

House Foreign Affairs Committee

Subcommittee on Africa

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In his November 18 meeting with President Trump, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman asked the President to intervene in the ongoing civil war in Sudan. It is a war that has produced what is currently the greatest humanitarian crisis on the planet. As many as 400,000 people already killed by war, disease and famine. An estimated 13 million people have been displaced.

President Trump has previously demurred from getting involved. It's another tough one that has a lot of history to it. Ethnic conflict, power struggle between military factions, Islamist and jihadist ideologies hanging around, international players on different sides and, seemingly, not much upside value to the U.S. That's where the superficial analysis is wrong.

Americans are at our best when we use our power selflessly. Our stature rises and the atmospheric support for ongoing US global leadership increases. This is a key moment for us as American leadership is being directly challenged by the Chinese Communist Party.

Add to that the trillion other reasons that the crown prince gave the president.

That being his pledge to invest \$1 trillion into the United States. That's not chump change, but it won't automatically happen. Significant negotiations between leaders are done on a relational basis. There must be mutual trust. This isn't about dotting I's and crossing T's in a contract. This is about fulfilling and getting what you believe in your heart you agreed to. There is an expectation game that must be matched or exceeded for the relationship to continue. Each leader must believe the other is fully committed to achieving what was agreed to in their hearts, not the details in signed agreements.

The recent meeting between the Crown Prince and the President will be the most significant between our two countries in decades if, in the coming months and years, our countries earnestly work to exceed the expectations of the other.

In that way, Sudan is a test. Will America really work and invest our authority and reputation to bring this humanitarian disaster to a conclusion? It's worth more than a trillion dollars to the U.S. economy.

And there is another, bigger issue: China is heavily courting Saudi Arabia.

The Saudis, with their resources and unrivaled status as defenders of Mecca and Medina, the two most holy sites for all Muslims, are the de facto leaders of the 56 Muslim-majority countries. We want the Saudis to be our key ally, not China's, otherwise more nations may fall under China's influence.

China is strategically pursuing Saudi Arabia in its effort to be the leader of the world and to undercut the US dollar as the world's reserve currency. This status has enormous benefits to our economy, a fact the Chinese recognize full well. The Chinese want to dethrone the dollar, and a key part of that strategy is to get the Saudis and other Gulf countries to trade in Chinese currency, not dollars. We cannot afford to let this happen.

Lives are at stake in Sudan, millions of them, but so is US global leadership and dollar supremacy.