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# **RESTORATION OF SAUDI- IRAN RELATIONS**

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## About the Author

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## Introduction

The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have influenced the fate of the Middle East as two highly influential regional entities. Saudi Arabia is a Sunni-majority state, and Iran, a Shia majority, has contested to influence the Islamic world for decades. Thus, they have challenged each other in battlegrounds like Syria, Yemen, and Lebanon to increase their legitimacy in the Islamic world. The People's Republic of China brokered the Saudi-Iran deal after three years of backchannel talks facilitated by Iraq and Oman. The deal has led to the diplomatic restoration between Saudi Arabia and Iran, which includes the reopening of the embassy after seven years as Saudi Arabia broke off ties with Iran after Saudi Arabia's embassy was attacked in Iran by protestors due to the execution of a Shia cleric in Saudi Arabia who was a strong critic of the Royal family.

The deal has revived two agreements. Firstly, the 1998 agreement focused on cooperation in the broader sector, including commerce, science, and the environment. Secondly, the 2001 agreement is a security agreement to fight against terrorism, money laundering, and drug trafficking. The accord does not contain any new agreements, but it might be considered the beginning of reconciliation between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Iran. There were talks of Houthi rebels in Yemen in the meeting. However, the deal cannot be seen as complete normalisation or an end to ideological and religious problems, as there are a few more topics to be addressed, among which the most important is Iran's desire to possess weapons of mass destruction. "Our arrival at this agreement, which will lead to the resumption of political relations, does not mean that we have reached a resolution to all outstanding differences between our two countries," said Saudi Arabia's

Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan al Saud. "Rather, it is evidence of our common desire to solve them through talks and dialogue with peaceful means and diplomatic tools."<sup>1</sup>.

The fact that the People's Republic of China, rather than the United States or another country like Iraq, mediated a deal between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia should not surprise anyone in the world. Due to Iran's collaboration with Russia by supplying Kamikaze drones to Russia in the Ukraine war, the U.S. has not maintained close relations with Iran; thus, the U.S. was not in a position to broker a deal. On the other hand, Iraq, a mediator before China, could not continue its mediation role as new Prime Minister Sudani showed little interest in acting as a mediator. Moreover, he did not enjoy the trust of Saudi Arabia like his predecessor, Al-Khadimi. China has an economic relationship with Saudi Arabia and Iran and has built trust in the region. "Chinese interests from energy reliance to expanding the Belt and Road Initiative in the region are very much affected by the state of Iran-Saudi relations, which is another key factor for Beijing to take on this new role."<sup>2</sup>

Saudi Arabia and Iran's relations have evolved due to internal changes. However, it has been heavily affected by world politics, as there has been a change in their relationship with a change in the global order. Hence, the paper focuses on the evolution of the relationship and tries to

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<sup>1</sup> The Iran Primer. "Iran and Saudi Arabia Restore Ties," March 10, 2023. <https://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2023/mar/10/iran-and-saudi-arabia-restore-ties>.

<sup>2</sup> The Institute for Peace and Diplomacy - l'Institut pour la paix et la diplomatie. "Symposium on the Chinese-Brokered Iran-Saudi Deal - The Institute for Peace and Diplomacy - l'Institut Pour La Paix et La Diplomatie," March 16, 2023. <https://peacediplomacy.org/2023/03/16/symposium-on-the-chinese-brokered-iran-saudi-deal/>.

analyse how world order has affected the Saudi-Iran relationship since the 19th century. Furthermore, the paper will focus on why this deal was signed at this time. In addition, the paper will analyse how this deal will affect regional and international actors. Finally, the paper will predict the future of this deal in the region.



Figure 1. Chinese mediation between Saudi Arabia and Iran (Source: Saudi Press Agency/Dpa/Reuters)

## Evolution of Saudi-Iran Relations and Global World Order

### First Phase: British-Centric

The Friendship Treaty was drafted and signed by two states (at the time, the Kingdom of Persia and the Kingdom of Hejaz, Najd, and its Dependencies) in Tehran in 1929, marking the end of the initial exchanges.<sup>3</sup> During this period, both nations had little interest in each other; thus, their relationship remained smooth. In this period, the region was British-centric, wherein the British had deeply rooted themselves in Bahrain, Oman, Arab sheikhs, and Kuwait. Thus, Saudi Arabia and Iran could not take significant steps without considering British interests. In this period, globally, there was a multipolar world. However, the region was British-dominated, with other powers playing secondary roles. The cross-cutting links among many axes of conflict that often exist in the multipolar system were diminished by British regional supremacy and Iran's and Saudi Arabia's shared identity with the British pole.<sup>4</sup> A secure environment was created during this time since Iran and Saudi Arabia kept their contact with the British. However, Nazi Germany's presence in Iran led to a deterioration of relations between Britain and Iran and security concerns. Iran also claimed some lands in Arabia. When Abdul Aziz signed a bilateral agreement with the British in Jeddah and acknowledged the government of Bahrain in 1927, Iran officially complained to the League of Nations.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Hadzikadunic, Emir. "Iran–Saudi Ties: Can History Project Their Trajectory?" n.d. <https://mei.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Insight-215-Saudi-Iranian-Ties.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

However, Iran could not take any significant action as it was weaker than Saudi Arabia and the British. Thus, despite the multipolar world order, there was stability and security due to the British's dominance in the region.

## **Second phase: Shared Interests**

In this period, Saudi Arabia and Iran had shared interests and cooperated in the region. In this period, there was a bipolar global world order wherein both of them had chosen one side, which was the U.S. side. As the USSR was in the immediate vicinity and supported the revolutions that opposed monarchy rule in the Middle East, it threatened Iran and Saudi Arabia. The Arab-Iranian Friendship Organisation was formed in the 1960s by Saudi Arabia, Iran, and other states. Opec and O.I.C. were also founded around this time.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, it was the best stage in the Saudi-Iran relationship, as they were on the same side.

## **Third phase: Revolution of 1979**

This phase was a turning point in the Iran-Saudi relationship, as there was a revolution in Iran that led to the abolishment of the Shah monarchy and the rise of Ayatollah Khomeini. Iran changed its stance as it opposed Saudi Arabia and the U.S. Iran followed an independent foreign policy in the bipolar global order. "Only the Islamic Republic, neither East nor West". Iran displayed scant awareness of the constraints set by the international system in this regard.<sup>7</sup> Due to the development of Saddam Hussein's pro-Soviet Ba'athist Iraq during this time, the region had three significant

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Walt, Stephen M. "Revolution and War." *World Politics* 44, no. 3 (1992): 321–68. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2010542>.

powers. Iraq was pro-Soviet, Saudi Arabia was pro-America, and Iran was revisionist. During this period, Saudi Arabia and the U.S. backed Iraq against Iran to do the heavy lifting and end Iran's threat. The Pan-Arab Charter was launched on February 8, 1980, in Baghdad by President Saddam Hussein. The most important clause in this charter stated that should Iraq go to war with a non-Arab state, other Arab nations would support it. The pact provided ideal cover for Saudi ambitions.<sup>8</sup> Thus, in this period, Iraq and Iran were punished by the U.S. and Saudi Arabia as both nations ignored the polarity in the region.

### **Fourth phase: Iraq Factor and Unipolarity**

This period can be viewed as a detente period in the relationship between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Iran's foreign minister, "Velayati," also made an official trip to Saudi Arabia, where he met with King Saud al-Faisal to discuss matters relating to the security of the Gulf, economic collaboration, and Hajj disagreements. Saud al-Faisal highlighted the importance of Iran's participation in regional politics during this meeting.<sup>9</sup> In this period, Iraq became a threat to the GCC and Saudi Arabia. Thus, military action was taken against Iraq as the U.S. dominated the unipolar world order. As the U.S. put down Iraq with ease, Iran saw the military might of the U.S. Thus, Iran started behaving as a responsible and rational actor, trying to improve its image by collaborating

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<sup>8</sup> Hadzikadunic, Emir. "Iran–Saudi Ties: Can History Project Their Trajectory?," n.d. <https://mei.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Insight-215-Saudi-Iranian-Ties.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Alsultan, F.M., & Saeid, P. (2016). *The Development of Saudi-Iranian Relations since the 1990s: Between Conflict and Accommodation* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315615462>



internationally. Thus, there was stability due to U.S. hegemony in the world order and region. The Cooperation Agreement and Security Accord were finalised during this time, the most fruitful phase of Saudi-Iranian reconciliation in 1998 and 2001, respectively.<sup>10</sup> Surprisingly, Iran also proposed new arrangements between both nations: collective security and a "joint army to defend the Muslim world." Saudi Arabia rejected this as they did not want to sacrifice their security arrangement with the U.S. Hence, the security accord, signed in 2001, excluded military collaboration.

### **Fifth phase: A Power Vacuum**

This phase started in 2008 and is ongoing. In this period, there have been two significant developments. First, the U.S. started withdrawing its forces from Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. Second, the Arab Spring led to proxy wars. Additionally, U.S. strikes on Syria and Iran were suspended. In reaction to China's growing assertiveness in the region, the U.S. shifted its attention from the Middle East to an East Asia policy. This allowed other actors like Russia, China, and India to enter the region. Iran had more room to increase its influence by waging proxy conflicts after the U.S. left the region. The Obama Doctrine, published in 2016, said that the United States would not take part in Middle Eastern proxy warfare. Furthermore, he asked the Saudis to "share" the Middle East region with their rival Iran and resolve their disagreements peacefully.<sup>11</sup> During this period, the U.S. also stepped out of JCPOA deals and imposed sanctions on Iran, which

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<sup>10</sup> Hadzikadunic, Emir. "Iran–Saudi Ties: Can History Project Their Trajectory?," n.d. <https://mei.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Insight-215-Saudi-Iranian-Ties.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Gresh, G.F., & Keskin, T. (Eds.). (2018). *U.S. Foreign Policy in the Middle East: From American Missionaries to the Islamic State* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351169646>

isolated Iran worldwide and increased its closeness to China and Russia. In addition, the U.S. was reluctant to take any military action in the region in response to Iran's attack on Saudi Arabia's oil fields, which made Saudi Arabia feel uneasy. As the world order is multipolar, Iran is trying to use it fully. Thus, Saudi Arabia has also followed Salman's doctrine, which has aggressively moved its regional interests and maintained a balanced relationship with major powers like the U.S., Russia, and China in the multipolar world order.

## **Reasons for the Restoration of the Relationship**

This transaction involved the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the People's Republic of China. All of these participants had a stake in the agreement, which assisted Saudi Arabia and Iran's relationship to be restored. More importantly, the world order is now multipolar, in which China's, Russia's, and India's roles have increased in the region. This led to activity in the region among regional powers.

### **The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

For Saudi Arabia to restore its relationship with Iran, there are three significant reasons. First, Saudi Arabia saw that it could no longer rely on the U.S. for security guarantees in the region. Hence, they wanted to signal to the U.S. that they were noticing U.S. inactivity in the region to guarantee security, and they signed a deal that may harm U.S. interests to contain Iran and Chinese influence, which will lead to security upgrades by the U.S. to Saudi Arabia. The original resumption of talks between Riyadh and Tehran directly resulted from Washington's failure to take action against Iran when it launched missiles at Saudi Arabia in 2019. At that point, Saudi

authorities realised they could no longer rely on the United States for security protection.<sup>12</sup> Thus, this move by Saudi Arabia shows that Saudi Arabia can approach different actors in the region where the U.S. is disengaging. Nonetheless, Saudi Arabia cannot consider leaving the U.S. and expect China to provide the security role that the U.S. does in the region.

Secondly, Saudi Arabia wanted to normalise its relationship with Iran due to its 2030 strategic economic goals to diversify its economy, which requires regional stability. In contrast, Riyadh views Beijing as the sole party with genuine leverage over Iran and a partner that is becoming more credible in light of the U.S.'s disengagement. It now anticipates China to serve as the deal's guarantor.<sup>13</sup> After restoring the relationship with Iran, Saudi Arabia will expect that there will be no attacks by Iran on Saudi Arabia's oil fields. More importantly, Saudi Arabia has also held talks with the Houthis in Yemen, backed by Iran, wherein the truce has been declared. In addition, Saudi Arabia may also engage with Iran in solving other proxy wars, like in Syria and Lebanon. Therefore, Saudi Arabia's economic interests also led to restoring the relationship to reduce security threats.

Lastly, Saudi Arabia was the only significant Arab power left to normalise its relations with Iran, as GCC countries like the U.A.E., Oman, and Qatar had already normalised their relationship with

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<sup>12</sup> Cinzia Bianco, Ellie Geranmayeh, Julien Barnes-Dacey. "The Shoots of Stability: What the Saudi-Iran Deal Means for the Middle East and Europe." ECFR, March 14, 2023. <https://ecfr.eu/article/the-shoots-of-stability-what-the-saudi-iran-deal-means-for-the-middle-east-and-europe/>.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

Iran. As a result, Saudi Arabia would have felt like normalising its relationship similar to its partners.

## **Islamic Republic of Iran**

The Islamic Republic of Iran has three motivations to normalise its relationship. Firstly, Iran is facing domestic protests and an unstable environment internally. Consequently, Iran wants Saudi Arabia to reduce support for Iran's exiled and Iranian opposition TV channel, "Iranian International." The authoritarian regime probably expects that the agreement's clause prohibiting interference in one another's domestic affairs will help to reduce this opposition.<sup>14</sup>

Secondly, Iran is trying to counter Western sanctions and efforts led by the U.S. and Israel to isolate Iran. Therefore, Iran has diversified its relationship by reestablishing its relations with the Gulf. Due to this deal, Saudi Arabia can invest in the Iranian economy, breaking its economic isolation. Lastly, Iran is also trying to isolate Israel, which has tried to approach Gulf nations to form an "Anti-Iran" bloc with an aggressive military stance.

## **The People's Republic of China**

China is an economic superpower with economic interests in the region, like the Belt and Road Initiative project and securing oil purchases from Saudi Arabia and Iran. China has refrained from meddling in regional affairs in favour of taking an impartial position. China's goal is economic;

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid

they also want the region to be stable because they have significant investments there.’ China has tried to act as a political mediator in the region, as it has sent political envoys to Syria and Palestine. In this case, they were fortunate, as Iraq and Oman held talks between Iran and Saudi Arabia. However, due to some political changes in Iraq, China was next in line to act as a mediator. Therefore, China's role as a political mediator was less, and it was more of a coincidence. Dynamic changes in the global system have offered China a space to act. Middle Eastern nations also had the chance to diversify their connections through hedging techniques due to these shifts, enhancing their political flexibility.<sup>15</sup>

The Middle East was marked by differences due to the Arab Spring at the start of the last decade. However, relations have been normalised between Israel and Arab states, Turkey and Egypt. Altogether, this deal can be seen as a part of detente in the region.

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<sup>15</sup> “Symposium on the Chinese-Brokered Iran-Saudi Deal,” March 2023. <https://peacediplomacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Symposium-on-the-Chinese-Brokered-Iran-Saudi-Deal.pdf>.



Figure 2. Iran's influence in the Middle East Region (Source: The Hindu)

## How does this Deal affect International and Regional Actors?

### United States of America

This agreement has undermined American dominance in the region. This agreement prevents the United States from isolating Iran, which is aiding Russia in the conflict in Ukraine and attempting to acquire WMD. However, the agreement also has the potential to stabilise the region, which is why the United States has praised, as Anthony Blinken stated, "With regard to the agreement reached between Saudi Arabia and Iran with China's involvement, from our perspective, anything that can help reduce tensions, avoid conflict, and curb in any way dangerous or destabilising

actions by Iran is a good thing."<sup>16</sup> In short, the U.S. was unable to act as a mediator due to its confrontational role towards Iran, but, in reality, the deal may reduce the chance of military action towards Iran supported by Israel, as after this deal, all GCC members except Bahrain have normalised their relationship with Iran; the chance of conflict is reduced, which means the U.S. will not be dragged into the conflict in the region.

Therefore, the U.S.'s role as a security provider will not be affected for two reasons. First, China cannot take the political side in the region like the U.S. and play a security role. More importantly, regarding security infrastructure, the U.S. has deeply tied itself to the GCC, specifically Saudi Arabia. Thus, there will be no significant harm to the U.S. role. Nevertheless, since Iran has historically pursued hostile behaviour in a multipolar international system, this agreement may thwart American efforts to stop Iran from attaining WMD. In addition, this deal may boost Iran's confidence in the region.

## State of Israel

Unlike the U.A.E. and Saudi Arabia's diplomatic stance, Israel favours a confrontational stance against Iran to contain its threat. Due to this deal, the "Anti-Tehran alliance" formed during the Trump administration is irrelevant. Consequently, Israel has lost its bargaining power, and it will be difficult for Israel to take military action against Iran. Israel is now led by a right-wing party

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<sup>16</sup> Harb, Ali. "Iran-Saudi Arabia Deal Not a Setback for U.S., Analysts Say." Iran-Saudi Arabia deal not a setback for U.S., analysts say | Politics News | Al Jazeera, March 16, 2023. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/3/16/iran-saudi-arabia-deal-not-a-setback-for-us-analysts-say>.

headed by Benjamin Netanyahu, who has plans to strike Iran's nuclear facilities. Benjamin Netanyahu warned Saudi Arabia about Iran, saying, “Those who partner with Iran partner with misery. Look at Lebanon, look at Yemen, look at Syria, look at Iraq”.<sup>17</sup> Israel would need American involvement in the region. However, as we have seen in the case of other Gulf countries like the U.A.E., which have normalised their ties with Iran and, on the other hand, signed the Abraham Accord with Israel, this pact will not stand in the way of Israel's attempts to normalise its ties with Saudi Arabia. The deal may also solve proxy wars like the Yemen war, which may be beneficial to improving Israel and Saudi Arabia's relationship, as when the Yemen war is solved, the U.S. and Saudi Arabia's relationship will also improve. Israel officials have stated, "The more relations between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia improve, the easier it will be to work on promoting normalization between Saudi Arabia and Israel."<sup>18</sup>

## The People’s Republic of China

China has developed relations with the Arab States. On the other hand, China has also maintained its deep ties with Iran. Iran depends on China for 30% of its foreign trade, while Saudi Arabia is

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<sup>17</sup>Iordache, Ruxandra. “Israel PM Cautions Saudi Arabia about Iran after China-Brokered Deal, Urges Greater U.S. Presence.” CNBC, April 19, 2023. <https://www.cnbc.com/2023/04/19/benjamin-netanyahu-israel-cautions-saudi-about-iran-after-china-deal.html>.

<sup>18</sup> Ravid, Barak. “Israel Sees Opportunity in Iran-Saudi Deal, Israeli Official Says.” Axios, March 22, 2023. <https://www.axios.com/2023/03/22/iran-saudi-deal-israel-opportunity>.



China's major oil supplier.<sup>19</sup> This was the first major deal in which China brokered peace in the Middle East. This gave China an excellent chance to claim a robust diplomatic victory in the Global South. Thus, this may be the beginning of China acting as a peace broker in another regional conflict, especially the Russia-Ukraine war. Therefore, this deal may boost China's image worldwide, as they are appreciated for their part in the deal even though China took part in negotiations after three years of backchannel talks hosted by Iraq and Oman. It seems doubtful that China will take on the role of a security provider in the area; instead, China will continue to play an important diplomatic and economic role there. In addition, China will work in the areas of health, green energy, and technology in the region. According to Wang Wenbin, a spokesperson for the Chinese Foreign Ministry, China will advance its Global South Initiative in the region, as he stated, "The Beijing dialogue is a robust and successful effort to put the Global Security Initiative (GSI) into practice. Tactics like "bolster one and bash the other" or "divide and rule" or "bloc confrontation" have never been proven to work on security issues.".<sup>20</sup>

## Republic of Iraq

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<sup>19</sup> The Cairo Review of Global Affairs. "Iran-Saudi Arabia: A Regional Transformation?," March 19, 2023. <https://www.thecaireview.com/essays/iran-saudi-arabia-a-regional-transformation/>.

<sup>20</sup> The Iran Primer. "Iran and Saudi Arabia Restore Ties," March 10, 2023. <https://iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2023/mar/10/iran-and-saudi-arabia-restore-ties>.

Iraq has been a proxy war battlefield between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Since 2003, Iraq has been destabilised, and there have been paramilitary groups present as well. There is a presence of Iranian-backed groups in Iraq, and Saudi Arabia also backs Sunni tribes. Iraq has played an active role in diffusing the tension between Iran and Saudi Arabia. During his stint as Iraq's prime minister from 2020 to 2022, Mustafa al-Kadhimi used his ties as the previous intelligence chief to bring together Iranian and Saudi delegations to Baghdad for five rounds of bilateral negotiations.<sup>21</sup> Due to this deal, there will be an increase in Saudi Arabia's investments in Iraq, and as the region will be stable, Iraq will benefit from this deal. However, if there is an increase in the U.S. and Iran's hostility due to Iran's acquisition of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), Iraq may face challenges. Since there will be more American forces in Iraq, paramilitary groups will likely revert to violence. More importantly, this agreement safeguards Saudi Arabia if tensions between the United States and Iran rise. In such a case, Iraq is not protected by the agreement, and Saudi Arabia's investments in Iraq will decline if tensions between the United States and Iran rise.

## **The Future of the Deal: Will it be a Success or a Failure?**

Several factors are at play to decide if this deal will succeed or fail. Firstly, it depends on Middle Eastern countries. Currently, Saudi Arabia and Iran have high stakes in the deal. Saudi Arabia's 2030 Vision requires stability for economic investment. On the other side, Iran is facing domestic

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<sup>21</sup> The Impact of the Saudi-Iranian Rapprochement on Middle East Conflicts | Crisis Group. "The Impact of the Saudi-Iranian Rapprochement on Middle East Conflicts," April 19, 2023. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/middle-east-north-africa/gulf-and-arabian-peninsula/iran-saudi-arabia/impact-saudi-iranian>.

protests that require non-interference from outside in Iran's internal affairs. More importantly, Iran needs to be in a better economic state, thus requiring financial investment. Altogether, both nations require normalising relations with each other for their own interests. If Saudi Arabia and Iran go together in one pole, which China and Russia East lead, it will lead to some conditions that were in the 1950s where there will be a high chance of success of this deal; however, if both of them go to a different pole, then the deal will be a failure. In the current scenario, Saudi Arabia will follow its independent policy like Iran did in 1980, leading to a situation where Saudi Arabia will decide its fate. Saudi Arabia will avoid high-level confrontation with Iran due to its long-term interests and the lack of commitment from the U.S.

Secondly, the U.S. relationship with Iran also plays a significant role in this deal's future. If Iran pursues its ambition to attain nuclear weapons, then it is likely that the U.S. will take a firm stance, which will likely be a military action that Israel will fully support. Throughout history, Iran has had solid ambitions, and Iran tried to pursue these ambitions aggressively whenever there was a multipolar global system. Currently, there is a multipolar global system, and in the future, there will be a multipolar world system as the Chinese model supports multipolarity. Multipolar systems are less rigidly structured than bipolar ones, which raises the possibility that Iran will seek to obtain nuclear weapons. Conflict is more likely in such systems because major and minor powers typically have great flexibility.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, the U.S. is preoccupied with the conflict in East Asia and Russia-Ukraine, allowing Iran to pursue its genuine objective. Hence, the U.S.-Iran relationship can decide the fate of this deal.

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<sup>22</sup> Mearsheimer, John J, and Stephen M Walt. 2008. *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*. Toronto: Penguin Canada.

Lastly, the deal will depend on how China is looking to play its role in maintaining the terms of this deal and how non-state actors respond to the deal, mainly Yemeni Houthi rebels. Saudi Arabia allowed China to mediate due to China's leverage over Iran. If Chinese economic interests are served, it will be a mediator and try to keep Iran on the terms. However, if China's interests are not met, maintaining the deal will not be easy. Thus, if China can convince Iran to maintain the deal, then Iranian-backed non-state actors will also be in control and hence will be successful.

## Conclusion

The restoration between Iran and Saudi Arabia can be the start of a solution to all significant issues in the region. This deal does not mean changing Saudi Arabia's and the GCC's close relationship with the U.S. militarily. Instead, it shows that due to U.S. disengagement in the region, a multipolarity system has risen in which each player navigates according to their own interests. This detente seeks regional stability by allowing both nations to work on their ideological and strategic differences.

Domestic reasons on both sides have brought them to the table of negotiations.

The deal will face a complex situation of militarisation in the region as Saudi Arabia will be working closely with the U.S. to develop military capabilities according to its military doctrine. In response, Iran will follow its military doctrine of forming an axis of resistance and collaborating with non-state actors.

This deal will favour Palestine as its cause will be again recognised and focused as the region's two significant powers will solve its issues, leading to regional stability and peace. In this case, it may complicate Israel's question again as Saudi Arabia still needs to sign the Abraham Accord.

There is a multipolar world system, and the historically multipolar system has led to significant developments in the region. There will be a security dilemma for a short period; however, the deal will depend on the global world order over the long term. In conclusion, this deal may stabilise the region or be part of a detente taking place in the whole region, which may last for a short time.

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