

# Congressional Testimony

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### *Iran in the Gulf*

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

#### *The IRGC:*

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

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

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<sup>5</sup> "Oman Oil Minister Slams OPEC Policy on Prices, Market Share," *Reuters*, January 21, 2015.

(<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/01/21/oman-oil-ope-idUKL6NOV00SL20150121>)

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Energy Information Administration, "Monthly Energy Review," June 2015, page 35.

(<http://www.eia.gov/totalenergy/data/monthly/pdf/sec2.pdf>)

<sup>7</sup> Juliet Eilperin & Karen DeYoung, "U.S., Gulf Nations Agree 'Verifiable' Nuke Deal with Iran Helps Everyone," *The Washington Post*, May 14, 2015. ([http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/obama-works-to-assure-gulf-leaders-about-us-alliance-in-region/2015/05/14/3654275e-fa50-11e4-9ef4-1bb7ce3b3fb7\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/obama-works-to-assure-gulf-leaders-about-us-alliance-in-region/2015/05/14/3654275e-fa50-11e4-9ef4-1bb7ce3b3fb7_story.html))

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

share a base with some of these militias are particularly stunning.<sup>17</sup> Saudi officials have complained “Iran is taking over the country.”<sup>18</sup>

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

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

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

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<sup>17</sup> Josh Rogin & Eli Lake, “Iran’s Forces and U.S. Share a Base in Iraq,” *Bloomberg*, June 22, 2015. (<http://www.bloombergview.com/articles/2015-06-22/iran-s-forces-and-u-s-share-a-base-in-iraq>)

<sup>18</sup> Lucas Tomlinson, “‘Nobody is Going to Wait’: Saudi Drafting Nuclear Back-Up Plan to Counter Iran?” *Fox News*, March 7, 2015. (<http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2015/03/07/nobody-is-going-to-wait-saudi-drafting-nuclear-back-up-plan-to-counter-iran/>)

<sup>19</sup> Yaroslav Trofimov, “Saudis Warm to Muslim Brotherhood, Seeking Sunni Unity on Yemen,” *The Wall Street Journal*, April 2, 2015. (<http://www.wsj.com/articles/saudis-warm-to-muslim-brotherhood-seeking-sunni-unity-on-yemen-1427967884>)

<sup>20</sup> Jay Solomon, Dion Nissenbaum, & Asa Fitch, “In Strategic Shift, U.S. Draws Closer to Yemen Rebels,” *The Wall Street Journal*, Jan 29, 2015. (<http://www.wsj.com/articles/in-strategic-shift-u-s-draws-closer-to-yemeni-rebels-1422576308?tesla=y>)

<sup>21</sup> Yara Bayoumy & Mohammed Ghobari, “Iranian Report Seen Crucial for Yemen’s Houthis,” *Reuters*, December 15, 2014. (<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/15/us-yemen-houthis-iran-insight-idUSKBN0JT17A20141215>)

missiles, artillery, rocket-propelled grenades, and explosives.<sup>22</sup> Others claim the group received such shipments as early as 2009.<sup>23</sup>

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

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

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

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

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<sup>22</sup> Eric Schmidt & Robert F. Worth, “With Arms for Yemen Rebels, Iran Seeks Wider Mideast Role,” *The New York Times*, March 15, 2012. ([http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/15/world/middleeast/aiding-yemen-rebels-iran-seeks-wider-mideast-role.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/15/world/middleeast/aiding-yemen-rebels-iran-seeks-wider-mideast-role.html?pagewanted=all&_r=1)); Barbara Starr, “Weapons Seized off Yemen Point to Iran, U.S. Official Says,” *CNN*, January 30, 2013.

(<http://edition.cnn.com/2013/01/29/world/meast/yemen-weapons-seized/>); Yara Bayoumy & Mohammed Ghobari, “Iranian Report Seen Crucial for Yemen’s Houthis,” *Reuters*, December 15, 2014. (<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/15/us-yemen-houthis-iran-insight-idUSKBN0JT17A20141215>); “Iranian Ship Unloads 185 Tons of Weapons for Houthis at Saleef Port,” *Al Arabiya* (Saudi Arabia), March 20, 2013. (<http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2013/03/20/Iranian-ship-unloads-185-tons-of-weapons-for-Houthis-at-Saleef-port.html>); “Iranian Ship Laden with Weapons Docked near the Yemeni Port of Hodeida,” *Al Jazeera Arabic* (Qatar), March 19, 2015.

(<http://www.aljazeera.net/news/arabic/2015/3/19/اليمني-الحديدة-ميناء-قرب-ترسو-بالسلاح-محملة-إيرانية-سفينة>)

<sup>23</sup> “Yemen Seizes Vessel With Iranian Crew,” *Al Arabiya* (Saudi Arabia), October 26, 2009. (<http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2009/10/26/89328.html>)

<sup>24</sup> John Kerry, “Interview with Judy Woodruff of PBS Newshour,” *PBS News*, April 8, 2015. (<http://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2015/04/240486.htm>)

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

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

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

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

### *Proliferation Challenges*

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

### Commerce in the Gulf

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Defense Cooperation**

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

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<sup>33</sup> Ankit Panda, "India, Iran and Oman Open Talks on Deep Sea Gas Pipeline," *The Diplomat*, March 1, 2014. (<http://thediplomat.com/2014/03/india-iran-and-oman-open-talks-on-deep-sea-gas-pipeline/>); Andrew Critchlow, "In the Shadow of Iran A New UAE Oil Port is Transforming the Energy Sector," *The Telegraph* (U.K.), September 29, 2014.

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/energy/oilandgas/11127089/In-the-shadow-of-Iran-a-new-UAE-oil-port-is-transforming-energy-sector.html>); Shaddad Al Musalmi, "Iran Will Help Oman Become A Regional Economic Hub," *Muscat Daily* (Oman), February 10, 2014. (<http://www.muscatdaily.com/Archive/Oman/Iran-will-help-Oman-become-a-regional-economic-hub-Envoy-2xau>)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Syria:

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>45</sup> Yaroslav Trofimov, “To U.S. Allies, al-Qaida Official in Syria Becomes the Lesser Evil,” *The Wall Street Journal*, June 11, 2015. (<http://www.wsj.com/articles/to-u-s-allies-al-qaeda-affiliate-in-syria-becomes-the-lesser-evil-1434022017>); David Ignatius, “A New Cooperation on Syria,” *The Washington Post*, May 12, 2015. ([http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/a-new-cooperation-on-syria/2015/05/12/bdb48a68-f8ed-11e4-9030-b4732caefe81\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/a-new-cooperation-on-syria/2015/05/12/bdb48a68-f8ed-11e4-9030-b4732caefe81_story.html)); Karen DeYoung & Liz Sly, “U.S. Allies in Middle East Ramping Up Support for Rebel Forces in Syria,” *The Washington Post*, April 29, 2015. ([https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-allies-in-middle-east-ramping-up-support-for-rebel-forces-in-syria/2015/04/29/07b1d82c-edc8-11e4-8666-a1d756d0218e\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-allies-in-middle-east-ramping-up-support-for-rebel-forces-in-syria/2015/04/29/07b1d82c-edc8-11e4-8666-a1d756d0218e_story.html))

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

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

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

### Libya:

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

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

### Yemen:

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>52</sup> Akbar Shahid Ahmed, “Obama Brokered a Secret Deal between 2 Arab States Could Help End Libya’s Civil War,” *The Huffington Post*, June 21, 2015. ([http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/06/17/libya-peace-uae-qatar\\_n\\_7605898.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/06/17/libya-peace-uae-qatar_n_7605898.html))

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Iraq:

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

<sup>54</sup> Lara Jakes, "Saudi Arabia's Unpaid Debts," *Foreign Policy*, June 17, 2015.

(<http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/06/17/saudi-arabias-unpaid-debt/>)

<sup>55</sup> Carolyn Cole, "Saudi Military Official Discusses Arab Coalition's Fight in Yemen," *Los Angeles Times*, April 7, 2015. (<http://www.latimes.com/world/middleeast/la-fg-yemen-saudi-qa-20150407-story.html>)

<sup>56</sup> "Yemen Facing Serious Food Insecurity As Conflict Deteriorates, New UN Study Finds," *UN News Centre*, June 18, 2015. ([http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51187#.VZqqhvn4\\_IU](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=51187#.VZqqhvn4_IU)); Shane Dixon Kavanaugh & Vlad Vovcuk, "Saudi-Led Campaign of Airstrikes in Yemen Marks 100th Day," *Vocativ*, July 1, 2015. (<http://www.vocativ.com/news/207203/saudi-led-airstrikes-in-yemen-marks-100th-day-of-bombings/>)

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Negligence on Terror Finance**

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

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

<sup>59</sup> U.S. Department of State, Press Release, “Jeddah Communiqué,” September 11, 2014. (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/09/231496.htm>)

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

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

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

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

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

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<sup>61</sup> David Cohen, "Confronting New Threats in Terrorist Financing," *Remarks before the Center for a New American Security*, March 4, 2014. (<http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/j12308.aspx>)

<sup>62</sup> Karen DeYoung, "Kuwait, Ally on Syria, is Also the Leading Funder of Extremist Rebels," *The Washington Post*, April 25, 2014. ([https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/kuwait-top-ally-on-syria-is-also-the-leading-funder-of-extremist-rebels/2014/04/25/10142b9a-ca48-11e3-a75e-463587891b57\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/kuwait-top-ally-on-syria-is-also-the-leading-funder-of-extremist-rebels/2014/04/25/10142b9a-ca48-11e3-a75e-463587891b57_story.html))

<sup>63</sup> David Cohen, "Confronting New Threats in Terrorist Financing," *Remarks before the Center for a New American Security*, March 4, 2014. (<http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/j12308.aspx>)

<sup>64</sup> Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "Qatar's Friends-With-Everyone Approach Rankles Some of its Persian Gulf Neighbors," *The Washington Post*, October 4, 2014. ([https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/qatars-friends-with-everyone-approach-rankles-some-of-its-persian-gulf-neighbors/2014/10/04/b89977f8-4a7b-11e4-b72e-d60a9229cc10\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/qatars-friends-with-everyone-approach-rankles-some-of-its-persian-gulf-neighbors/2014/10/04/b89977f8-4a7b-11e4-b72e-d60a9229cc10_story.html)); Maria Abi-Habib & Rory Jones, "Kuwait Attack Renews Scrutiny of Terror Support Within Gulf States," *The Wall Street Journal*, June 28, 2015. (<http://www.wsj.com/articles/kuwait-attack-renews-scrutiny-of-terror-support-within-gulf-states-1435529549>)

<sup>65</sup> Robert Mendick, "Terror Financiers Are Living Freely in Qatar, US Discloses," *The Telegraph* (U.K.), November 16, 2014. (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/islamic-state/11233407/Terror-financiers-are-living-freely-in-Qatar-US-discloses.html>)



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

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

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

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

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<sup>66</sup> David Andrew Weinberg, "Qatar and Terror Finance, Part I: Negligence," *Center on Sanctions & Illicit Finance*, December 2014, page 16.

([http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/publications/Qatar\\_Part\\_I.pdf](http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/publications/Qatar_Part_I.pdf))

<sup>67</sup> U.S. Department of the Treasury, Press Release, "Treasury Designates Twelve Foreign Terrorist Fighter Facilitators," September 24, 2014. (<http://www.treasury.gov/press-center/press-releases/Pages/j12651.aspx>)

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

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

<sup>70</sup> David Andrew Weinberg, "Qatar and Terrorism Part I: Negligence," *Center on Sanctions & Illicit Finance*, December 2014.

([http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/publications/Qatar\\_Part\\_I.pdf](http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/publications/Qatar_Part_I.pdf))

<sup>71</sup> U.S. Department of State, "Country Reports on Terrorism 2014," June 2015, page 206.

(<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/239631.pdf>)

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>74</sup> @althani\_faisal, "الضاري حارث مثنى الدكتور وفضيلة العودة سلمان الدكتور الشيخ فضيلة من بزيارة الامس مجلسنا تشرف"، Twitter, June 28, 2015. ([https://twitter.com/althani\\_faisal/status/615279539279626240](https://twitter.com/althani_faisal/status/615279539279626240)); @ayedhalqahtani2, "بضيافة العودة سلمان د.", Twitter, June 28, 2015. (<https://twitter.com/ayedhalqahtani2/status/615291202900897792>); salman\_alodah, "بمجلس ضيوفا كانوا"، Instagram, June 29 2015. (<https://instagram.com/p/4hhMNvsE9t/>)

<sup>75</sup> "HH the Father Emir Offers Condolences on Death of Harith Al-Dhari," *Qatar News Agency*, March 19, 2015. (<http://www.qna.org.qa/en-us/News/15031919220056/HH-the-Father-Emir-Offers-Condolences-on-Death-of-Harith-Al-Dhari>); العراق في المسلمين علماء ينة، Facebook, March 19, 2015. (<https://www.facebook.com/iraq.amsi/photos/a.591541200883660.1073741827.289539944417122/798865970151181/?type=1>); العراق في المسلمين علماء ينة، Facebook, March 19, 2015. ([https://www.facebook.com/iraq.amsi/photos/pb.289539944417122.-2207520000.1435770280./798866310151147/?type=3&src=https%3A%2F%2Fscontent.xx.fbcdn.net%2Fphotos-xaf1%2Fv%2Ft1.0-9%2F11081174\\_798866310151147\\_2360145105808591333\\_n.jpg%3Foh%3D03172c3c3d3c7306e2fb9f876453e885%260e%3D5614FED3&size=625%2C269&fbid=798866310151147](https://www.facebook.com/iraq.amsi/photos/pb.289539944417122.-2207520000.1435770280./798866310151147/?type=3&src=https%3A%2F%2Fscontent.xx.fbcdn.net%2Fphotos-xaf1%2Fv%2Ft1.0-9%2F11081174_798866310151147_2360145105808591333_n.jpg%3Foh%3D03172c3c3d3c7306e2fb9f876453e885%260e%3D5614FED3&size=625%2C269&fbid=798866310151147)); العراق في المسلمين علماء ينة، Facebook, March 19, 2015. ([https://www.facebook.com/iraq.amsi/photos/pb.289539944417122.-2207520000.1435770280./798866360151142/?type=3&src=https%3A%2F%2Fscontent.xx.fbcdn.net%2Fphotos-xpa1%2Fv%2Ft1.0-9%2F11039240\\_798866360151142\\_4451469926683737231\\_n.jpg%3Foh%3De615d590e88258d8b1d9c7be5708e316%260e%3D5631C3D9&size=370%2C251&fbid=798866360151142](https://www.facebook.com/iraq.amsi/photos/pb.289539944417122.-2207520000.1435770280./798866360151142/?type=3&src=https%3A%2F%2Fscontent.xx.fbcdn.net%2Fphotos-xpa1%2Fv%2Ft1.0-9%2F11039240_798866360151142_4451469926683737231_n.jpg%3Foh%3De615d590e88258d8b1d9c7be5708e316%260e%3D5631C3D9&size=370%2C251&fbid=798866360151142)); الشيخ الوالد الامير، التعني قناة، YouTube.com, uploaded March 19, 2015. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKIIdual8qk>)

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

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

<sup>78</sup> Andrew Gilligan, "Minister's family ties to terror," *The Guardian* (U.K.), November 1, 2014. (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/qatar/11203140/Ministers-family-ties-to-terror.html>); "تفاصيل عن علاقة الموقوف المولوي باعترافات أردني أبعدته طهران إلى دمشق ومنها أبعد إلى لبنان: 3 قتلى وأكثر من 20 جريحاً في طرابلس وميقاتي ضد تغطية المخلين وأسلوب الأمن العام

*Al Hayat* (UK), March 14, 2012; (<http://bit.ly/lw2raoj>)

Foundation for Defense of Democracies

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

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

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

<sup>79</sup> Andrew Gilligan, “Minister’s family ties to terror,” *The Guardian* (U.K.), November 1, 2014.

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/qatar/11203140/Ministers-family-ties-to-terror.html>)

“قطر والإمارات والبحرين دعت مواطنيها لعدم السفر للبنان... والموجودين فيه للرحيل فوراً” *Al Rai Media* (Al Kuwait), May 20, 2012; (<http://www.alraimedia.com/Articles.aspx?id=333916>) & “Charbel: UAE, Qatar, Bahrain’s Travel Restrictions Are Precautionary Measures,” *Naharnet* (Lebanon), May 20, 2012.

(<http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/40840>)

<sup>80</sup> “شربل : المولوي أطلق لأن تهتمته بسيطة وأدعو الى حال طوارئ سياسية” *Al Hayat* (U.K.), May 23, 2012;

(<http://goo.gl/PbIPxt>) & “العطية ومعتز برشم يتقاسمان جائزة رياضي الموسم” *Al Kass* (Qatar), May 14, 2013; ([http://www.alkass.net/news\\_details.aspx?news\\_id=53548](http://www.alkass.net/news_details.aspx?news_id=53548))

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

<sup>82</sup> “جريمة مقتل القائد أبو عبدالعزيز القطري - جبهة ثوار سوريا من الداخل (الحلقة 2)” *YouTube*, uploaded March 5, 2015. (<https://youtu.be/n5GdmJMj1GI?t=1m22s>); “شهادة القائد أبو جهاد الشيشاني/ مقطع ابو عبد العزيز” *Palestine Youth website (archived)*, March 26, 2014.

(<https://web.archive.org/web/20141113072416/http://www.shabab.ps/vb/archive/index.php/t-145507.html>)

<sup>83</sup> Holly Watt, “Terror on Twitter: How Banned Terror Organisations Are Making a Mockery of the Law on Social Media,” *The Telegraph* (U.K.), January 23, 2015.

(<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/terrorism-in-the-uk/11363891/Terror-on-Twitter-How-banned-terror-organisations-are-making-a-mockery-of-the-law-on-social-media.html>); “21 Jan 2015: Column 319,” *Daily Hansard* (U.K.), January 21, 2015.

(<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmhansrd/cm150121/debtext/150121-0004.htm>)

<sup>84</sup> Tam Hussein, “Why Did Jund Al-Aqsa Join Nusra Front in Taking Out 'Moderate' Rebels in Idlib?” *The Huffington Post*, June 11, 2014. ([http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/tam-hussein/nusra-front\\_b\\_6112790.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/tam-hussein/nusra-front_b_6112790.html))

<sup>85</sup> “جريمة مقتل القائد أبو عبدالعزيز القطري - جبهة ثوار سوريا من الداخل (الحلقة 2)” *YouTube*, uploaded March 5, 2015; (<https://youtu.be/n5GdmJMj1GI?t=1m22s>) & Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi, “Muhajireen Battalions in Syria (Part IV),” *Aymenn Jawad Al-Tamimi Website*, August 19, 2014;

(<http://www.aymennjawad.org/15207/muhajireen-battalions-in-syria-part-iv>)

<sup>86</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, “An al Qaeda Front Group in Syria,” *The Long War Journal*, May 2, 2015.

(<http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2015/05/an-al-qaeda-front-group-in-syria.php>); Thomas Joscelyn,

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>87</sup> Thomas Joscelyn, “Syrian Rebel Leader Was bin Laden’s Courier, Now Zawahiri’s Representative,” *The Long War Journal*, December 17, 2013.

([http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/12/aq\\_courier\\_rebel\\_leader\\_zawahiri.php](http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2013/12/aq_courier_rebel_leader_zawahiri.php))

<sup>88</sup> Jay Solomon & Nour Malas, “Qatar’s Ties to Militants Strain Alliance,” *The Wall Street Journal*, February 23, 2015. (<http://www.wsj.com/articles/qatars-ties-to-militants-strain-alliance-1424748601>)

<sup>89</sup> U.S. Department of State, “Country Reports on Terrorism 2014,” June 2015, page 206.

(<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/239631.pdf>)

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

<sup>91</sup> Jonathan Schanzer, “Hamas’s Benefactors: A Network of Terror,” *Testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs*, September 9, 2014.

(<http://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA13/20140909/102629/HRG-113-FA13-Wstate-SchanzerJ-20140909.pdf>); “דולר מיליארד 2-3 שווה מרוזק-אבו סגנו, דולר מיליארד 2-5 שווה משעל אלד'ח: חמאס של הטייקונים,”

*Globes* (Israel), July 24, 2014. (<http://www.globes.co.il/news/article.aspx?did=1000957870>); “The Corruption at The Head of Hamas,” *Globes* (Israel), July 20, 2014.

(<http://www.jpost.com/Business/Business-Features/The-corruption-at-the-head-of-Hamas-363550>)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>102</sup> Karen DeYoung, “Kuwait Official Quits Post; U.S. Accused Him Of Funding Extremist Fighters In Syria,” *The Washington Post*, May 12, 2014. ([https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/kuwait-official-quits-post-us-accused-him-of-funding-extremist-fighters-in-syria/2014/05/12/31a8df86-d9fb-11e3-8009-71de85b9c527\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/kuwait-official-quits-post-us-accused-him-of-funding-extremist-fighters-in-syria/2014/05/12/31a8df86-d9fb-11e3-8009-71de85b9c527_story.html))

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

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

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

### **Incitement, Hatred, and State-Sanctioned Intolerance**

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

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

<sup>104</sup> David Andrew Weinberg, "UAE's Zealous New Terror List," *FDD Policy Brief*, November 17, 2014.

(<http://www.defenddemocracy.org/media-hit/david-weinberg-uae-zealous-new-terror-list/>)

<sup>105</sup> "القدس -جمل-أبو-الشهيد-منزل-يغلق-الاحتلال," *Al Jazeera* (Qatar), July 1, 2015.

(<http://www.aljazeera.net/news/reportsandinterviews/2015/7/1/الاحتلال-يغلق-منزل-الشهيد-جمل-أبو-القدس>)

"القدس من شهيد زوجة ترحيل يعتزم الاحتلال," *Al Jazeera* (Qatar), June 22, 2015.

(<http://www.aljazeera.net/news/humanrights/2015/6/22/الاحتلال-يغلق-منزل-الشهيد-جمل-أبو-القدس>)

<sup>106</sup> David Andrew Weinberg, Oren Adaki, & Grant Rumley, "The Problem with Al Jazeera," *The National Interest*, September 10, 2014.

(<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-problem-al-jazeera-11239>)

<sup>107</sup> @DavidAWeinberg, "Like #Qatar's #AlJazeera, #Bahrain's state news wire is lumping known terrorists into its count of #Gaza "martyrs": <http://www.bna.bh/portal/en/news/627718> ..." *Twitter*, July 31, 2014.

(<https://twitter.com/DavidAWeinberg/status/494902618380984320>); "Palestinian Death Toll: 1377

Martyrs, 7700 Wounded," *Bahrain News Agency* (Bahrain), July 31, 2014.

(<http://www.bna.bh/portal/en/news/627718>); @DavidAWeinberg, "Like #AlJazeera, #Qatar's state news

wire calls known terrorists "martyrs" and "victims" in its #Gaza death count:

<http://www.qna.org.qa/News/14073108140011/%D8%A7%D8%B1%D8%AA%D9%81%D8%A7%D8%B9-%D8%B9%D8%AF-%D8%B6%D8%AD%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D8%AF%D9%88%D8%A7%D9%86-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%A5%D8%B3%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A6%D9%8A%D9%84%D9%8A-%D8%A5%D9%84%D9%89-1363-%D8%B4%D9%87%D9%8A%D8%AF%D8%A7-%D9%887680-%D8%AC%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%AD%D8%A7> ..."

*Twitter*, July 31, 2014.

(<https://twitter.com/DavidAWeinberg/status/494907859411300352>); @QatarNewsAgency, "ضحايا عدد ارتفاع"

http://bit.ly/1n5Jo1V #qatar," *Twitter*, July 31, 2014.

(<https://twitter.com/QatarNewsAgency/status/494759524721373184>)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>112</sup> David Andrew Weinberg, "Qatar Needs Tough Love," *Politico*, February 23, 2015 ([http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/02/qatar-emir-tamim-isis-115425.html#.VZxAj\\_n4\\_IU](http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/02/qatar-emir-tamim-isis-115425.html#.VZxAj_n4_IU))

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

<sup>118</sup> Ahmed Ghalab, “وزير الشؤون الإسلامية: المهددات ليست من «الإخوان» وحدهم بل هناك تغريبيون,”

*Al-Hayat*, April 9, 2014 (<http://goo.gl/qpTHRn>)

<sup>119</sup> Oren Adaki, “Highlighting Hatred in Saudi Textbooks,” *FDD Policy Brief*, March 27, 2014.

(<http://www.defenddemocracy.org/media-hit/oren-adaki-highlighting-hatred-in-saudi-textbooks/>); “وزير وحركيون تغريبيون هناك بل وحدهم «الإخوان» من ليست المهددات: الإسلامية الشؤون,” *Al Hayat* (London), April 9, 2014. (<http://alhayat.com/Articles/1686765/وزير-الإسلامية-الشؤون-وزير-من-ليست-المهددات-الإخوان-من-ليست-المهددات-الإسلامية-الشؤون-وزير-وحركيون>)

<sup>120</sup> Sami Aboudi, “Bombing Exposes Saudi Failure To Curb Sectarian Strains,” *Reuters*, May 26, 2015. (<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/05/26/us-gulf-security-sectarianism-analysis-idUSKBN00B1GL20150526>)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>126</sup> Shane Dixon Kavanaugh, “Dubai Provides Pulpit For Muslim Clerics Who Mock 9/11,” *Vocativ*, July 2, 2015. (<http://www.vocativ.com/news/207818/dubai-provides-pulpit-for-muslim-clerics-who-mock-911/>); Omar Abdelkafi, “The Internet,” *MEMRI TV*, January 18, 2015.

([http://www.memritv.org/player/largePlayer.php?&width=571&height=463&skin=memri\\_red&autoplay=1&clip\\_image=http://www.memritv.org/pic\\_clip/clip\\_intro\\_571\\_432.jpg&clipid=4782](http://www.memritv.org/player/largePlayer.php?&width=571&height=463&skin=memri_red&autoplay=1&clip_image=http://www.memritv.org/pic_clip/clip_intro_571_432.jpg&clipid=4782))

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

<sup>128</sup> David Andrew Weinberg & Oren Adaki, “Meet Saudi Arabia’s Biggest (and Most Controversial) Twitter Star,” *The National Interest*, June 22, 2015. (<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/meet-saudi-arabias-biggest-most-controversial-twitter-star-13158>); “1 الالدورة فعاليات جدول,” *Government of Dubai Website*, accessed July 6, 2015.

([http://www.quran.gov.ae/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=207&Itemid=550](http://www.quran.gov.ae/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=207&Itemid=550))

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>131</sup> @thaqafa, "خطيب إمام حميد بن صالح. د الشيخ فضيلة الإسلامية الثقافة إدارة # وضيف الكويت دولة #ضيف زيارة ترقبوا," *Twitter*, December 13, 2014. (<https://twitter.com/thaqafa/status/543815271119454210>); @thaqafa, "تابعوها حميد بن صالح. د الشيخ فضيلة الحرام المسجد إمام ضيفنا محاضرة وتطلق الله بإذن دقائق," *Twitter*, April 16, 2013. (<https://twitter.com/thaqafa/status/324178245463453697>)

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

<sup>133</sup> "grand\_mosque," Instagram, December 19, 2014. (<https://instagram.com/p/wygXdhMZqT/>)

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

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

<sup>136</sup> "وصال قناة بث توقف الإعلام وزارة," *Al-Watah Newspaper* (Qatar), June 26, 2015. (<http://alwatan.kuwait.tt/articledetails.aspx?id=440732>); "الدم امتحان... بالوحدة الفتنة تواجه الكويت / تقدم الأمير سمو / بالوحدة الفتنة تواجه الكويت... الدم امتحان," *Alrai Mediagroup*, June 29, 2015. (<http://www.alraimedia.com/Articles.aspx?id=602961>)

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

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

### **Human Rights, Civil Rights, and Justice**

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

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

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

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

<sup>139</sup> “والمجرمين بالمجوس ويصفهم البحرين في طائفة على يدعو السعيدي”، المدحوب *Al Wasat News* (Bahrain), October 19, 2014. (<http://www.alwasatnews.com/4425/news/read/929439/1.html>); @jassimalsaeedi, “الجماعة السنة يأهل”، السعيدي# البحرين# رتويت# والخنازير أبناء القردة والنصارى اليهود أبناء والمجوس والنواصب الرافضة دمر اللهم خير على تصبجون *Twitter*, September 8, 2012. (<https://twitter.com/jassimalsaeedi/status/244537355187408897>)

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

<sup>141</sup> Condoleezza Rice, “Remarks at the American University in Cairo,” *Remarks before the American University in Cairo*, June 20, 2005. (<http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/rm/2005/48328.htm>)

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

<sup>143</sup> Michael Crowley, “The Kings and O,” *Politico*, May 11, 2015. (<http://www.politico.com/story/2015/05/obama-middle-east-monarchs-117769.html>)

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

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

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

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

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

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<sup>144</sup> How to Build a More Sustainable and Mutually Beneficial Relationship with Saudi Arabia: Blueprint for U.S. Government Policy," *Human Rights First*, March 2015.

(<http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/sites/default/files/Saudi-Arabia-Blueprint-final.pdf>)

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

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

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

<sup>148</sup> "Saudi Arabia is Hiring Executioners as Beheadings Rise," *FoxNews.com*, May 19, 2015.

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

ordinary people to prison for years simply for criticizing government policies or the personage of the country's Amir.<sup>150</sup>

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

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

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

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

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

<sup>150</sup> Human Rights Watch, "Kuwait: Crackdown on Free Speech," February 3, 2015.

(<https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/02/03/kuwait-crackdown-free-speech>)

<sup>151</sup> "Oman Holding Blogger Muawiyah Alrawahi at Psychiatric Hospital," *Committee to Protect Journalists*, August 5, 2014. (<https://cpj.org/2014/08/oman-holding-blogger-muawiyah-alrawahi-at-psychiat.php>)

<sup>152</sup> "Qatari Poet Life Sentence Reduced to 15 Years," *BBC*, February 25, 2013

(<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-21572072>)

<sup>153</sup> "Qatar 'Kafala' Labour Reforms Face Fresh Delay," *AFP*, June 23, 2015.

(<http://sports.yahoo.com/news/qatar-kafala-reforms-face-fresh-delay-000217060--sow.html>)

<sup>154</sup> David Batty, "Migrants Building UAE Cultural Hub 'Risk Abuse if They Complain'," *The Guardian*, February 10, 2015 (<http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/feb/10/migrants-united-arab-emirates-human-rights-watch>)

<sup>155</sup> United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, "Preliminary Observations on the Official Visit to the United Arab Emirates by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers (28 January-5 February 2014)," February 5, 2014.

(<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=14223&LangID=E>)

<sup>156</sup> State Department spokesperson, "Press Statement: Lifting Holds on Security Assistance to the Government of Bahrain," June 29, 2015. (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2015/06/244478.htm>)

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

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

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

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

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<sup>157</sup> Tom Malinowski, “Briefing on the 2014 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices,” *U.S. Department of State*, June 25, 2015. (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2015/06/244368.htm>)

<sup>158</sup> State Department spokesperson, “Press Statement: Lifting Holds on Security Assistance to the Government of Bahrain,” June 29, 2015. (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2015/06/244478.htm>)

<sup>159</sup> “Bahrain Frees Sunni Opposition Leader After Four Years,” *AFP*, June 20, 2015. (<http://news.yahoo.com/bahrain-frees-sunni-opposition-leader-four-years-083010472.html>)

<sup>160</sup> “Bahrain Sentences Opposition Leader to Four Years in Jail,” *Reuters*, June 16, 2015. (<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/06/17/us-bahrain-trial-idUSKBN0OW0MB20150617>)

<sup>161</sup> “Bahrain: Jailing Opposition Leader an Affront to Freedom of Expression,” *Amnesty International*, June 16, 2015. (<https://www.amnesty.org/latest/news/2015/06/bahrain-jailing-opposition-leader-an-affront-to-freedom-of-expression/>)

<sup>162</sup> “Bahrain Jails Politician for Criticising Yemen War,” *Khaleej Times* (UAE), June 30, 2015. ([http://www.khaleejtimes.com/mobile/inside.asp?xfile=/data/middleeast/2015/June/middleeast\\_June268.xml&section=middleeast](http://www.khaleejtimes.com/mobile/inside.asp?xfile=/data/middleeast/2015/June/middleeast_June268.xml&section=middleeast))

<sup>163</sup> Jennifer Fenton, “Bahrain’s Human Rights Still Fall Short, Despite Washington Policy Shift,” *Al Jazeera America*, June 30, 2015. (<http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2015/6/30/bahrain-human-rights-still-fall-short.html>); “US/Bahrain: Bad Move to Resume Arms Sales,” *Human Rights Watch*, July 2, 2015. (<https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/07/02/us/bahrain-bad-move-resume-arms-sales>)

<sup>164</sup> “Bahrain: Opposition Figure to be Held in Remand for Expressing Opinion,” *Al Wefaq National Islamic Society*, July 2, 2015. (<http://alwefaq.net/cmsen/2015/07/02/44747/>)

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

### **Policy Recommendations**

#### **Energy and Economic Relations:**

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

*Regional Reassurance and Iran:*

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

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

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

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

*Combating Terror and Terror Finance:*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Religious Incitement:

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

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

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<sup>167</sup> "How to Build a More Sustainable and Mutually Beneficial Relationship with Saudi Arabia: Blueprint for U.S. Government Policy," *Human Rights First*, March 2015.

(<http://www.humanrightsfirst.org/sites/default/files/Saudi-Arabia-Blueprint-final.pdf>)

<sup>168</sup> David Andrew Weinberg, "Textbook Diplomacy: Why the State Department Shelved a Study on Incitement in Saudi Education Materials," *FDD Press*, March 2014.

([http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/Textbook\\_Diplomacy.pdf](http://www.defenddemocracy.org/content/uploads/documents/Textbook_Diplomacy.pdf))

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

*Protecting Rights and Reform:*

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

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

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

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

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<sup>169</sup> Finland Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "Finland summoned the Interim Chargé d'Affaires of Saudi Arabia to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs," January 20, 2015. ([http://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/article/-/asset\\_publisher/suomi-kutsui-saudi-arabian-va-asiainhoitajan-kuultavaksi-ulkoministerioon?\\_101\\_INSTANCE\\_3qmUeJgIxZEK\\_redirect=%2Fen%2Ffrontpage](http://valtioneuvosto.fi/en/article/-/asset_publisher/suomi-kutsui-saudi-arabian-va-asiainhoitajan-kuultavaksi-ulkoministerioon?_101_INSTANCE_3qmUeJgIxZEK_redirect=%2Fen%2Ffrontpage))

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

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