinah. Any successful terrorist attack on either of the two holiest sites in Islam would substantially undermine the standing and prestige of KSA in the Muslim world as the guardians and servants of the Two Holy Mosques. As such, the defense and security of Makkah and Madinah are of primordial and vital importance to the Saudi state.

The danger of terrorism is, of course, caused by the contagion of extremism and its borderless nature. Terrorism is an international crisis and thus KSA cannot protect itself wholly by protecting against terrorism within its own borders. The Saudi state needs to continue to invest time, money, and manpower to quell terrorism abroad as well.

**Table 1 – World’s Largest Oil Exporters & Spare Capacity Holders (2012-2013)**

Country	Exports in Million Barrels Per Day 2012-2013	Spare Capacity in Million Barrels Per Day 2012-2013
Saudi Arabia	8.8 Million	2 to 2.5 Million
Russia	7.2 Million	----
UAE	2.6 Million	200,000 to 400,000
Kuwait	2.4 Million	200,000 to 400,000
Nigeria	2.2 Million	----
Iraq	2.2 Million	----
Iran	1.8 Million	* Sanctions
Angola	1.7 Million	----
Venezuela	1.7 Million	* Political Instability
Norway	1.6 Million	----
Canada	1.5 Million	----
Algeria	1.5 Million	----
Qatar	1.3 Million	100,000 to 200,000
Kazakhstan	1.3 Million	----
Libya	1.3 Million	* Political Instability

Source – OPEC, JODI, EIA & Personal Estimates

KSA is already active in international counterterrorism efforts, having recently donated \$100 million to the United Nations International Center for Counterterrorism. It has also strengthened its cooperation with Pakistan and India to combat terrorism in Afghanistan. The South Asian country has become a safe haven for Islamic terrorists, and activity in Afghanistan has historically spilled into KSA, Pakistan, and India. The biggest terrorist threat for KSA, of course, is its neighbor Yemen. The Al Qaeda affiliate in Yemen, AQAP, has converted Saudi nationals to terrorism and harbored Saudi terrorists within their borders. Additionally, a certain specialized terrorist cell has attempted an assassination plot on the Saudi Minister of Interior who commands the KSA Counterterrorism Program. The threat of terrorism is inescapably omnipresent and subsequently the scope of the KSA military needs to include counterterrorism efforts abroad.

It is dangerous, however, for the military mechanism to see terrorism only in terms of attacks and assassination attempts; the most precarious element behind any terrorist organization is the dissemination of extremism. It is the ideology that drives indoctrination. KSA is particularly susceptible to extremism based on its firm Islamic foundation that sometimes seems at odds with its economic prosperity and burgeoning modernism. Similarly, Saudi school curricula have in the past been linked to the inculcation of extremist intolerance and jihad. KSA has already made major steps in curriculum reform, and it has created a highly successful counterterrorism strategy that targets ideological rehabilitation and promotes counter-radicalization efforts.

The public role in countering terrorism is immeasurable. KSA’s ability to galvanize public support for its counterterrorism campaign measures the success of the campaign. If KSA continues to concentrate on ideological counterterrorism and cultivate ways to de-radicalize citizens at home and abroad, it will maintain its global reputation as an innovator and frontrunner in counterterrorism solutions.

## **Goal III – To Bolster the Defense of Strategic Allies**

With the decline of U.S. and European interventionism and the pervasive regional instability following the so-called Arab Spring, KSA has emerged as the undisputed Arab regional leader. It must pioneer a new paradigm for regional stability by investing in the strengthening and stabilizing efforts of its strategic allies in its close neighborhood and beyond. To bolster the defense of its strategic allies, KSA needs to focus on three tasks: strengthening the foundations of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and protecting certain of its member states; institutionalizing the shared military capabilities of GCC; and containing the effects of the so-called Arab Spring on the region.

Since the founding of GCC in 1981, KSA has been partnered with its fellow Arab States bordering the Gulf: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). However, in its 30 plus years of existence, the success and strength of the attempted regional integration has been repeatedly called into question. Most recently, KSA has initiated a bold effort to not only better integrate—but unify—the GCC states into a union. A unified confederacy, according to KSA, would help protect the region against sweeping unrest and instability.

This proposal—delivered once in 2011 and again at the Gulf Summit in 2012—has not been well received. In fact, UAE and Bahrain are the only two states to have agreed to such a plan without reservations; the rest of the Gulf countries do not seem to see unification as the answer to the Council's past performance. KSA will continue on the path of a Gulf Union through stronger integration with the core states in order to preserve and rebuild the regional order. KSA is finalizing a comprehensive plan for a Gulf Union and will propose this initiative before the end of 2014.

While founded as a political and economic union, GCC has grown to include a joint military force. And while the partner states are still unsure how to adapt the GCC foundation to respond to regional changes, they are in majority agreement regarding the consolidation and continuation of a shared military apparatus. Although GCC already has the Peninsula Shield Force—a military force that has most recently aided in the efforts against the Bahraini uprising—the core states of GCC hope to expand its defense measures. Recently, a majority of the GCC partnered states have agreed on a joint military command and police force—or a Joint Defense Council—as well as a Gulf Academy for Strategic and Security Studies to standardize military education and training. The increased institutionalization and construction of regional military architecture will help project GCC unity and protect the region against both internal instability and external threats.

Most of the debated changes regarding GCC and its military apparatus are in response to the so-called Arab Spring and the concomitant shift in regional affairs. The waves of revolution have weakened or collapsed many Arab states. Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen and especially Syria, have all been politically, economically, and socially compromised by the supposed pro-democracy uprisings and this instability threatens the survival not only of the suffering nations, but of several other Arab and African nations as well. Most prominent among them are Iraq, Sudan and Somalia.

Consequently, the well-being and security of post-Arab Awakening nations and strategic allies are vital to KSA national security, and KSA will continue to prioritize aid to such areas. They are Egypt, Pakistan, Palestine, Yemen, Lebanon, Morocco, Jordan, Malaysia, and Bangladesh. KSA's expanding foreign aid program is a necessity to maintain stability in the Middle East-North Africa region and the wider Muslim world.

## Goal IV – To Succeed in Power Projection

While the capabilities and strength of the military are an indisputably important aspect of a nation's defense apparatus, the effectiveness of its expeditionary warfare—or power projection—is no less vital to KSA's strategic standing. In the case of vital national security being threatened by outside powers on any strategic allies, KSA's power projection infrastructure must be prepared for preemptive actions in not only one, but two theaters of operation simultaneously. It is essential that KSA establish its ability to rapidly react to threats, respond to crises, contribute to deterrence, and contain regional unrest. KSA will need to project power regionally and internationally, while projecting influence in the Muslim world.

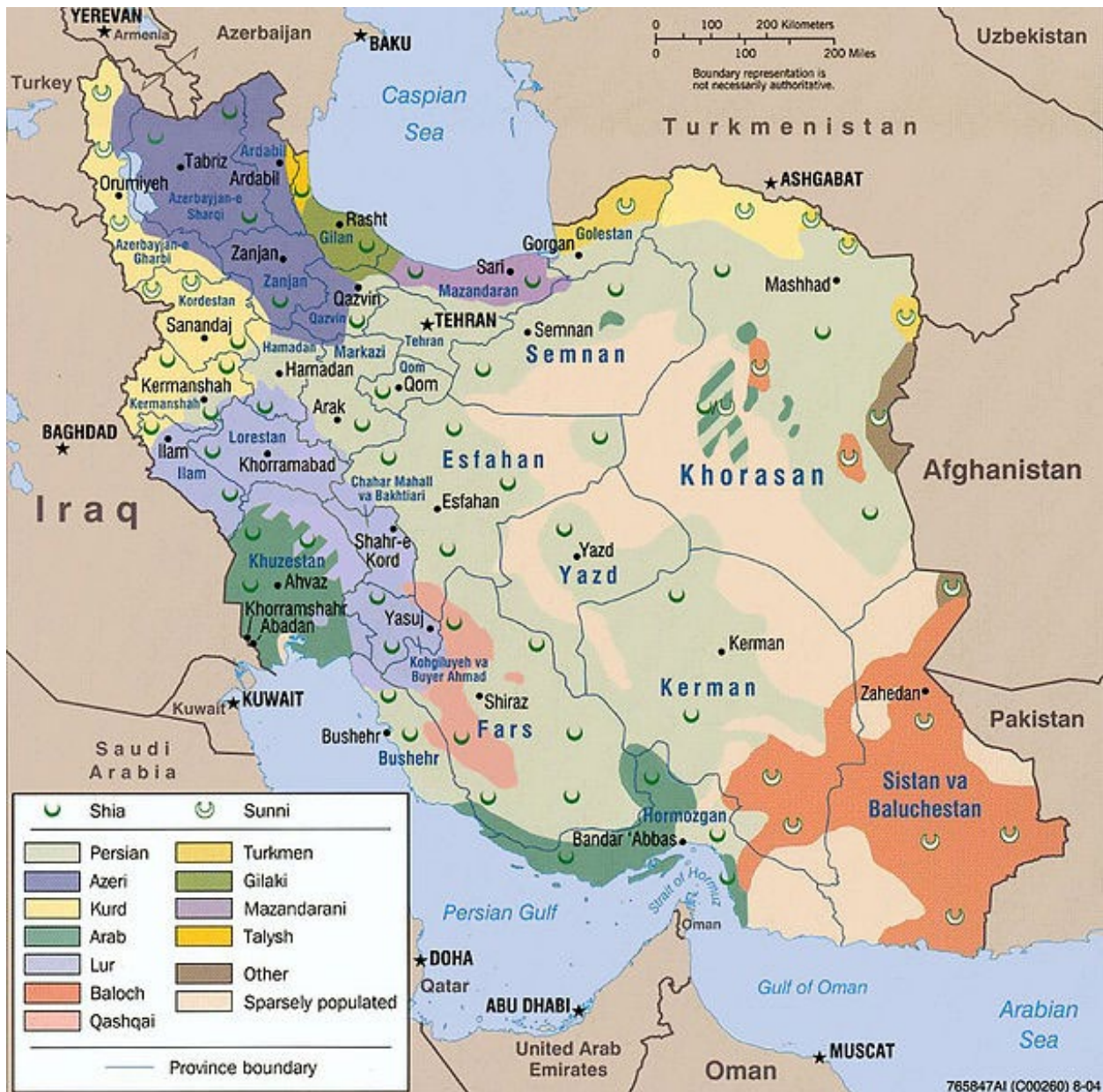
Regionally, KSA continues to limit Iran's influence in the region through the inherent weaknesses of the Persian state. In particular, the domestic ethno-religious realities show a mosaic of various competing ethnic and religious groups that, in certain instances, are in overt conflict with each other over power and resources (see Map 5). KSA perceives Iran as the main threat to regional stability and looks to upgrade its conventional military might, and thus its power projection, to deter future Iranian aggression. In terms of defense budgets, KSA allots almost five times the amount as Iran. These massive investments have led to a substantial increase in military manpower in the last decade. However, the investment has not yet paid off. In the last decade, Iran has managed to expand its regional influence into Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria. Similarly, the KSA military has still depended on the U.S., UK, and France for military advice and training. While the current expansion of the Saudi military will be immense, KSA has to shift its doctrine focus to the quality of its forces instead of the quantity in order to better streamline its forces and make them highly mobile and effective.

To project power internationally, KSA aims to slowly establish itself as an alternative to Western military interventionism in the Arab world and provide its own martial solutions to crises that arise not only in the MENA region, but further abroad as well. KSA, through the Peninsula Shield Force, has already spearheaded a considerably successful military action in Bahrain. Similarly, the Kingdom asserted its independence when it declined a seat on the UN Security Council due to its passivity on Syria and the Palestinian issue. KSA will continue to pioneer new military paradigms and defense solutions in the region and the wider Muslim world.

Finally, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia must continue to project its religious influence within the Muslim world. As the host of the two holiest cities, Makkah and Madinah, KSA's role as the cradle and protector of Islam was inherited through its very geography. Its military apparatus, defense responsibilities, and foreign policy priorities were structured accordingly. Thus, KSA should not only continue to respect and abide by its core Muslim principles when it forges its military strategies to retain its religious legitimacy, it should also continue to strengthen its religiously driven defense and diplomatic mechanisms in order to continue to project soft power and consolidate its influence in the wider Muslim world.



**Map 5 – Iran’s Ethno-Religious Distribution**



Source: University of Texas at Austin

## **Goal V – To Deter the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)**

KSA has been steadfast in its objection to Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) and its insistence that every Middle Eastern state eradicate all such capabilities from the region. However, as other nations have failed to respond with the same urgency, KSA has had to adapt to the unfortunate but nonetheless unavoidable emergence of the Middle East as a region with WMDs. To deter the spread of WMDs, KSA set out to modify its military strategies in three separate ways: continuing to promote the Middle East as a WMD-Free Zone; increasing its detection, interdiction, and containment capabilities; and creating military deterrence against nuclear threats.

KSA articulated its official stance on WMDs through its signatures on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, and the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as its continued promotion of a WMD Free Zone in the Middle East. Historically, KSA has sided with a WMDs-free military strategy and has invested interest in continuing on this path to deter WMDs.

Similarly, KSA is a participant in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism that not only promotes the deterrence of WMDs but also helps develop participating nations' abilities to detect and respond to nuclear attacks. Accordingly, KSA has prepared itself for the possibility of a nuclear Middle East region. It should continue to enhance its capabilities to combat nuclear attacks independently through increased detection and response initiatives, as well as investigate new ways to protect itself against WMDs and ensure that such weapons do not fall into the hands of terrorists.

While KSA has yet to develop a nuclear weapons program, it must be made clear as a matter of policy that this posture will immediately have to be altered if Iran acquires nuclear weapons. Under such a scenario, KSA will be forced to reconsider its nonproliferation strategy, especially since Iran will join Israel as being the only two powers in the Middle East to possess nuclear arsenals with delivery systems. Hence, KSA should develop a contingency plan to create a credible nuclear deterrent to protect itself and its strategic allies (the details of this plan are beyond the scope of this document for now). A potential Saudi doctrine would prioritize the safety of its citizens and the stability of the Arab world—that is, its ability to prevent a nuclear Iran and protect against a hypothetical Israeli nuclear attack—over its current declared nonproliferation and WMD free agenda in the Middle East.

## **Goal VI – To Establish Two Separate Commands for Cyberspace and Space**

In order to create a comprehensive and current strategic doctrine, KSA should continue the modernization program of its military apparatus and adapt to the new cutting edge technological discoveries. There are two major commands that KSA should establish—cyberspace and space—in order to successfully compete in the international order.

This goal should be considered through three separate lenses: expanding cyber expertise and awareness; developing a comprehensive cyber-security branch of defense; and solidifying

partnerships with agencies and government to ensure maximum cyber-security. To build its space command, KSA aims to establish itself as a leading supplier of space surveillance and monitoring technologies.

The importance of increased cyber-security became salient when a self-replicating virus infected a substantial number of computers at Saudi Aramco. While the cyber attack failed to damage the actual production of oil through a spill or explosion, the virus did affect certain day-to-day business operations of the state energy behemoth. Moreover, the attack evinces an emerging trend towards cyber war and the increased sophistication in adversary cyber-capabilities. Just as KSA is a target vulnerable to terrorism due to its oil resources, its integral role in the global economy makes it susceptible to cyber attacks.

As such, Saudi survival is dependent on the collection of updated cyber intelligence and the defense apparatus's development of a comprehensive cyber-security branch of defense. Additionally, due to KSA's integral role in the global economy, the cyber-security of its government and business systems is of international concern. Therefore, KSA should look to other countries' agencies and governments as allies and work with them to share technological advancements and cyber awareness to ensure maximum collective security.

The expansion of KSA's space capabilities is a military imperative that will be vital to the overall functioning of its national security apparatus and its power projections. KSA sees space expansion as an integral step in its effort to create a knowledge-based economy as well. In particular, KSA has announced its initiative to establish itself as a leading supplier of space-based technologies such as earth-monitoring products, satellites, and interactive maps. KSA's increased interest in space clearly has peaceful purposes, but these new capabilities will also have an undeniable impact on its surveillance and defense competencies, as well as its power projections.

## **Goal VII – To Strengthen Inter-agency Partnerships**

All of these previously discussed goals would be futile without the final goal to strengthen inter-agency partnerships within Saudi military institutions. The entire architecture of the KSA defense needs to be strengthened and streamlined to accommodate the earlier suggested modifications, as well as maximize overall efficiency and effectiveness. In order to accomplish this, the strategy should focus on three separate tasks: advancing the coordination and consistency of national security, intelligence, and foreign policy strategy and their corresponding agencies; adapting cross-agency organizational defense mechanisms in accordance with and in response to the ever-changing domestic, regional, and international environment; and creating an inter-agency approach to assess all agencies' preparedness, capabilities, and handicaps as well as the nation's risks and challenges.

KSA already initiated structural reform through the establishment of the Saudi National Security Council (NSC) in October 2005. NSC was created to coordinate Saudi strategies regarding defense, intelligence, and foreign policy with the ultimate aim to increase effectiveness and efficiency across agencies while also maintaining the flexibility necessary to adapt to changing circumstances.

Initially, NSC was created in response to the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq and the concurrent geo-political shifts. Now, Saudi strategies must adapt to the so-called Arab Spring and the new regional environment that positions KSA as its main source of military and political

stability. The current consultative action of NSC, therefore, should be monitored in order to ensure it is functioning properly as it creates policies in response to the new domestic, regional, and international environment. The strength of the inter-agency partnership has yet to be properly tested against a second regional paradigm shift. As such, it becomes imperative that the Saudi defense system develop a way to evaluate the effectiveness of NSC; there is a need to create an unbiased assessment of all agencies' preparedness, capabilities, and handicaps as well as the nation's risks and challenges as these factors change with the times.

This SDD identifies and discusses the Kingdom's strategic goals as a means to focus the efforts of the inter-agency. Implementing the proper strategies, detailed in the following section, to fulfill these seven goals will enable the Saudi military system to protect its citizens against internal threats, defend against external threats, and prevent regional unrest—in other words, secure the state's survival.

## Strategies

To succeed in each goal detailed above, the KSA military institutions must take into account the required and necessary resources to develop and adopt appropriate strategies for the SDD. These proposed strategies aim to develop and apply military power in order to secure the KSA national interests—specifically to protect against internal threats, defend against external threats, and prevent regional unrest. As with the goals, the strategies hereunder were conceived with consideration to the local, regional, and political environment as well as the military muscle of both KSA and its allies and adversaries.

The following section suggests ways to succeed in the seven separate goals given the progress and potential of the KSA military services. The strategies detail how the Saudi state should defend the homeland, succeed in counterterrorism efforts, bolster the defense of partner states, succeed in power projection missions, deter the spread of weapons of mass destruction, establish two separate commands for cyberspace and space, and strengthen inter-agency partnerships.

### Strategy I – Defending the Homeland

In order to properly prepare to defend the homeland, KSA should create three separate ways to defend the northern border, the southern border, and the surrounding sea-lanes.

KSA's northern border remains perilously taut, as tensions between KSA and Iraq have only increased since the November 2013 mortar attack and Iraq's public criticism of Saudi diplomacy. As such, the strategy to defend the homeland at its northern border prioritizes the maintenance of its substantial land forces brigades, naval assets, and air defense systems throughout the country to preemptively deter aggression and project Saudi potential power.

These defense systems can be additionally improved, however, through a shift in the military paradigm. While the sizable GDP of the KSA economy and large military budget allows for



increased military expenditure, more attention should be spent to manning the ever-increasing military infrastructure with better-trained troops. KSA should invest more heavily in training centers, technology education, and indoctrination and consider creating a center for border research and studies. This shift toward qualitative growth over quantitative will ensure the positive effects of the increased military presence, and thus ensure the success of the strategy.

The threat on the southern border, namely from Yemen, can be contained through continued military ground forces along the border, as well as counterterrorism operations in Yemen. KSA should consolidate its military policy on its southern border by deploying RSLF's Special Forces and giving them a new mandate to eradicate the Houthi rebellion and quell its goal to establish an Iranian proxy state in the far north of Yemen.

In addition to the military presence necessary to eliminate the Houthi rebellion on its borders, KSA also needs to deal with the AQAP franchise. While KSA's crackdown successfully pushed members of the terrorist cells out of its borders, these Saudi natives have relocated nearby in Yemen. Thus, KSA has a vital national security prerogative to deter any AQAP terrorist to slip back into their home country undetected.

Lastly, KSA must alleviate vulnerability at sea through the addition of naval assets for the RSNF in the Arabian Sea, the Gulf, Red Sea, and the Gulf of Aden. These expanded naval forces will be armed to defend against attack or blockade by both sovereign and pirate ships. RSNF must insist on total regional maritime dominance, maintaining freedom of navigation while simultaneously repelling aggression. This will require control of the northern and southern approaches, from the entry into the Red Sea through the Suez Canal (See Map 6) to the Horn of African through Bab Al Mandab and the shores of the Asian subcontinent, to the Gulf through the Strait of Hormuz (See Map 7). This can be accomplished through the continued refurbishment, modernization, and expansion of the RSNF's Western and Eastern fleets with the creation of the new Southern fleet—described later in the Resources section—and through anti-ballistic defense capabilities in the Arabian Sea, Red Sea, and the Gulf, as well as increased air defenses in the region.



## Map 6 – KSA & Suez Canal



Source: Energy Information Administration

**Map 7 – KSA & Strait of Hormuz**



Source: Maritime Security Review

## **Strategy II – Consolidating Counterterrorism Successes**

To consolidate its impressive counterterrorism efforts, KSA should maintain three separate, but complimentary, ways to defend against terrorist attacks at home, terrorist attacks abroad, and the dissemination of terrorist ideology in both locales.

When it comes to domestic counterterrorism, KSA's strategies have already been lauded as some of the most sophisticated and effective in the world. Since the first attack on Saudi soil in 1995, the KSA various Special Forces has been refocused almost singularly on counterterrorism. These forces continue to be upgraded, expanded, and enhanced to shift with the changing climate. The Arab upheavals have brought new momentum to terrorism in the region, while the modern world has brought new terrorist techniques. The KSA counterterrorism program has continued training in hijack prevention, residential terrorist detection and containment, and specialized weaponry, as well as technological training to prevent terrorist hacking and monitor terrorist discourse online.

In addition to the homeland defense strategies that will mitigate foreign terrorists away from the KSA borders, KSA has a responsibility to invest in an effort to increase regional counterterrorism

efforts and share its own expertise. Specifically, KSA should substantially increase its assistance to the Yemeni government to deactivate AQAP and its influence on wayward citizens. The KSA assistance will entirely be dependent on the Yemeni government's demonstrated dedication to fight AQAP. KSA needs to be firm in its relationship with Yemen, insisting that they collaborate to create a viable and sustained counterterrorism campaign as a solution to the terrorism springing from within their borders.

Finally, KSA should export its Prevention, Rehabilitation, and Aftercare (PRAC) campaign abroad to teach other nations how to deal with indigenous terrorism. The "soft" PRAC campaign supplements military counterterrorism by targeting the ideological and intellectual causes of extremist violence. The three pillars of this soft strategy—prevention, rehabilitation, and aftercare—successfully support Saudi counterterrorism efforts through deep understanding of the extremist ideology and perpetuated promotion of Saudi religious legitimacy.

To help spread regional stability, KSA should promote PRAC's emphasis on deterrence, rehabilitation, and reintegration in other nations—including Yemen, Iraq, and any other state struggling with power vacuums and extremism in the aftermath of the so-called Arab Spring. Not only will PRAC help alleviate the dissemination of terrorist ideology at home and abroad, it will help re-assimilate recovered terrorists into Arab society.

Similarly, KSA should continue to share its new approaches to combat terrorist ideology. One successful example of modernizing counterterrorism strategies is the Sakinah counter-radicalization campaign which looked to online forums and chat rooms to target, engage with, and ultimately de-radicalize potential extremists and terrorist targets. KSA should continue to promote the Ministry of Islamic Affairs's Sakinah effort, as well as keep innovating new ways to monitor the dissemination of extremist ideologies and share its innovations with the international community.

### **Strategy III – Bolstering the Defense of Strategic Allies**

It is in KSA's interest to bolster the defense of its strategic allies or "partner states" in order to maintain regional order as well as its leadership role. In order to succeed in this goal, KSA should strengthen the core of its strategic partnership with its traditional historical allies, such as the core GCC states, Egypt, Pakistan, Palestine, Yemen, Lebanon, Morocco, Jordan, Malaysia, and Bangladesh. This can be achieved through the creation of mechanisms to expedite cooperation, acquisitions, and shared capabilities between KSA and its strategic partners.

The most important step KSA should make is to create a joint Gulf military command to replace the aging Peninsula Shield Force. Additionally, the military institutions of the core GCC partner states should develop systematized maritime and police forces, as well as training programs, to streamline and strengthen the defense mechanisms of KSA's partnered states.

Outside of GCC, KSA also has great stake in the stability of the region and therefore should consider increasing its military action in countries made vulnerable from the power shifts of the Arab uprisings. KSA should increase and expand its military foreign operations by sending stabilization forces to unstable post-Arab Uprising countries such as was done in Bahrain. Similar select interventions will most likely become a priority and necessity in certain regional countries over the short-to-medium term and will have to occur with assent and cooperation from their

respective central governments. Simultaneously, KSA should offer continued economic and military aid to compliant states. The stability of the Arab region greatly influences KSA's national security imperatives, and thus it is a priority that the KSA strategic posture stresses continued military presence and cooperation with its regional partner states.

## **Strategy IV – Projecting Power**

In order to succeed in power projection missions, KSA should implement three separate ways to give its military force a worldwide reach and thus sustain the emergence of KSA's global influence.

The first strategy looks to project its power within the region. KSA should curtail and limit Iran's influence—particularly on Iraq and Syria—through conventional military parity. This requires the continued expansion of military personnel in the RSLF (Army), SANG (National Guard), RSNF (Navy), RSAF (Air Force), and RSADF (Air Defense Force), but with an emphasis on modernization and organizational reform from within. Similarly, the KSA defense infrastructure should match its increase in weapons and technology with an increase in training programs and military indoctrination. This strategy ensures that the KSA military not only expands to permanently neutralize Iranian capabilities, but does not over-inflate to the point of ineffectuality, as has been witnessed countless times across the Arab world.

The second strategy looks to establish its power internationally. In order to accomplish power projections on a global scale, KSA needs to maintain a redefined “special” strategic relationship with the U.S. while asserting its assertiveness and independence. KSA should keep expanding its historical ties and consolidate a strategic alliance with France as the de facto preeminent European military power. KSA should seriously reconsider its historical ties with Britain and create a special committee to finalize a thorough review. KSA should also increase its global activities to curtail Russian policies across the MENA region. Nevertheless, KSA should continue to distance itself from the passivity attributed to the UN Security Council and American and European allies (except France) on Syria and Iran. Additionally, KSA should emphasize swift intervention in unstable countries worldwide to deter hostile actions, and increase its economic as well as martial aid in order to maintain international stability and security.

Finally, the third strategy looks to project its soft power as the main “defender” of the Muslim faith, and use its formidable economic and financial capabilities with its considerable diplomatic influence to uphold the Islamic world with its actions. This means KSA would benefit from continued expanded military forces to sustain its soft power global reach. The intensified presence of these defense forces will help fulfill KSA's continued religious duty toward Muslims across the world. KSA should also maintain complete control of the ever-increasing Hajj pilgrimage through heightened sustained activation of the KSA military, security, and intelligence infrastructures. Both of these strategies are aimed to articulate KSA's military power and its intent to use it to safeguard vital national security interests as well as the interests of Muslims at large.

As the center of global energy and cradle of Islam, KSA has established itself as a world power that has both global and regional objectives and responsibilities. As such, in order to protect its centrality and project its power, KSA investment in these three strategies needs to be relatively limitless. The KSA global, regional, and cultural responsibilities are potentially endless, so the budget needs to be adequate to meet its objectives and maintain its status as a world power.



## **Strategy V – Deterring the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs)**

KSA attempts to deter the spread of WMDs are highly dependent on the realities of the proliferation of nuclear capabilities throughout the region—an uncertain and unpredictable determinant. Of course, KSA will continue its anti-proliferation policies and promote a Middle East Region as a Nuclear-Free Zone; this strategy would suppose a continued relationship with the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, as well as a renewed Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and the push for similar policies.

However, to prepare for the potentially unavoidable reality of a nuclear Middle East region, KSA should consider an alternative way to respond to a myriad of different nuclear scenarios. KSA should create a task force to combine all its WMDs-interdiction, elimination, and detection efforts. It is imperative that this task force be equipped with the best nuclear forensics, disablement, and coordination capabilities. These military advantages will not only act as a deterrent, but also will allow KSA to gauge the proper nuclear environment in its context and act accordingly.

Ultimately, the other option to defend against the spread of WMDs is to create a military deterrence of nuclear threats. This strategy largely sets itself up to respond to the heretofore unfulfilled - but likely - Iranian acquisition of nuclear weapons over the medium term. KSA will have to invest in a nuclear deterrent in order to establish a counter to Iran's atomic program. Of course, if Iran gets nuclear weapons (with Israel already having a nuclear arsenal), KSA will be forced to follow suit. Thus, KSA should explore its nuclear provision options in order to prepare for a very likely nuclear Iran in the medium-to-long term.

## **Strategy VI – Establishing Two Separate Commands for Cyberspace and Space**

To help modernize and expand its military capabilities, KSA should create ways to expand its technological edge in both cyberspace and space in order to compete with modern defense standards and project its power globally. To expand cyber expertise and awareness, Saudi strategies need to emphasize cyber-awareness in education curriculum and training programs. KSA should introduce new cyberspace scholastic programs and scholarships, as well as increase online training of defense personnel to ensure heightened sophistication in coding, encryption, virus detection, and other important cyber-security capabilities.

In order to develop a comprehensive cyber-security command, KSA should follow through with its plan to absorb the Saudi Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) and National Center for Electronic Security (NCES) to create a larger, centralized cyber-security command. It also may be prudent for KSA to solidify partnerships with outside agencies and governments to share cyber capabilities and develop the most sophisticated system possible. This would require strengthened partnerships with technologically advanced governments and business sectors and a shared effort to host conventions, trade agreements, and information exchanges surrounding cyber-security. KSA would benefit from continued collaboration with cyber-experts in Western countries and other advanced and allied nations.



To develop its space command, KSA should embark on a massive new space program that aims to establish itself as a leading consumer of space surveillance and monitoring technologies. It can accomplish this goal through its partnership with more established space agencies while increasing its investment in space technology. KSA's King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST) has already collaborated with the U.S. National Aeronautics Space Agency (NASA) in lunar and asteroid science research, and has since signed a joint statement to expand space cooperation to include joint satellite production and research, joint missions, technology development, and training exchanges. Continued collaboration with NASA—as well as other allied space programs—will help KSA's space program sustainably expand.

International collaboration is not enough to establish a space command that will improve Saudi defenses; KSA also should invest in the development of a competitive space program through the expansion of its research and space facilities. Enabled with sensitive devices and cameras, these satellites can conduct scientific experiments as well as surveillance. Finally, it is imperative to vital Saudi national security interests that KSA develop a sustained indigenous space program over the medium-term that will ultimately send astronauts into space. The success of these programs will contribute to the success of space exploration in KSA, and as such contribute to the success of a more technologically advanced defense strategy.

## **Strategy VII – Strengthening Inter-agency Partnerships**

The success of the current goal of strengthening inter-agency partnerships within the military institutions depends heavily on the full functioning of the National Security Council (NSC). NSC, established in 2005, is responsible for coordination among the KSA defense, intelligence, security, and foreign policy institutions. NSC has to be further strengthened through the clarification of the roles and responsibilities of each agency, while offering consistent cross-agency cohesion and education to ensure a common approach to strategy and implementation. These changes could help KSA advance the coordination and consistency of national security, intelligence, and foreign policy strategy and their corresponding agencies.

NSC was created to coordinate the internal and external policies in response to the U.S. occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan and its regional ramifications. However, in order to succeed as the cross-agency organization defense mechanism, KSA built its organizational layout to restructure, reorganize, and grow in response to the ever-changing domestic, regional, and international environment. This will improve the interagency strategic planning process and ensure efficient crisis and wartime response management. Thus, NSC should not only formulate a cohesive strategy across different agencies, it should adapt and implement these strategies efficiently and effectively.

To complete the full strategy, KSA should investigate an inter-agency approach to assess all agencies' preparedness, capabilities, and handicaps as well as the nation's risks and challenges. In order to accomplish such an assessment, KSA should empower NSC to investigate and monitor defense agencies. Furthermore, NSC must have the authority to make necessary corrections if agencies prove ineffectual, negligent, or needing improvement. These adjustments should be made concurrent to in-depth research on advanced technologies, additional capabilities, and programs needed to evaluate and correct the defense, foreign policy, intelligence, and security apparatuses.

With an outline of the seven separate ways to fulfill the strategic goals established, it is now

prudent to look at Saudi means and reserves to itemize the resources necessary to implement these strategies and succeed in the realization of the national security goals.

## Resources

KSA's history of stability and domestic security success speaks to its potential military means and considerable resources. While KSA already possesses the resources to succeed in the goals and strategies outlined above, KSA should continue to develop these strategic programs in order to adapt to the unpredictable times ahead and advance into a new modern military dimension. KSA should reposition its forces to address new challenges, develop its capabilities to modernize its approach, and share its expertise in order to stabilize a newly uprooted region.

**Table 2 – Projected Largest Economies in MENA Region (Plus Turkey), 2014**

Country	Projected GDP at Current Prices in US\$, 2014
Saudi Arabia	\$772.6 Billion
Turkey	\$767.0 Billion
UAE	\$412.3 Billion
Iran	\$405.5 Billion
Israel	\$305.7 Billion
Egypt	\$286.1 Billion
Iraq	\$248.3 Billion
Pakistan	\$241.4 Billion
Algeria	\$219.4 Billion
Qatar	\$213.7 Billion

Source – IMF World Economic Database (April 2014)

## Resources I – Requirements to Defend the Homeland

To succeed in the strategies outlined for homeland defense at the northern border, southern border, and the surrounding sea-lanes, KSA needs to maintain its substantial home-based land forces, naval fleets, air forces, and missile defense systems throughout the kingdom.

This SDD suggests that the Royal Land Forces (RSLF) have 300,000 and the National Guard (SANG) have 200,000 combat-ready troops. These forces will be carefully equipped (see Tables 3 & 4) in order to assure that the home-based ground forces are as strong as they need to be to defend the north and south borders. These numbers would allow KSA to have presence in the north to deter any aggression from Iraq and Iran and prevent unrest from spilling across into KSA territory. Similarly, KSA should increase the deployment of ground forces from the RSLF and the SANG to the Yemen border. Here, KSA should work with the other forces from the Ministry of Interior (MOI) and General Intelligence Presidency (GIP) to assist, expand, and strengthen the on-going massive operation to prevent the infiltration and smuggling into the southern Jazan and Najran

regions of KSA that border Yemen.

**Table 3 – RSLF (Army) Minimum Capabilities Required**

<b>Weapons Systems</b>	<b>Suggested Capabilities</b>	<b>Estimated Capabilities in 2011-2012</b>
Combat Ready Personnel	300,000	200,000 to 225,000
Main Battle Tanks	2,500	1,000 to 1,200
Armored Personnel Carrier	4,000	3,000 to 3,500
Armored Infantry Fighting Vehicles	3,000	1,500 to 2,000
Reconnaissance Vehicles	500	250 to 300
Multiple Role Helicopters	250	50 to 75
Transport Helicopters	150	50 to 60
Electronic Warfare	5	NA

Finally, KSA needs to maintain the work of its special operations, counterterrorism, and counterintelligence forces on its southern border to collect critical data from specific sources as well as advanced actionable intelligence on AQAP and the Iranian-backed Houthi terrorist networks operating all along the border from their respective Yemeni safe heavens. The resources necessary for further expansion of counterterrorism efforts across the region will be discussed in the next section.

**Table 4 – SANG (National Guard) Minimum Capabilities Required**

<b>Weapons Systems</b>	<b>Suggested Capabilities</b>	<b>Estimated Capabilities in 2011-2012</b>
Combat Ready Personnel	200,000	100,000 to 125,000
Main Battle Tanks (New Force)	500	NA
Armored Personnel Carrier	4,000	2,000 to 2,500
Armored Infantry Fighting Vehicles	5,000	2,500 to 3,000
Reconnaissance Vehicles	250	NA
Multiple Role Helicopters (New Force)	200	NA
Transport Helicopters (New Force)	50	NA

Given that the northern and southern borders will continue to be defended with the appropriate force structures and weapons systems, this SDD suggests that KSA maintain—and advance—its Naval capabilities (expansion of the Western and Eastern fleets) as well as air assets to create a three-dimensional defensive dome over the three sea-lanes that are critical to Saudi national

security. This would include the creation of a new large Southern fleet for the Royal Saudi Naval Forces (RSNF), based in Jazan on the Red Sea that will exclusively operate in the southern tip of the Red Sea, Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden. The fleet's main objectives will be to project power from the Horn of Africa to the Asian subcontinent through the Arabian Sea and secure the critical and vital Bab Al Mandab crossing (See Map 7).

**Map 7 – KSA & Bab Al Mandab**



Source: Energy Information Administration

In addition, an anti-ballistic defense capability in the Gulf should be added to the RSNF's Eastern Fleet, with Aegis class destroyers equipped with anti-ballistic missiles. In the north of the Gulf, the RSNF's Eastern Fleet should expand the smaller, faster patrol crafts that are more suitable for shallow waters. The RSNF's Western Fleet should also have an anti-ballistic defense capability in the Red Sea with a significant amount of Aegis class destroyers to project power in the vital Suez Canal region and the southern Mediterranean basin (See Map 6 in Strategy Section). The specific minimum numbers necessary for comprehensive sea-lane defenses can be found in the following tables (Tables 5, 6, 7 & 8).



**Table 5 – RSADF (Air Defense) & SMF (Strategic Missile Forces)  
Minimum Capabilities Required**

<b>Weapons Systems</b>	<b>Suggested Capabilities</b>	<b>Estimated Capabilities in 2011-2012</b>
Combat Ready Personnel	40,000	25,000 to 30,000
Guns	4,000	2,000 to 2,500
Air Defense Systems	5,000	2,500 to 3,000
Medium Range Ballistic Missiles (MRBM)	250	50 to 75
Inter Mediate Ballistic Missiles (IRBM)	50	NA
Inter Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM)	20	NA

The aforementioned resources suggested to defend the homeland will also aid in the other six goals and strategies, strengthening the defense mechanism as a whole. Each goal—to succeed in counterterrorism, bolster the defense of strategic allies or partner states, prevail in power projection missions, deter the spread of weapons of mass destruction, establish two separate commands for cyberspace and space, and strengthen inter-agency partnerships—will call upon the strengthened armed forces to help execute the strategies laid out in the earlier sections.

**Table 6 – RSNF (Navy) Minimum Capabilities Required**

<b>Weapons Systems</b>	<b>Suggested Capabilities</b>	<b>Estimated Capabilities in 2011-2012</b>
Combat Ready Personnel	50,000	25,000 to 30,000
Patrol and Coastal Combatants	150	50 to 75
Destroyers	10	NA
Frigates	20	7 to 10
Amphibious	75	10 to 15
Logistical/Support/Supply	50	20 to 25
Mine Countermeasures	20	5 to 8
Submarines	9	NA
Electronic Warfare	10	NA
Multiple Role Helicopters	100	30 to 40
Transport Helicopters	60	20 to 30

## **Resource II – Requirements to Maintain Success in Counterterrorism**

KSA should adopt a program that pulls personnel from the various forces found throughout the Saudi national security infrastructure and deploys these highly trained counterterrorism experts to various countries deemed strategic allies in order to help train and equip their military, intelligence, and security services to properly combat terrorism and other forms of instability.

This would include the implementation of the soft approach discussed in the strategy section: the training of personnel to recognize terrorists in their community, rehabilitation of extremist thought through conversation and compassion, and the use of an agency such as the National Information Center (NIC) and its sophisticated centralized computer network to allow MOI to monitor personal data concerning citizens and foreigners of major security interest.

Additionally, KSA has found success through its Special Forces' various specialized training campaigns. KSA should share its campaigns—dubbed “Sawlet Al-Haq” or “the Attack of Truth”—in order to raise the combat capabilities of neighboring troops. These programs would provide practice in crises such as regaining control of hijacked oil tankers or planes, utilizing helicopters, overseeing terrorist prison transfers, and specialized weaponry training. KSA should also continue to expand its commitment to joint programs, missions, and information exchanges to work together with its regional strategic partners to pursue leads in terrorist activities, track terror financing, and combat the threat of extremism in the Arab and Muslim worlds.

## **Resource III – Requirements to Bolster Defense of Strategic Allies**

Unified military leadership will be the crux of any effort to bolster the defense of the KSA partner states. KSA will replace the GCC Peninsula Shield Force with a larger and more coordinated and joint military effort. This project will become the new Gulf Unified Military Command with 100,000 troops and KSA will contribute 50% to 75% of the troop total. GCC has also recently announced its commitment to a potential specialized joint police force, a Gulf Academy for Strategic and Security Studies, and a Gulf Coordination Center for Maritime Security. These new structures will bolster the strategic partners' missile defense, border security, counterterrorism efforts, and overall regional stability better than GCC has been able to thus far.

While the past GCC military force—the GCC Peninsula Shield Force—was composed of 30,000 personnel with the majority of the units, troops, and officers offered by KSA, the new GCC deterrent force will be 100,000 strong. This number will include combat soldiers, weapons, and intelligence platforms from many different sources. Headquartered in Riyadh, the KSA National Guard Ministry (SANG) will serve as the “base force” to this Gulf Unified Military Force and its only mission will be to respond to any potential aggression against a Gulf state or a KSA strategic ally (Picture 1).

**Picture 1 – SANG Troops on the King Fahd Causeway Entering Bahrain (2011)**



Source: Bahrain Television

The increased construction of regional security architecture, and the coordination of military expenditure, equipment, and training—as well as pure manpower—will help achieve GCC’s initial mission to subdue Iranian influence in the Arab world over the medium- to long-term.

These modifications demonstrate KSA’s intentions to protect itself and its strategic allies without Western intervention and its commitment to counter any military threats against certain Gulf States and its strategic allies. The Gulf Unified Military Command will also provide the resources for KSA to achieve its next goal: to prevail in power projection missions.

## Resource IV – Requirements to Prevail in Power Projection

The KSA effort to strengthen GCC and its military might directly reflects its effort to project power globally. To fulfill its strategy of projecting power through increased interventionism and independence away from the West, KSA needs to be able to sustain its supply of military forces, increased diplomatic dynamism, and continuous and expanding emergency economic assistance within the Arab and Muslim worlds in order to consolidate a sustainable presence across the Middle East and wider Arab world.

**Table 7 – RSAF (Air Force) Minimum Capabilities Required**

Weapons Systems	Suggested Capabilities	Estimated Capabilities in 2011-2012
Combat Ready Personnel	40,000	20,000 to 25,000
High Quality Combat Aircrafts (HQCA)	500*	250 to 275
Transportation	150	50 to 75
Refueling	30	5 to 10
Multiple Role Helicopters	200	100 to 125
Transport Helicopters	50	20 to 25
Electronic Warfare Planes	50	15 to 20

\*4.5 Generation Minimum to Qualify for HQCA, including the three HQCA platforms in the RSAF arsenal - Eurofighter Typhoon, F-15 Saudi Advanced, Upgraded Tornados – and a potential new fourth one.

KSA will project power through its increased contribution to the forthcoming Gulf Unified Military Command in order to sustain the new security architecture in the region and neighboring countries. If the conventional military grows to the numbers suggested above, KSA will be able to cement its role as the Arab military central power and secure regional stability. It is also understood that KSA is the only country to viably face down the continuous Iranian destabilizing policies in Arab countries with sizable native Shia populations (See Map 8)—some of which are KSA strategic partner states.

The suggested strengthened military interventionism includes increased arms purchasing and weapon training as well. KSA has invested massively in its air force and land-based missile defense forces, as well as equipment upgrades in aircrafts, attack and transportation helicopters, air defense, and naval systems. These capabilities will help KSA respond to regional crises in place of Western interference, and thus reiterate its emerging global power status.



**Table 8 – Marines (Part of RSNF) Minimum Capabilities Required**

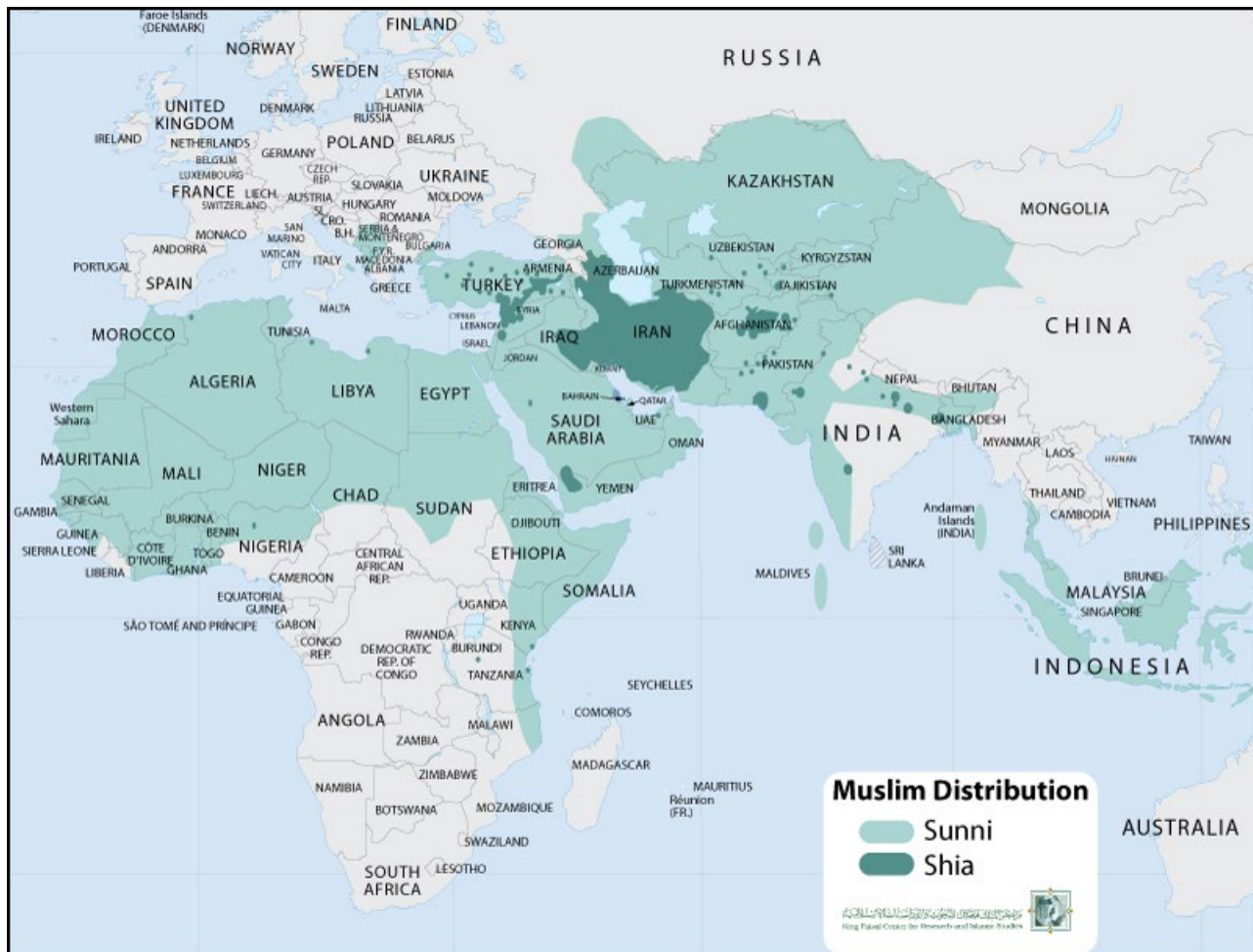
<b>Weapons Systems</b>	<b>Suggested Capabilities</b>	<b>Estimated Capabilities in 2011-2012</b>
Combat Ready Personnel	10,000	2,000 to 4,000
Armored Personnel Carriers	400	100 to 150
Reconnaissance Vehicles	50	10 to 20
Armored Infantry Fighting Vehicles	200	50 to 100
Multiple Role Helicopters	25	NA
Transportation Helicopters	10	NA
Amphibious	25	NA

Non-military mediation in unstable countries can also help project KSA's power; Foreign Ministry diplomats will continue to successfully navigate power shifts and negotiate government reshuffling in order to stabilize the region. The mediators' work within the Arab world will help establish KSA power beyond its emerging military might. Additionally, continued economic and financial assistance—the bankroll of foreign militaries, aid in civil reconstruction programs, or overall funding of its partner allies—will help the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia prevail in its power projection missions regionally and globally.

Finally, and uniquely to the power projection efforts of KSA, the state will continue to expand its resources to maintain its religious legitimacy as the cradle of Islam and guardians of Islam's two holiest mosques at Makkah and Madinah. KSA has a special responsibility to the approximately 1.3 billion Sunni Muslims in the world (there are about an additional 100 to 150 million Shias of various sects). It is imperative that KSA sustains its promotion of Sunni Islam across the globe (see Map 8). This soft power attribute is of vital importance to KSA's new emerging national security prerogatives.

Ultimately, each goal listed in this assessment and its concomitant resources will strengthen Saudi power projections as KSA continues to evolve its military mechanisms to compete in the modern world.

**Map 8 – Distribution of Sunnis and Shias in Muslim World**



Source: King Faisal Center for Research & Islamic Studies (KFCRIS)

## Resource V – Requirements to Deter Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs)

KSA's split strategies to deter the spread of WMDs require duplicate resources. Ideally, KSA can successfully combat the proliferation of nuclear power in the Arab world and the wider Middle East through preventive resources such as nuclear detection, nuclear forensics, and response and mitigation branches of defense. KSA has one of the most advanced biological weapon agent detectors, and it enhances its chemical weapon preparations through defensive equipment such as decontamination units, chemical detectors, and personal protective equipment. Additionally, KSA's air defense missile capabilities are meant to act as a non-nuclear deterrent; its ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, fighter and ground attack aircraft, ground-based artillery, and rocket launchers all offer defense alternatives to nuclearization and help KSA advance in the ongoing regional arms race.

However, as mentioned in the strategies section, KSA needs to be able to counter Israel and Iran in the case that the latter acquires nuclear weapons. KSA continues to standby in the process of acquiring a nuclear deterrent until it is deemed that Iran has manufactured nuclear weapons. If such a scenario occurs, KSA will initiate a domestic nuclear weapons program within a yet to be specified time-period to counter Iran's acquisition.

A credible nuclear strategy would mandate that a rapid nuclear deterrent be obtained in the short term and that the establishment of an indigenous nuclear weapons program take shape over the medium- to long-term. This policy will mitigate the threat of a nuclear Iran through the Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD) strategic paradigm, and is thus vital to Saudi national security. While KSA still prefers to advance the resources to protect a nuclear-free Middle East, it must be realistic in its preparation for the future.

## **Resource VI – Requirements to Create Two Separate Commands for Cyberspace and Space**

KSA has prioritized both cyberspace and space as defensive goals in its efforts to modernize its national security architecture and ensure it survives in the face of the new threats and vulnerabilities of the times.

In regard to the development of a cyberspace control, KSA needs both in-house and contracted efforts to protect its data. The resources for such efforts can be created through the consolidation of CERT and the National Center for Electronic Security (NCES) into a larger cyber-security command controlled by a specific KSA government ministry. The establishment of a Security Operation Center can offer security automation, vulnerability assessments, and security and incident management services. A new National e-Security Center will also assist KSA in monitoring its networks and protect itself as well as its strategic partners against massive cyber-attacks, an example of which was the 2013 Iranian-inspired cyber attack on Saudi Aramco.

These are the resources necessary for KSA to establish a cyber-security command. However, KSA would need to properly train and educate the appropriate amount of personnel to staff these new operation centers and accomplish the associated tasks. This will require outside help, and KSA should pool technology experts with the highest skill levels and experience to prepare the Kingdom for a future in cyber-security.

KSA's national security communities have astutely initiated partnerships with established security agencies, technology experts, and foreign intelligence services to increase information exchanges as well as joint venture trade agreements. KSA has already reached out to world-leading private sector leaders and Internet security tradecraft to learn from their expertise and cutting edge technologies. These partnerships will hopefully lead to expedited training for Saudi cyber-experts, as well as the adoption of an even more advanced cyber-security infrastructure based on indigenous methods and innovations of new technological resources.

To create a new Saudi Space Command, KSA will look to King Abdulaziz City of Science and Technology (KACST) and its Space Program Management Office to develop its space and aeronautical capabilities. KACST has developed its resources through research collaboration with a NASA program, as well as the advancement of aeronautic technology, EO sensors, and radio

frequencies. Most importantly, KACST has recently invested in the launch of two satellites—SAUDISAT 4 and SAUDI GEO1—that have been formatted with sensitive devices and cameras designed to perform scientific experiments. KACST has numerous other specialized satellites currently in space.

The Space Command—heavily geared toward military and intelligence use—should be located under the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces in the Ministry of Defense (MOD). And it should be at the discretion of the Minister of Defense to decide where to properly house the Space Command and in what unified service (RSLF, RSAF, SADF, RSNF). The Space Command will be primarily responsible for the continued exploration and advancement of space technology, the use of space to enhance Saudi defensive capabilities, and for ensuring that all necessary resources are put in place to advance this strategic priority program.

## **Resource VII – Requirements to Strengthen Inter-agency Partnerships**

The National Security Council (NSC) is the most vital organ that requires considerably increased resources to strengthen inter-agency partnerships between the KSA military, security, and intelligence communities. To emphasize the supreme importance of NSC and its organizational mechanisms, all major Saudi national security leaders, as well as important government ministers, have prioritized membership into NSC. NSC instead should be composed of the following:

- King (who serves as well as Prime Minister)
- Crown Prince (who serves as well as Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Defense)
- Deputy Crown Prince (who serves as well as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Prime Minister)
- Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Minister of National Guard
- Minister of Interior
- President of General Intelligence Presidency
- Minister of Finance
- Minister of Petroleum & Mineral Resources
- Minister of Islamic Affairs
- Minister of Labor
- Minister of Higher Education
- Governor of Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency

All of the above named members and their corresponding agencies must be major contributors to a future SDD, and thus all of these officials need to be present to truly create an inter-agency partnership within the KSA national security establishment that will determine SDD.



As detailed above, KSA has the resources to accomplish the seven defense goals and the suggested strategies they inspired. Yet, KSA's commitment to superlative success requires that it continue to develop its strategic capabilities in order to challenge its own goals and insist on continued advancement in its military architecture. More than KSA's massive resources and considerable military means, it is the insistence on and absolute necessity of continuous improvement that has contributed to KSA's stability and power projection for the past century. However, due to the enormous challenges KSA will always face, much more needs to be achieved in a shorter time span if the nation is to truly rise to its full potential.

## Conclusion

This proposed Saudi Defense Doctrine (SDD) identifies areas within the KSA national security mechanism that need to be strengthened, the strategies that can be implemented to strengthen those areas, and the means necessary to do so. The above-mentioned index of military, security and intelligence goals, ways, and resources are all presented in an effort to defend KSA against external threats while simultaneously protecting the Middle East and the wider Arab world from instability and chaos.

In order to accomplish its first goal of home defense, KSA needs to revisit its home-based military, navy, and air missile systems. The Kingdom needs to maintain and strengthen its capabilities at the northern border, southern border, and sea-lanes, with an emphasis on protecting vulnerabilities surrounding Yemen, Iraq, and at sea.

For its second goal, KSA has a responsibility to share its superior counterterrorism strategies abroad while maintaining its successful defense against extremist ideology and terrorist attacks at home. The MOD, MOI, Ministry of National Guard (SANG), and GIP need to maintain their resources, if not expand them, in order to help neighboring and strategic countries in their counterterrorism efforts.

To achieve its third goal, this SDD proposes that KSA upholds the regional national security environment of its strategic allies through the forthcoming Gulf Union. This Union involves a strengthened GCC and institutionalized GCC military command, armed with shared combat soldiers, weapons, and intelligence. It will be the mission of this new Gulf Unified Military Command force to stabilize countries rocked by the Arab uprisings in 2011 and maintain peace in the region.

The fourth goal—to succeed in power projections—looks at the KSA influence regionally, internationally, and throughout the Muslim World. The SDD emphasizes the continuation of increased independence from KSA's historic Western strategic allies, emphasizing the objective of military parity and the acceleration of the national security expansion plans. This will allow KSA to intervene in regional and international crises and act as the de facto central Arab nation based on the maintenance of its traditional Islamic principles in every decision.

The most sensitive of the seven goals—to deter the spread of WMDs—aims to promote a Nuclear-Free Zone in the Middle East, but calls to increase detection, interdiction, and containment capabilities. This goal also envisions the creation of a military nuclear deterrent that may include its own acquisition of select WMDs in the event of Iranian acquisition.

KSA's sixth goal sets out to create two separate commands—one for cyber-space and one for space—in order to modernize its defense systems. The first step toward cyber-space security excellence is consultation with the technologically advanced business sector at home and abroad for resources and expertise regarding cyber-security. Also, KSA needs to consolidate its computer response team and electronic security mechanisms into a larger cyber-security command. The success of the space command, too, depends on collaboration with outside experts, as well as the continued exploration and advancement of KACST's space and aeronautical capabilities.

Finally, KSA can assure inter-agency partnerships within its defense, security, and intelligence communities through the empowerment of NSC to coordinate strategy, assess all agencies' capabilities and handicaps, and adapt to any change that comes its way. This final goal—to strengthen inter-agency partnerships—will ensure that all the earlier goals are executed through a unified KSA effort.

The implementation of a Saudi Defense Doctrine announces KSA's dedication to both its own homeland defense and its staunch support of stability throughout the Middle East and the wider Arab world. In the pursuit of these seven goals, KSA should harness its extremely substantial political, financial, and military resources in order to quell the ongoing crises ravaging the Arab and Muslim world while increasing its own strength and survival.



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