



Model Arab League

Annotated Bibliography for Saudi Arabia

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This annotated bibliography was created to serve as a research resource for students taking part in the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations' Model Arab League Program. With the understanding that research can be intimidating and time consuming, an effort was made to find a set of scholarly articles that give a detailed background and thorough account of the current situation for this League of Arab States member. Included are annotations designed to give a description of the source with the intention of students completing the research on their own. There has been an attempt to focus on more contemporary scholarship, specifically post-9/11 and post-2011 (so-called "Arab Spring") where possible, as these are two phenomena that fundamentally changed politics in the Arab world. These sources should provide students with a solid basis for understanding the country they are representing in both regionally and globally significant issues as well as the interests of other countries within the League of Arab States.

1. Bruce Riedel and Bilal Y. Saab, "Al Qaeda's Third Front: Saudi Arabia," *The Washington Quarterly*, Volume 31, Issue 2, Spring 2008, pp. 33-46. •• Prior to 9/11, Osama bin Laden did not really foment terrorism within Saudi Arabia. After 9/11 however, bin Laden thought he had been given an opportunity to gain a lot of ground within the kingdom because the U.S., an important Saudi ally was tied up in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Saudi government had some experience dealing with severe internal terrorism before (think 1979), but al-Qaeda's campaign was intense and somewhat surprising to the administration. This led the Saudi's to address its internal terrorism problem by various means, including Wahhabi fatwas denouncing terrorist acts, tracking of terrorist funding, cyber campaigns, and rehabilitation programs. This article outlines how the Saudi government has handled al-Qaeda inspired terrorism within its borders and argues that Saudi counterterrorism has been largely successful.
2. Khalid A. Alkhatlan, "Contribution of oil in economic growth of Saudi Arabia," *Applied Economics Letters*, Volume 20, Issue 4, July 2012, pp. 343-348. •• Saudi Arabia is the second largest oil producer in the world behind Russia and oil accounted for an average of 80% of the Saudi government's revenues over the period of 1970-2009. Furthermore, studies have shown that export revenues from Saudi oil are positively linked to GDP growth and domestic consumption of oil has a negative impact on Saudi GDP. Obviously then, oil has been and will remain a commodity of extreme importance to the Saudi economy and the government has a vested interest in maintaining high export levels. This article illustrates how Saudi GDP is linked to oil with multiple tables of statistical data and concludes that the Saudi government must find a balance between domestic use and exports of oil.
3. Andrys Onsman, "Dismantling the Perceived Barriers to the Implementation of National Higher Education Accreditation Guidelines in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," *Journal of*

Higher Education Policy and Management, Volume 32, Number 5, November 2010, pp. 511–519. •• In a commendable demonstration of forward thinking, the Saudi government has “invested heavily in its social sector” and especially education in order to diversify itself off of oil in the future. The investments into education have been sweeping, most notably among colleges, post-graduate institutions like the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST), and in administrative oversight in the form of the National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA). It appears however that some academic standards being set by the NCAAA are not being met; almost challenging the government funding these institutions are receiving. This article argues that this phenomenon maybe due to the amount of foreigners present in Saudi universities in both student and faculty positions.

4. Mohammed Duliem Al-Qahtany, “Doing Business in Saudi Arabia: Implication for International Investors,” *Journal of Transnational Management Development*, Volume 8, Issue 1-2, 2003, pp. 3-16. •• Contrary to the American business environment where the government takes a relatively hands-off approach, the Saudi government is heavily involved in business taking place within its borders. The Majority of businesses require some sort of permit from the Saudi government to operate and must employ Saudi citizens or have Saudi investors. In addition, starting a business requires going through established gatekeepers, both when working with a government and private contract. This article describes the various laws and processes regarding business operation in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, a task that is both easier than many places and more difficult at the same time.
5. Thomas Hegghammer, “Islamist Violence and Regime Stability in Saudi Arabia,” *International Affairs*, Volume 84, Issue 4, July 2008, pp. 701-715. •• Islam tends to be homogenized in American media, often leading to sweeping generalizations of Islam, Arabs, and terrorism where these categories are a lot more nuanced than Westerners give them credit. Saudi Arabia is lumped in as a state supporter of *jihād*, wherein truth, the kingdom undertook one of the most successful domestic counter-jihadist and counterterrorism campaigns that has been seen. While a distinct set of historical circumstances led Saudi forms of Islam to become relatively conservative, their conservatism actually served as an anchor for many and prevented them from crossing over into jihadist extremism. This article explains the heterogeneity of Saudi Islamism and how the Saudi state dealt with Islamist extremist within its borders.
6. Madawi Al-Rasheed, “Saudi Arabia: Local and Regional Challenges,” *Contemporary Arab Affairs*, Volume 6, Number 1, January 2013, pp. 28-40. •• “The Arab uprisings posed serious challenges to Saudi Arabia at the level of society and leadership. Activists engaged in intense debates, and both real and virtual protest, to which the leadership

responded by fighting for security and survival. The uprisings added to the regime's internal succession burdens as Islamists in other Arab countries won seats in elected parliaments." (Abstract) This article examines the official Saudi reaction to uprisings associated with the so-called "Arab Spring". This author argues that in accordance with its strategic interests in each Arab country, the Saudi government has responded to uprisings in one of three ways: attempts at containment, support of a counter-revolution, or support of the revolution.

7. Saud Mousaed Al Tamamy, "Saudi Arabia and the Arab Spring: Opportunities and Challenges of Security," *Journal of Arabian Studies: Arabia, the Gulf, and the Red Sea*, Volume 2, Issue 2, December 2012, pp. 143-156. •• Saudi Arabia can more accurately be seen as a "kingdom in transition" in which the transition began well before the so-called "Arab Spring". Contemporary historical events within the region have made Saudi Arabia take on a more active role in the Arab world, and to a certain extent distance itself from the U.S. Many of the changes occurring throughout the Arab world following the Arab Spring have forced the Saudi government to reevaluate some of the positions it has taken including those on Iraq, Iran, Syria, Yemen, Egypt, and Lebanon. This article explains how changes that occur in one of these countries can tangentially affect Saudi Arabian interests in another or within Saudi Arabia itself.
8. Alexander Nicoll and Jessica Delaney, "Saudi Arabia: Testing Times Ahead," *Strategic Comments*, Volume 16, Comment 49, December 2010, pp. 1-3. •• In 2010, there were a small set of issues pertinent to Saudi Arabia. First, the so-called succession crisis, in which different princes have opposing points of view on domestic and international policy were vying for power. The succession crisis is still on the minds of some people today but is truly only a crisis of international perception, as future princes or kings are unlikely to remain consistent rather than divergent when it comes to policymaking. The other issues included the presence of al-Qaeda within Saudi Arabia, containing destabilizing forces in Yemen, and the growing influence of Iran, especially in Iraq. This IISS report gives a succinct outline of these issues and how the government of Saudi dealt with them. Some of these issues remain of interest into the present day.
9. Christopher Clary and Mara E. Karlin, "Saudi Arabia's Reform Gamble," *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, Volume 53, Issue 5, September 2011, pp. 15-20. •• Having gone from a "collection of roving Bedouin tribes to become one of the wealthiest countries in the world," Saudi Arabia's leaders have tried to enact reforms that reflect the state's new global position. The most recent efforts for reform have come in education and economic diversification. Educationally, King Abdullah has made it a point to build many more schools and universities in order to make education more universal in the kingdom. The hope is that education will lead to entrepreneurship that will in turn

diversify the Saudi economy off of oil. This article argues that while these reforms have the best of intentions, they can lead to some societal problems. One of the main problems associated with these sweeping reforms come an inflation of college educated youth who then are either unable to find a job or are unwilling to work in professions requiring manual labor; a problem eerily similar to one the U.S. is facing.

10. M. Anaam Hashmi and Mohammed Al-Habib, “Sustainability and Carbon Management Practices in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia,” *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*, Volume 56, Number 1, January 2013, pp. 140–157. •• Internationally, environmental impact of industry and sustainability is becoming an increasingly serious concern. Much of the discussions surrounding sustainability and environmentally friendly business practices have to do with reducing greenhouse gas and/or carbon emissions. As Saudi Arabia’s economy is so tied to the export of hydrocarbons, it has a vested interest in protecting its export industry. That said, Saudi Arabia has taken significant steps to show its commitment to reducing its own carbon emissions like signing the Kyoto protocol and hosting a number of sustainability conferences. This article details that various international agreements Saudi Arabia is party to in regard to environmental sustainability and the numerous ministries and programs within the kingdom that are tasked with monitoring its own sustainability practices.
11. Simon Mabon, “Kingdom in Crisis? The Arab Spring and Instability in Saudi Arabia,” *Contemporary Security Policy*, Volume 33, Number 3, December 2012, pp. 530-553. •• Many people appear to be unsurprised by the fact that widespread domestic protest did not take hold in Saudi Arabia in the wake of the so-called “Arab Spring”. However, it is easy to point out that the modern Saudi state is wealthy because of oil exports and therefore its citizens should be more satisfied with their living conditions than those in other Arab countries. While this easy explanation may be partially true, it does not reflect the reality of Saudi society that has its own internal divisions, a youth bulge like many other Arab states that had uprisings, and high levels of Saudi citizen unemployment. This article shows that Saudi Arabia is not an exception to the Arab Spring in terms of modern conditions, but is an exception because of historical development of the state and its security institutions.
12. S. M. Al-Almaie, “The Pattern and Factors Associated with Child Spacing in Eastern Saudi Arabia,” *The Journal of the Royal Society for the Promotion of Health*, Volume 123, Issue 4, December 2003, p. 217-221. •• Intervals between child births have been proven to have an impact on the health of the children, with shorter intervals having negative health consequences. One way for women to increase their birth interval naturally is to extend breast feeding which causes lactational amenorrhea, or the pause of menstruation. Interestingly, this study find that women in urban areas of Saudi Arabia are

displaying increased birthrates and shorter birth intervals because of their access to baby formula without an increase in the use of contraceptives. This study also confirms that birthrates, use of the lactational amenorrhea method, and/or use of contraceptives are directly correlated to the education level of the women studied. The argument can be made then that improving the level of female's education in Saudi Arabia could increase the overall health of children in the kingdom.

13. Mohammad Nuruzzaman, "Politics, Economics and Saudi Military Intervention in Bahrain," *Journal of Contemporary Asia*, January 2013, pp. 1-14. •• On March 14th, 2011, the Peninsula Shield Force (*Dar'a al-Jazeera*) was deployed in Bahrain to quell uprisings shadowing those of other countries amidst the so-called Arab Spring. The deployment was the first use of the Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC) military for an intra-GCC issue. While many argue that this move was Saudi Arabia flexing politically, this article explores the idea that economics and religion had just as much a part to play in the decision to intervene in Bahrain with the Peninsula Shield. The use of force speaks to the international importance of the small island nation that is Bahrain, but also Saudi Arabia's significant stake in the state and wider Gulf region.
14. Yoel Guzansky, "Questioning Riyadh's Nuclear Rationale," *Middle East Quarterly*, Volume 20, Number 2, Spring 2013, pp. 59-64. •• As Iran inches closer to nuclear weapons capability, Saudi Arabia justifiably feels threatened. Iran's acquisition of a nuclear weapon would fundamentally change Gulf regional security dynamics, which are relatively balanced at the moment. This threat appears to be leading Saudi Arabia to pursue a nuclear option of its own, or it is at least making threats of its own in order to pressure the U.S. into further security guarantees. However as the U.S. begins to retreat from the Middle East, the guarantee of U.S. protection has become tenuous leading Saudi Arabia to reach out to other states like Pakistan. At the moment, Saudi Arabia is pursuing a civilian nuclear program and is has the stated goal of having its first nuclear reactor online in 2020. This civilian program has been coupled however with rhetoric about reserving the right to enrich uranium on its soil. This article explains the politics surrounding Riyadh's nuclear reasoning and makes recommendations for long term solutions to the issue.
15. Remy L. de Jong, Rashid I. Al Layla, and Willem J. Selen, "Alternative Water Management Scenarios for Saudi Arabia," *International Journal of Water Resources Development*, Volume 5, Issue 1, March 1989, pp. 56-62. •• In parallel to the increases in the global demand of oil, Saudi Arabia experienced rapid urbanization and development. The growth in the kingdom attracted many foreigners looking for employment, driving the proportion expatriates in Saudi Arabia up to 23% of the population as early as 1984. This new influx and concentration of people quickly drove up the need for water, a need

that is not easy to accommodate given the desert climate of the Arabian Peninsula. This article describes the current sources of water in Saudi Arabia along with their respective sustainability. In addition, the authors make interesting policy recommendations for the future maintenance of water in the kingdom.