



**THE SITUATION BETWEEN SAUDI ARABIA  
AND IRAN AND THE EFFECTS ON THE  
MIDDLE EASTERN REGION.**

**Forum:** Special Political and Decolonization (SPECPOL)

**Agenda Item:** The situation between Saudi Arabia and Iran and the effects on the Middle Eastern region.

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**Position:** Deputy Chair

**Introduction:**

The situation between Saudi Arabia and Iran is suddenly heated up because Iran was winning the regional struggle in many ways. In Syria, President Bashar al-Assad is supported by Russia and Iran has majorly chased rebel groups backed by Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is attempting to accommodate rising Iranian affect and the military adventure of impulsive Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is intensifying regional intensity. However, Mohammed bin Salman is conducting a war in Yemen -Saudi Arabia's southern neighbour- against rebel groups in part to root comprehend Iranian influence there. After two and half years this is proving a costly gamble.

On the other hand in Lebanon, the Saudis are trying to convince the prime minister, in a oppressive way, to resign in order to disorganise a country where Iran's ally, Hezbollah, leads powerful bloc in a political way and controls heavily armed fighting force. Also, there are some countries that have force at play. The government of Saudi Arabia has been encouraged by the President Trump's support. Furthermore, Israel government thinks Iran is a mortal threat and they are in a sense of turning back the Saudi effort to contain Iran. Israel and Saudi Arabia were the two countries most braavely opposed to the 2015 international agreement limiting Iran's nuclear programme.

## **Definition of Key Words:**

**Shia Sect:** One of the two main branches of Islam, followed by about a tenth of Muslims, especially in Iran, that rejects the first three Sunni caliphs and regards Ali, the fourth caliph, as Muhammad's first true successor.

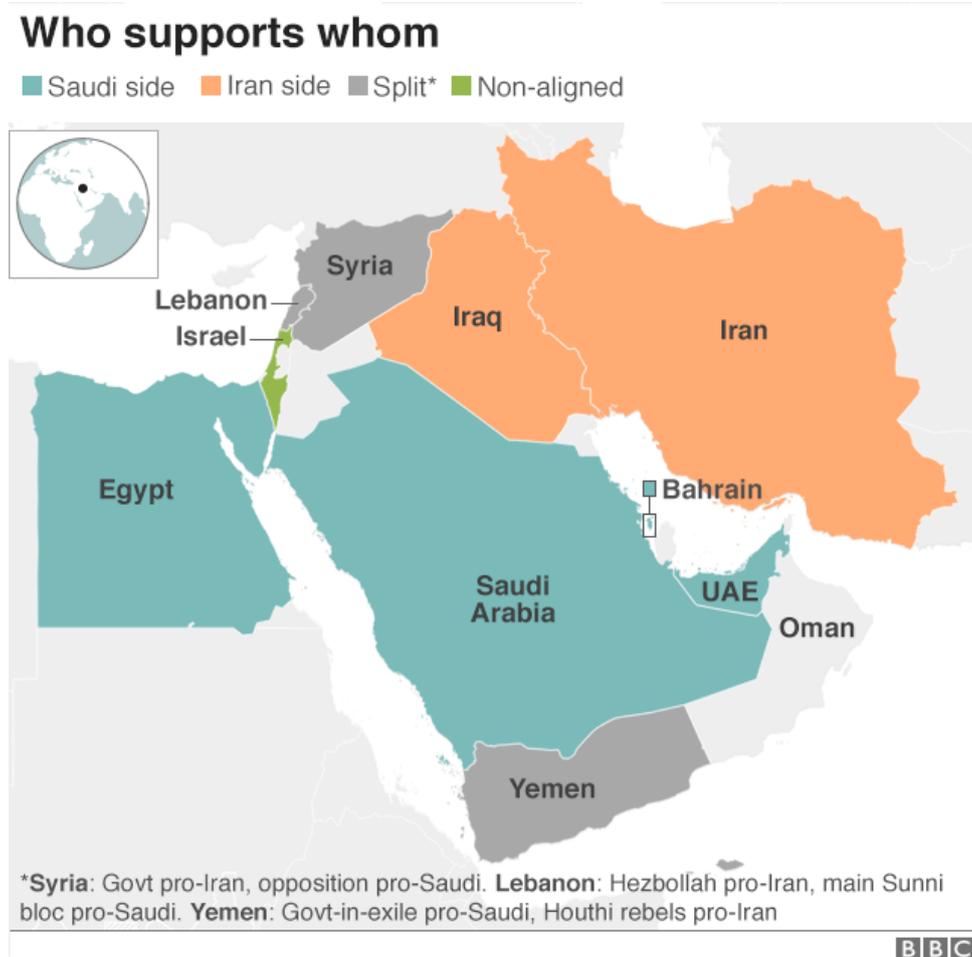
**Sunni Sect:** One of the two main branches of Islam, commonly described as orthodox, and differing from Shia in its understanding of the Sunna and in its acceptance of the first three caliphs.

**Hezbollah:** It is a militia group and political party that first emerged as a faction in Lebanon following the Israeli invasion of that country in 1982. They call themselves as ‘‘The Party of God.’’



## Historical Background:

Saudi Arabia and Iran are locked in a intense struggle for regional dominance. The decades-old conflict between them is exacerbated by religious differences. They each follow one of the two main sects in Islam - Iran is majorly Shia Muslim, while Saudi Arabia sees itself as the leading Sunni Muslim power. Historically Saudi Arabia, a monarchy and home to the birthplace of Islam, saw itself as the leader of the Muslim world. However this was challenged in 1979 by the Islamic revolution in Iran which created a new type of state in the region that had an explicit goal of exporting this model beyond its own borders. The 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq overthrew Saddam Hussein, a Sunni Arab who had been a major Iranian adversary. After this, crucial Iraqi military pressure decreased in Iran, which has been rising since then.



Fast-forward to 2011 and uprisings across the Arab world caused political instability throughout the region. Iran and Saudi Arabia abused these disaster to expand their pressure, notably in Syria, Bahrain and Yemen, further heightening mutual suspicions. Iran's critics say it is intent on establishing itself or its proxies across the region, and achieve control of a land corridor stretching from Iran to the Mediterranean.

### **Major Parties Involved and Their Views:**

**Syria:** The Syrian government of President Bashar al-Assad is against to Iran because of their dispute.

**Egypt:** They had a role in Middle East politics and they had good relationship with Saudi Arabia because of the Islamic revolution in Iran. Amid recent heightened tension between Saudi Arabia and Iran, Egyptian President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi called for "avoiding escalation of tension in the region, but not at the expense of the Gulf's security and stability"

**Russian Federation:** Russian government have good and equal relationship with both of them Iran and Saudi Arabia. They also sell weapons to both countries. Russia's air offensive in the Syrian war helped turn the tide in Bashar al-Assad's favour, and the Iran-backed fighters supporting him.

**United States of America:** Key events affecting them have included the CIA-orchestrated overthrow of Iran's prime minister in 1953 and the taking of hostages at the US embassy in Tehran in the 1980s. Neither Mr Trump nor his administration have criticised radical Islam in the Kingdom in the same way they link Iran to terrorism. Nor are Saudis on the list of foreign nationals on his controversial travel ban.

**Saudi Arabia:** They are one of the world's top oil exporters and wealthiest countries. Saudi Arabia fears Iran wants to dominate the Middle East and is opposed to the Shia-led power's growing involvement and influence in the region.

**Iran:** Iran has supported Syrian President Bashar al-Assad in his fight against opposition groups and the so-called Islamic State (IS). Its elite Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) has been instrumental in advances against Sunni jihadists in Syria as well as in Iraq. Iran also believes Saudi Arabia is trying to destabilise Lebanon, where the Iran-backed Shia movement Hezbollah is part of the government.

**Turkey:** Turkey is a Sunni country and has a strong relationship with Saudi Arabia because of their side in the Syria issue. Turkey does not believe in Iran because of the recent news about the Kurdish region in Iran and Iran has an enigmatic relationship with Kurdish people.

**Lebanon:** Lebanon government is an ally of Iran because of Hezbollah. Saudi Arabia and Lebanon have a very nervous and intense relationship because of Hezbollah's leader. Its leader Hassan Nasrallah has often attacked the Saudi government. They have sect differences and this creates a very bad relationship between the countries.

## Timeline of Events:

<u>1979</u>	Iranian Revolution
<u>1980-1988</u>	Iraq declared war to Iran and it took 8 years. Saudi Arabia remains publicly neutral, but reportedly makes three of its ports available to ship military equipment to Iraq.
<u>1982</u>	Saudi Arabia supplies Iraq with 1 billion dolaar per month in aid.
<u>May 1984</u>	Iran attacks oil tankers in Saudi waters then Saudi Aaraabiiiaa shoots down an Iranian Phantom jet over Saudi waters.
<u>1990</u>	Saudi government aids to Iran after 40,000 people die because of a earthquake.
<u>1991</u>	Riyadh and Tehran restore dipolmatic ties
<u>2003</u>	Fall of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein
<u>2011</u>	Arab spring which is anti government protests in Middle Easat and North Africa.
<u>2016</u>	Execution by Saudis of Shiaa cleric Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr.
<u>2017</u>	Lebanese PM Saad Hariri resigns.

## **Convention and Treaties:**

### **THE IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL**

It's an agreement that was made in 2015 between Iran and six world powers - the US, UK, France, China, Russia and Germany. These countries were worried that Iran was on its way to creating nuclear weapons - something it denied. They'd had economic sanctions - penalties that would hit its economy - on Iran for 10 years before that as a punishment. It meant that Iran couldn't trade with a lot of other countries. Iran has some of the biggest oil reserves in the world - so not being able to sell it meant they were missing out on making a lot of money. Between 2012 and 2016, it's estimated the sanctions caused Iran to lose out on £118bn in oil money. In return for being able to trade internationally again, Iran had to massively cut down its nuclear energy programme. It included closing down some nuclear facilities or reducing their capacity, as well as allowing international inspectors to check they were keeping to the terms.

## **Possible Solutions:**

First of all, the most essential and necessary point for these countries and the others is to understand the realities in the Middle East and not looking past for new and modern solutions for the issue. The situations that happened in the past effects now in some countries that related on the ongoing Middle Eastern region issue so, mainly Saudi Arabia and Iran should not think about their past or issues that happened in the past. Secondly, people should understand that they believe in the same religion but different sects and this is not a problem or this should not create a war or dispute. People must learn how to act and speak to the minority group.

**Notes from the Chair:**

Dear Delegates, I hope this report will be very beneficial and helpful for your hardwork on the topic. My best idea for you is please do not believe everything you read. This issue is continues for the decades and always change something. Topic is very sensitive for all the muslims and related countries so, please do not believe everything that you read about this topic. Please look at most common news websites such as BBC News, Euronews, the Guardian etc. I believe that you all know some little things that what's going on the Middle East Region. Please come to committee with well-knowledgeable.

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