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NEGATIVE BRIEF: Qatar

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INHERENCY

1. Commitment expires in 2023 anyway

US / Qatar agreement was signed in 2013 to last 10 years. So it ends in 2 years even with a Negative ballot

Kenneth Katzman 2021. (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs with Congressional Research Service) Qatar: Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy, last updated 7 Apr 2021 <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R44533.pdf> (accessed 25 May 2021) (brackets added)

The United States and Qatar signed a formal DCA [defense cooperation agreement] on June 23, 1992, and it was renewed for 10 years, reportedly with some modifications, in December 2013. The text of the pact is classified, but it reportedly addresses U.S. military access to Qatari military facilities, prepositioning of U.S. armor and other military equipment, and U.S. training of Qatar’s military forces.

2. Qatar reforms are underway thanks to Status Quo policies

Link: 7 years ago this expert recommended we maintain a close relationship and use it to influence Qatar’s behavior.

Lori Plotkin Boghardt 2014. (fellow in Gulf politics at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy ) Aug 2014 Qatar and ISIS Funding: The U.S. Approach <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/qatar-and-isis-funding-the-u.s.-approach> (accessed 25 May 2021)

To influence Qatar's policies, the United States has employed a carrot-and-stick approach. It heaps praise on its ally for developing new anti-terrorist financing regulations, while privately discouraging and sometimes publicly admonishing its support for terrorist organizations. Yet the fundamental problem is that America's counterterrorism agenda sometimes conflicts with what Qatar perceives to be its own political interests. [END QUOTE] Qatar's security strategy has been to provide support to a wide range of regional and international groups in order to bolster its position at home and abroad. This strategy has involved generously supporting Islamist organizations, including militant ones like Hamas and the Taliban. Allowing private local fundraising for Islamist groups abroad forms part of this approach. Closing channels of support to militant Islamists -- i.e., what Washington would like Doha to do -- would be inimical to Qatar's basic approach to its own security. [SHE CONTINUES LATER IN THE CONTEXT QUOTE:] American and international pressure has been shown to influence the counter-terrorist financing policies of Gulf states. The case of Kuwait is a recent example. Under significant pressure this year, Kuwait has been strengthening its lax anti-terrorist financing rules. There are even indications that at least some of the new rules will be enforced -- a big issue of concern when it comes to Gulf states. The United States should view its close relationship with Qatar as an avenue through which to influence its ally in a better direction.

And it worked: Today in 2021, Qatar is reforming to combat support for extremist violence and is making good progress

Kenneth Katzman 2021. (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs with Congressional Research Service) Qatar: Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy, last updated 7 Apr 2021 <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R44533.pdf> (accessed 25 May 2021)

According to the 2019 State Department report on terrorism: “Qatar has made significant strides in addressing state-sourced internal and external support for educational and religious content espousing intolerance, discrimination, sectarianism, and violence, although examples are still found in textbooks and disseminated through satellite television and other media.” Qatar has hosted workshops and participated in regional meetings on the issue.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. A/T “Qatar supports Hamas = supporting terrorism”

Qatar support for Hamas is humanitarian aid. It reduces threats and Israel (the supposed victim) agrees with it

Kenneth Katzman 2021. (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs with Congressional Research Service) Qatar: Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy, last updated 7 Apr 2021 <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R44533.pdf> (accessed 25 May 2021)

Qatar has engaged with the Islamist group Hamas, a Muslim Brotherhood offshoot and U.S.- designated terrorist group that has exercised de facto control of the Gaza Strip since 2007. Qatari officials assert that their engagement with Hamas can help foster Israeli-Palestinian peace. Some of Hamas’s top leaders have been based in Doha, and the current leader of its political bureau, Ismail Haniyeh, reportedly relocated there in 2020.49 Much of Qatar’s leverage with Hamas and Israel comes in the form of substantial financial aid it provides to the people of Gaza, which Israeli officials support as a means of promoting calm on the Israel-Gaza border.

Qatar mediation reduces Hamas-Israel tensions

Kenneth Katzman 2021. (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs with Congressional Research Service) Qatar: Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy, last updated 7 Apr 2021 <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R44533.pdf> (accessed 25 May 2021)

Qatar criticized the August 13, 2020 UAE-Israeli announcement of a commitment to normalized relations as a UAE betrayal of the Palestinian cause, despite the simultaneous Israeli suspension of its annexation plans. Hamas announced on August 31, 2020, that, through Qatari mediation, a deal had been reached to avoid Israel-Hamas escalations and restore calm along the border with Israel after several weeks of high tensions.

2. A/T “Qatar supports terrorists in Syria”

Qatar supplied rebels fighting against Syrian president Bashar Al Assad

Kenneth Katzman 2021. (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs with Congressional Research Service) Qatar: Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy, last updated 7 Apr 2021 <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R44533.pdf> (accessed 25 May 2021)

In Syria, Qatar provided funds and weaponry to rebels fighting the regime of President Bashar Al Asad, including those reportedly linked to the Muslim Brotherhood and which competed with anti-Asad factions supported by Saudi Arabia. Qatar also claimed that its ties to Jabhat al Nusra (JAN), an Al Qaeda affiliate that was designated by the United States as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO), were instrumental in persuading the group to sever its ties to Al Qaeda in 2016, and to release its Lebanese and Western prisoners.

Helps US policy: The US opposes Assad too

US State Department 2021. “Relations with Syria” 20 Jan 2021 https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-syria/

In June 2020, the sanctions provisions of the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act came into full effect, allowing the U.S. government to  sanction regime financiers, officials, senior government figures around Bashar al Assad and their enablers, and military leaders who perpetuate the conflict and obstruct a peaceful, political resolution of the conflict as called for by UNSCR 2254.

3. Qatar cooperates on counter-terrorism

Qatar cooperates with the US on counter-terrorism

Kenneth Katzman 2021. (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs with Congressional Research Service) Qatar: Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy, last updated 7 Apr 2021 <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R44533.pdf> (accessed 25 May 2021) (brackets in original)

According to the State Department report on international terrorism for 2019, released in June 2020: The United States and Qatar continued to increase CT [counter-terrorism] cooperation in 2019, building on progress made after the U.S. Secretary of State and Qatari Foreign Minister signed a CT MOU [memorandum of understanding] in July 2017. At the U.S.- Qatar Counterterrorism Dialogue in November 2019, the two governments declared their fulfillment of the MOU largely complete and committed to set shared priorities for 2020.

Qatar actively fights financing of terrorism and cooperates with US and international programs

**Dates matter: Qatar started new initiatives in 2017, 2019 and 2020 against terrorism financing. How about we give them a chance to work?**

Kenneth Katzman 2021. (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs with Congressional Research Service) Qatar: Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy, last updated 7 Apr 2021 <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R44533.pdf> (accessed 25 May 2021) (brackets in original)

The State Department 2019 report on terrorism states that Qatar is taking steps to prevent terrorism financing and the movement of suspected terrorists into or through Qatar. According to the report: The Qatari government passed a new AML/CFT [anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism] law in 2019 and sought feedback from the International Monetary Fund and the U.S. government during the drafting process. Qatar continued to maintain restrictions, imposed in 2017, on the overseas activities of Qatari charities, requiring all such activity to be conducted through one of two approved charities in an effort to better monitor charitable giving for terrorist financing abuse. The State Department announced on August 12, 2020 that then-Coordinator for Counterterrorism, Ambassador Nathan Sales, met in Doha with Qatar’s Attorney General and other senior government officials to discuss Qatar’s role as a partner in combating the financing of terrorism, including implementation of its new AML/CFT legislation. The country is a member of the Middle East North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), a regional body that coordinates efforts combatting money laundering and terrorism financing. In February 2017, Qatar hosted a meeting of the “Egmont Group” consisting of 152 country Financial Intelligence Units. Qatar is also a member of the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC), a U.S.-GCC initiative announced in May 2017 and Qatar joined the United States and other TFTC countries in designating terrorists affiliated with Al Qaeda and IS later in 2017.

5. No weapons diversion to terrorists

Qatar has 100% favorable evaluation by US government for “not” diverting weapons

Kenneth Katzman 2021. (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs with Congressional Research Service) Qatar: Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy, last updated 7 Apr 2021 <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R44533.pdf> (accessed 25 May 2021)

Over the past two decades, Qatar has shifted its weaponry mix more toward U.S.-made equipment.69 According to the State Department military cooperation factsheet cited above, the United States has $25 billion dollars in active government-to-government sales cases with Qatar under the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) system, and, since 2014, the United States has authorized the permanent export of over $2.8 billion in defense articles to Qatar via the Direct Commercial Sales (DCS) process. Qatar has a 100% favorable rate on Blue Lantern end-use monitoring (EUM) checks for direct commercial sales and a “satisfactory” rating for the FMS Golden Sentry EUM monitoring program.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Lost diplomatic influence

Link: US cuts its relations with Qatar. That’s the AFF plan

Link: Qatar occupies a key ideological space in the Islamic world, supporting regional peace, US military operations, and having doors open to many groups

Christopher M. Blanchard 2014. (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs with Congressional Research Service) 4 Nov 2014 Qatar: Background and U.S. Relations <https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/RL31718.pdf> (accessed 25 May 2021)

Qatari officials are quick to point out their commitment to the general goal of regional peace and their support for U.S. military operations, even as they maintain ties to Hamas and others critical of Arab-Israeli peace negotiations. In June 2009, U.S. Ambassador to Qatar Joseph LeBaron explained Qatar’s policy in the following terms: “I think of it as Qatar occupying a space in the middle of the ideological spectrum in the Islamic world, with the goal of having doors open to it across that ideological spectrum. They have the resources to accomplish that vision, and that’s rare.”

Link: Vital diplomatic assistance lost. We need Qatar’s help as a key mediator in difficult relationships

Kristian C. Ulrichsen 2014. (Middle East fellow at Rice University’s Baker Institute for Public Policy, an associate fellow at Chatham House, visiting fellow at London School of Economics Middle East Center in the United Kingdom; also an affiliate faculty member at the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies at Univ of Washington–Seattle) 24 Sept 2014 Qatar and the Arab Spring: Policy Drivers and Regional Implications <https://carnegieendowment.org/2014/09/24/qatar-and-arab-spring-policy-drivers-and-regional-implications-pub-56748> (accessed 25 May 2021)

 Qatar’s comparative advantage in mediation is its ability to serve as an intermediary for indirect negotiations and back-channel communications between sworn adversaries and to balance relationships with an array of mutually antagonistic foes.  
 Any return to a policy of quiet backroom diplomacy will strengthen Qatar’s credentials as an effective interlocutor among disputants that cannot easily engage in direct dialogue. Qatar can serve an important role as a back channel to moderate among groups that U.S. officials in particular may not be able to directly reach but whose participation in political processes is nevertheless constructive.

Impact: Violence. Qatari mediation is successful at reducing hostilities in the region

Mehran Kamrava 2011. (Director of the Center for International and Regional Studies at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service in Qatar ) Mediation and Qatari Foreign Policy <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41342739?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents> (accessed 25 May 2021)

Ultimately, determining the successes or failures of Qatari mediation depends on the goals and intentions against which the country’s mediators judge themselves. They have, by all accounts, succeeded in negotiating reductions to national and international tensions and reducing the chances of violence. [END QUOTE] If tension reduction has been the primary goal of Qatari mediation, then in this sense it has been an unqualified success. But if the mediators’ intended purpose has been to resolve the conflicts that they mediate and to foster lasting peace among the disputants, then their record leaves much to be desired. Nevertheless, the important role of Qatari diplomacy in general and its mediation efforts in particular cannot be understated, especially in a region accustomed to diplomatic and domestic tensions and frequent political saber-rattling. [HE CONCLUDES LATER QUOTE:] Even in those cases where lasting peace is elusive, successful mediation is often measured in terms of the reduction of hostilities rather than the effectiveness of a lasting agreement. As such, Qatari mediation has indeed had a successful record.

BACKUP EVIDENCE – Lost diplomatic influence

Qatar has gained a reputation as a reliable peace broker

Mehran Kamrava 2011. (Director of the Center for International and Regional Studies at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service in Qatar ) Mediation and Qatari Foreign Policy <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41342739?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents> (accessed 25 May 2021)

In a region known for its cross-border crises and intra-national sectarian strife, Qatar has quickly emerged as an actor adept at diffusing and mediating conflicts. Doha’s “niche diplomacy” has led to its reputation as a reliable peace broker. As an integral part of its foreign policy pursuits, Qatar’s insistence on playing a mediating role has, at times, provoked the ire of other regional actors hoping to assume such a role for themselves. For instance, Egypt, which has long viewed itself as Sudan’s primary patron, initially sought to take the initiative away from Qatar in solving the Darfur crisis. In the end, Qatar, with richer pockets and less of a history in relation to Sudan, won out.

Example of success: Qatari intervention helped end the reign of Qadhafi in Libya

Mehran Kamrava 2011. (Director of the Center for International and Regional Studies at Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service in Qatar ) Mediation and Qatari Foreign Policy <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41342739?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents> (accessed 25 May 2021)

The substance of the country’s mediation efforts may be lacking in depth and long-term resilience, but by its very hyper-activism, Qatar has begun to shape global perceptions of itself as regional peacemaker, an honest broker, a proponent of mediated peace and reconciliation in a region long ravaged by war. In diplomacy, appearances are seldom any less important than substance. These perceptions are only likely to be strengthened by Qatar’s highly visible, and eventually successful, involvement as a major player in the Libyan civil war that ended Colonel Mu‘ammar al-Qadhafi’s decades-long reign. For a small country without a long history of involvement in regional and global affairs, the image of the Qatari flag hoisted by Libyan rebels on Qadhafi’s compound when it was overrun bespeaks the rapid ascent of the small shaykhdom’s popularity and its soft power throughout the Arab world. Mediation has emerged as one of the central tools for enhancing Qatari soft power and global image. On that score, at least insofar as its image is concerned, Qatar’s successes are indeed impressive.

BIG LINK TO DISADs 2 and 3: ENDING THE CARTER DOCTRINE – SIDE EFFECT OF AFF PLAN

Link: AFF must shut down US Central Command. US air base in Qatar is the headquarters of the US Central Command

**And no, they can’t replace it or rebuild it somewhere else. That would be “reforming” not “decreasing” US military commitments and it’s extra-topical. All they can do is decrease, not reform.**

Kenneth Katzman 2021. (specialist in Middle Eastern Affairs with Congressional Research Service) Qatar: Governance, Security, and U.S. Policy, last updated 7 Apr 2021 <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R44533.pdf> (accessed 25 May 2021)

Qatar’s leaders work with the United States to secure the Persian Gulf, as do the other GCC leaders. The United States and Qatar have had a formal Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA) that reportedly addresses a U.S. troop presence in Qatar, consideration of U.S. arms sales to Qatar, U.S. training, and other defense cooperation. Under the DCA, Qatar hosts more than 8,000 U.S. forces and the regional headquarters for U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) at various military facilities, including the large Al Udeid Air Base.

Brink: Qatar relationship is critical

Dennis Lynch 2014. (journalist) Qatar And Terrorism: For Better Or For Worse, A Strong Connection 25 Aug 2014 <http://www.ibtimes.com/qatar-terrorism-better-or-worse-strong-connection-1668776> (brackets in original) (accessed 25 May 2021)

More recently, the U.S. signed a [$11 billion arms and defense deal](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/07/us-strikes-11bn-arms-deal-with-qatar-2014714223825417442.html) with Qatar for Apache helicopters, missile defense systems and more in July. The U.S. also keeps an Army base and an Air Force base in Qatar. A Pentagon spokesman, Rear Adm. John Kirby, summed up U.S.-Qatari relations in a statement following the deal. He called it “a critically important relationship in the region and [the U.S.] is pleased to be able to continue to make it stronger.”

Link & Brink: CENTCOM = Carter Doctrine, so AFF plan has the side effect of canceling the C. Doctrine

HAL BRANDS, STEVEN A. COOK, AND KENNETH M. POLLACK 2019. (**Brands** is the Henry A. Kissinger distinguished professor of global affairs at Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies. C**ook** is the Eni Enrico Mattei senior fellow for Middle East and Africa studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. **Pollack** is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute ) <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/12/15/carter-doctrine-rip-donald-trump-mideast-oil-big-think/> (accessed 25 May 2021)

The Iranian oil crisis had driven home the importance of Persian Gulf oil to Western prosperity, and Washington feared that the Soviets would seize upon the chaos of the Iranian revolution to overrun the region’s oil fields. To put teeth into the new commitment, Carter created a new military force that eventually grew into U.S. Central Command, which was given the primary responsibility of defending the region’s oil exports.

2. Canceling Carter Doctrine = Regional arms race

Link: US pullout triggers a costly regional arms race with Iran because Saudis will no longer trust the US

James M. Dorsey 2020 (award-winning journalist and commentator on foreign affairs who has covered ethnic and religious conflict and terrorism across the globe for more than three decades) 13 May 2020 “US military drawdown in Saudi Arabia threatens to fuel arms race” <https://www.wionews.com/opinions-blogs/us-military-drawdown-in-saudi-arabia-threatens-to-fuel-arms-race-298402> (accessed 25 May 2021)

One thing is certain, the recent US military pullback from Saudi Arabia will fuel a brewing arms race in the Middle East at a time when the region, struggling with the public health and devastating economic fallout of the coronavirus pandemic, can least afford it. It’s a financially costly race that neither Saudi Arabia nor Iran can really afford in an era of economic meltdown. Saudi Arabia is likely to see the withdrawal, despite a seemingly reassuring phone call between Saudi King Salman and President Donald Trump, as further evidence that it cannot fully rely, for its defence, on the United States.

Saudis and Iran cannot afford the high cost of the arms race…

James M. Dorsey 2020 (award-winning journalist and commentator on foreign affairs who has covered ethnic and religious conflict and terrorism across the globe for more than three decades) 13 May 2020 “US military drawdown in Saudi Arabia threatens to fuel arms race” <https://www.wionews.com/opinions-blogs/us-military-drawdown-in-saudi-arabia-threatens-to-fuel-arms-race-298402> (accessed 25 May 2021)

The reality on the ground, however, is neither of these countries can presently afford the extraordinary financial and technological cost of such militaristic endeavours when their economies are battered by a far-reaching global depression, a collapse of oil prices, and a health pandemic. Iran, moreover, is struggling to grope with US sanctions while Saudi Arabia faces painful fiscal problems and structural reforms.

… but it will happen because Saudis fear Iran

James M. Dorsey 2020 (award-winning journalist and commentator on foreign affairs who has covered ethnic and religious conflict and terrorism across the globe for more than three decades) 13 May 2020 “US military drawdown in Saudi Arabia threatens to fuel arms race” <https://www.wionews.com/opinions-blogs/us-military-drawdown-in-saudi-arabia-threatens-to-fuel-arms-race-298402> (accessed 25 May 2021)

The risk of an arms race was explicit in Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman’s warning at the time that Trump was gearing up to withdraw from the nuclear agreement that “Without a doubt, if Iran developed a nuclear bomb, we will follow suit as soon as possible.”

Brink: Arms race is especially dangerous right now because risk of Middle East war is accelerating sharply

[Anthony H. Cordesman](https://www.csis.org/people/anthony-h-cordesman) and Nicholas Harrington 2018. (Cordesman - Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy at Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS); served as a consultant on Afghanistan to the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Department of State. Harrington – CSIS Program Manager and Research Associate, Transnational Threats Project) 12 Dec 2018 <https://www.csis.org/analysis/arab-gulf-states-and-iran-military-spending-modernization-and-shifting-military-balance> (accessed 25 May 2021)

The military balance between Iran, its Arab neighbors, and the United States has been a critical military issue in the Middle East since at least the rise of Nasser in the 1950s. The risks this arms race presents in terms of a future conflict have not diminished with time, and many elements of the regional arms race have accelerated sharply in recent years. Clashes with Iran in the Gulf, struggles for influence in Iraq and Syria, and the war in Yemen all act as warnings that new rounds of conflict are possible. The Iranian reactions to the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA nuclear agreement, the growing tensions between the Arab Gulf states, the boycott of Qatar, and the unstable outcome of the fight against ISIS, and the Syrian civil war all contribute to an increasingly fragile and dangerous security environment.

Link: Arms race creates high risk of war

[Anthony H. Cordesman](https://www.csis.org/people/anthony-h-cordesman) and Nicholas Harrington 2018. (Cordesman - Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy at Center for Strategic & International Studies (CSIS); served as a consultant on Afghanistan to the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Department of State. Harrington – CSIS Program Manager and Research Associate, Transnational Threats Project) 12 Dec 2018 <https://www.csis.org/analysis/arab-gulf-states-and-iran-military-spending-modernization-and-shifting-military-balance> (accessed 25 May 2021)

No one can safely dismiss such rhetoric as political posturing due to the fact the U.S. is imposing steadily more serious economic sanctions on Iran. The history of war is as much the history on unintended conflicts and escalation as of deliberate attacks. There have already been far too many such wars in the Middle East, and the current arms race has far too long and dangerous a history to ignore.

Impact: Global economic collapse

Al Jazeera news 2019. Saudi Arabia’s MBS: War with Iran would collapse global economy 30 Sept 2019 <https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2019/9/30/saudi-arabias-mbs-war-with-iran-would-collapse-global-economy> (accessed 25 May 2021)

[Saudi Arabia](https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/country/saudi-arabia.html)‘s crown prince warned in an interview aired on Sunday that a military confrontation with [Iran](https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/country/iran.html)would collapse the global economy, adding that he would prefer a political and peaceful solution to a military one. Crown Prince [Mohammed bin Salman](https://www.aljazeera.com/topics/people/mohammed-bin-salman.html)told the US-based CBS programme [60 Minutes](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/mohammad-bin-salman-denies-ordering-khashoggi-murder-but-says-he-takes-responsibility-for-it-60-minutes-2019-09-29/) that crude prices could spike to “unimaginably high numbers” in case of an armed conflict.

3. Canceling Carter Doctrine = Threats to Oil Shipping Lanes

Link: Gulf States naval capabilities inadequate to patrol oil shipping lanes

Daniel J. Samet 2020 (*program assistant for Middle East Programs at the Atlantic Council*) 20 Feb 2020 To deter Iran, the Gulf states need stronger navies <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/menasource/to-deter-iran-the-gulf-states-need-stronger-navies/> (accessed 25 May 2021)

All this means that the task of promoting free and open waters will largely fall to the Gulf states themselves. Their main adversary is well-armed—Tehran boasts not only a capable fleet but also a formidable missile [arsenal](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-iraq-security-iran-military-analysis/outgunned-iran-invests-in-means-to-indirectly-confront-superpower-enemy-idUSKBN1Z711Q) that threatens all nearby enemy ships. Wedded to US security guarantees, the Gulf states have let their fleets atrophy to the point where the Saudi navy—arguably the region’s best—can muster just a [handful](https://medium.com/@k.girling/the-royal-saudi-navy-as-a-tool-of-geopolitics-and-security-policy-a510c365fa93) of aging ships. This doesn’t inspire much confidence when confronted with Iran’s asymmetrical warfare and conventional naval capabilities. To counter this threat to their national security, the Gulf states should strengthen their own sea-based deterrence.   There’s some evidence that they have come around. Qatar [reportedly](https://www.forbes.com/sites/hisutton/2020/02/04/qatars-massive-naval-expansion-to-include-submarines/) will soon buy submarines, which would make it the second country in the Gulf after [Iran](https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/iran-submarine-capabilities/) with such vessels. Riyadh also inked an [agreement](https://uk.reuters.com/article/saudi-defense-naval/saudi-french-groups-sign-preliminary-deal-for-naval-joint-venture-idUKD5N1Y201E) with a French defense contractor last year covering submarines, while Abu Dhabi has shown similar [interest](https://www.govconwire.com/2014/02/saudi-arabia-uae-eye-fincantieri-submarine-acquisitions-achille-fulfaro-comments/). Submarine-armed Gulf states would provide a significant check on Iran’s sizable undersea [fleet](https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/iran-submarine-capabilities/).    This is a good start, but the full answer includes corvettes, frigates, and unmanned vessels, as well as missile defense capabilities. The Saudis are on the right track through a naval modernization [plan](https://thearabweekly.com/saudi-defence-modernisation-focuses-naval-prowess), but they have a long way to go before building an adequate fleet. The UAE must also do more, along with Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and Oman. Their combined naval might would be enough to deter Iran from apprehending or striking merchant ships in the Strait of Hormuz. The Gulf states can either buy the necessary vessels from foreign shipbuilders or develop their own industries over the long term. A sensible solution would be to do both.    Indigenous naval capability may not be an easy answer in a region whose military history is largely defined by ground and aerial warfare. Yet ensuring Gulf security today will take new approaches, however costly they may be. Failing to do so—while letting Iran have its way—could prove far costlier.

Link: Disruptions of oil shipping raise oil prices

Robin Mills 2016. (nonresident fellow for Energy at the Brookings Institution Doha Center ) April 2016 “Risky Routes: Energy Transit in the Middle East” <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/en-energy-transit-security-mills-2.pdf> (accessed 25 May 2021)

The economic impacts of a disruption vary from trivial to severe and from regional to global. The impacts would depend on the nature of the disruption, its extent and duration, the energy source affected, how quickly normal transit could be restored, and on counter-measures and mitigation actions (for example the use of strategic stocks). The costs of a disruption are divided between the energy exporters, whose shipments are reduced or halted, and the energy importers, whose energy supplies are either reduced or become more expensive. Given the global nature of the oil business in particular, and the gas industry to an extent, these losses affect consumers everywhere.

Impact: Global economic damage.

Adam Vaughan 2018. (journalist) 25 Sept 2018 THE GUARDIAN (British newspaper) “Rising oil prices fuel fears of damage to global economy” <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/sep/25/rising-oil-prices-fuel-fears-damage-global-economy> (PetroMatrix is an oil industry research group) (accessed 25 May 2021)

The global economy could be damaged if oil prices return to $100 (£76) a barrel, experts have warned, after crude prices hit a four-year high of $82.16. Some market watchers have predicted prices between $90 and $100 by the year’s end after [Opec](https://www.theguardian.com/business/opec) last weekend rebuffed Donald Trump’s demands for the oil cartel to rein in prices by expanding production. Now after Tuesday’s high a leading analyst has said that if prices climbed to $100 – a level not seen since September 2014 – growth in oil demand would be “annihilated” and demand would fall sharply. Moreover, PetroMatrix said, emerging economies’ growth could suffer because of steep crude prices causing inflationary pressures that lead to interest rate rises. Those countries could also be forced to cut oil taxes, widening budget deficits. Any slowing in emerging markets would add to the recent economic challenges [facing countries including Turkey and Argentina](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/sep/08/emerging-economies-crisis-looms-shadow-america-boom-interest-rates).