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The Impact of U.S Military Bases in The Middle East
The Case of Saudi Arabia

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Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Language and Culture

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my family and friends, for their support, encouragement, and love that have guided me through every step of this journey. To my parents and my grandmother for their endless patience, and to my friends, who have been looking up for me to reach this goal.

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Abstract

This study looks at the impact of U.S. military bases in the Middle East, focusing on Saudi Arabia. It traces the history of U.S. involvement in the region, starting with the early establishment of military bases, and examines how these bases have shaped U.S.-Saudi political and economic relations. The research also explores the role of these bases during key conflicts and their effect on regional stability. By analyzing these aspects, the study provides insight into how U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia has influenced both countries and the wider Middle East.

المخلص

تتناول هذه الدراسة تأثير القواعد العسكرية الأمريكية في الشرق الأوسط، مع التركيز على المملكة العربية السعودية. وتعرض تاريخ التدخل الأمريكي في المنطقة، بدءاً من إنشاء القواعد العسكرية في بداياتها المبكرة، وتبحث في كيفية تشكيل هذه القواعد للعلاقات السياسية والاقتصادية بين الولايات المتحدة والسعودية. كما تستكشف الدراسة دور هذه القواعد خلال النزاعات وتأثيرها على استقرار المنطقة. من خلال تحليل هذه الجوانب، تقدم الدراسة نظرة على كيفية تأثير الوجود العسكري الأمريكي في السعودية على البلدين وكامل المنطقة.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ARAMCO	Arabian American Oil Company
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
CAOC	Combined Air Operations Center
CENTO	Central Treaty Organization
DCA	Defense Cooperation Agreement
EDIC	Emirates Defense Industries Company
ESFS	Expeditionary Security Force Squadron
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MESC	Middle East Supply Centre
MRAP	Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSC	National Security Council
OAPEC	Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PSAB	Prince Sultan Air Base
RED HORSE	Rapid Engineer Deployable, Heavy Operational Repair Squadron, Engineer
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
SAMI	Saudi Arabian Military Industries
SOCAL	Standard Oil of California
TAQNIA	Saudi Technology Development and Investment Company

SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
U.N.	United Nations
U.S.	United States
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
USAF	United States Air Force
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Soviet Union)
WTO	World Trade Organization
WWII	World War II

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Introduction

The relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia has been historically complex, marked by a blend of strategic cooperation and occasional tensions. The partnership has been primarily centered around economic interests, especially oil. Saudi Arabia has long been a crucial ally in providing the United States with a stable source of oil, while the U.S. has offered military and security support to the Kingdom. The United States considers Saudi Arabia as an important ally as the latter is located in a critical region. It helps maintain its power in the Middle east. To reinforce its alliance, the U.S. installed military bases in the country to reach desired objectives.

The presence of United States military bases in Saudi Arabia has been a longstanding and a complex geopolitical issue, dating back to the Second World War. This military alliance has evolved over time, raising questions about its impacts on regional stability, diplomatic relations, and the broader dynamics of Middle East politics. As this military alliance has played an important role in shaping the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East specifically in the gulf region with its amplifications extending beyond Saudi Arabia 's borders which led to dispute and tension within the region, accordingly contributing to shifts in alliances and power dynamics among Neighboring countries.

Moreover, this military partnership has evolved with time especially in response to regional conflicts such as those in Iraq or heightened tension with "Israel", the U.S military presence in the region is highly important in terms of providing protection and back up to their allies in the region especially during times of crisis, such development demonstrated the strategic importance of these bases which significantly reshaped the balance of power in the region. The establishment and maintenance of U.S. military bases in Saudi Arabia is held up with the strategic interests in the region, notably centered around oil extraction, since the

Middle East, particularly the Arabian Peninsula, has held significant importance due to its vast oil reserves making it a focal point for global economic and geopolitical interests.

Though the U.S. Military bases were very important to secure the United States interests in the Middle East, they faced many challenges and regional opposition when establishing them. By examining the historical evolution, current status, and future prospects of these installations. The study contributes in understanding the outcomes of the U.S military presence in Saudi Arabia and its impact on regional stability and counterterrorism, and certainly securing energy resources (oil).

The primary purpose of this research is to critically analyze the motivations, consequences, and the outcomes of the United States military presence in Saudi Arabia. the study aims to explain the strategic objectives behind maintaining military bases in the region. Furthermore, it seeks to assess the impact of this presence on regional stability. Though, the study aims to investigate the U.S Saudi relations regarding the partnership in oil extraction under the stability and security provided by the U.S military bases. Many questions have been raised concerning what exactly are the historical factors that have shaped the establishment and evolution of U.S. military bases in Saudi Arabia? And How does the presence of U.S. military forces in the kingdom influence regional security dynamics and stability? Leading us to question What diplomatic, economic, and strategic considerations governing the U.S.-Saudi military alliance? And How does the presence of U.S. military forces in Saudi Arabia affects the security of oil?

The United States' political relations with Saudi Arabia have long been a focal point of scholarly inquiry due to the strategic significance of this alliance in the Middle East. As there are a lot of research conducted by many scholars and experts in the field of this study, which is about the presence of U.S. military bases in the Middle East, specifically in Saudi Arabia, and its implications on the region.

This topic is not recent many scholars has dealt with it in their works, such as the « Basis of Empire: the global struggle against U.S. military posts » edited by Catherine Lutz. which is a collection of essays by various authors who discussed the historical evolution of U.S. military bases over the world, and their implications on the host countries, including the Arab Middle East countries, tracing back from the Gulf War era. Furthermore, Alexander Cooley in his work « Base politics: Democratic Change and U.S. military overseas. » describes the broader implications of maintaining military installations in different countries, including Middle East, and he explores their impact on these host countries.

Many books and articles dealt with the politics of the Middle East, but with a particular focus on the Arabian Peninsula F. Gregory gause III. in his work “Be Careful What You Wish: The Future of U.S.-Saudi Relations.” analyze the historical context of U.S Saudi relationship emphasizing mutual dependence regarding security and oil interests.

Undoubtedly there are numerous works that examined the spread of U.S bases in the Middle East such as Lutz, Catherine. *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against U.S. Military Posts*. which examines the network of U.S. military bases abroad highlighting their geopolitical implications and their effects on host nations. These works contribute to realizing the historical evolution of the U.S military presence in the Arab world, they also offer diverse perspectives about maintaining Overseas military installations and their impact on geopolitics, oil, and security dynamics.

The research will be based on the historical method as the nature of the topic requires detailed exploration and deep investigation to reveal to the target audience a range of information on the issue of U.S. military bases in the Arab world and its political implications. As the results of historical research are descriptive rather than predictive. It is important to know that descriptive analytical approaches are prevalent in this research work. The two approaches are deemed essential tools for the accomplishment of this study. As the study takes Saudi Arabia as a case study the historical method is given an importance in the context.

This work is to be divided into three chapters. The first is entitled U.S. military bases in the Middle East, this chapter will delve into the initial establishment of the U.S military bases in the Arab world and The military alliances that the U.S. shaped there. It also describes the importance of these bases. During the Cold War, and post-Cold War era. Moreover, analyzing Gulf War impact on U.S. military bases, And their expansion during counterterrorism Operations. In addition to that, Investigating the challenges and future expectations of These alliances.

The Second Chapter is entitled The U.S.-Saudi Arabia political relations and mutual economic prosperity. In this chapter, a detailed history of the Diplomatic ties between U.S and Saudi Arabia, the development of their relations post World War II era, and description is provided. Also, the impact of oil in shaping their relations, and the mutual agreements that was held to bring success and prosperity to both nations. In Addition to contemporary developments in bilateral relations. Such as the "Vision 2030" project that was initiated by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, which the U.S. is giving a big attention and support.

The third chapter is entitled U.S.-Saudi alliance during conflicts. This chapter looks at how important airbases like King Abdul Aziz Airbase and Prince Sultan Airbase were established and changed over time. These bases have been crucial for military plans in the

region. The chapter also talks about big military actions and political decisions, like Operation Desert Storm and Saudi Arabia's role during the U.S. invasion of Iraq. It explores the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Saudi Arabia and the reasons behind that decision. This chapter helps us understand how military and political teamwork has shaped relations between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia.

Chapter One

U.S. Military Bases in the Middle East

The Middle East is one of the most important regions in the world, due to its strategic location, and significant amount of resources. which had the attention of global powers since the early 19th century. This chapter looks at the history and impact of the U.S. military presence in the Middle East from World War II, through the Cold War, to the Gulf War. By examining historical events, geopolitical dynamics, and strategic needs, the chapter aim to understand American military involvement in this region. It also explores the important strategies of the American military. From protecting oil supplies and opposing Soviet influence during the Cold War to fighting terrorism and maintaining stability. significantly, U.S. military bases have been central to American power and influence.

Additionally, the chapter includes the diplomatic aspects of U.S. military involvement. By looking at how the U.S. military presence affects regional dynamics, local communities, and international relations, the study aims to provide a complete understanding of the complexities and challenges of American military activities in the Middle East.

Overall, this chapter offers an academic look at U.S. military bases in the Middle East, explaining their history, strategic goals, and lasting effects on the region. By exploring various aspects of American military involvement in this complex political landscape, the study helps to better understand the interactions between power, politics, and policy in the Middle East.

1. Initial Establishment of U.S. Military Bases in the Middle East

In the broadest sense, the phrases "base," "facility," and "installation" are commonly (and interchangeably) used. Installation typically refers to a single, limited physical action serving a single purpose. It usually takes the form of a purely technical term, without any political or ideological meaning. Although often used interchangeably, the words "base" and

"facility" have slightly different meanings. Historically, "base" was more commonly used to describe a situation where the foreign country had full freedom to operate and unlimited access. In contrast, "facility" is now used for situations where the host country has final control, and the foreign country's access is limited, dependent, and regulated by the host nation (Jensen 7).

In the late 19th century, the U.S started to extend its military bases outside of its borders. The Caribbean, Central America, and South America were the primary targets of more than a hundred interventions by U.S armed forces outside the borders of the capitalist international system before this. Asia and Africa were then impacted by military actions, which were mostly carried out to safeguard American interests and lives (Herrera and Cicchini), this period marked the beginning of the U.S.'s efforts to spread its power globally and secure its strategic interests across different continents.

Through three stages, the U.S established a global network of military installations. The first was the American loss of dominance over Cuba, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam in the 1898 war against Spain. The beginning of the Cold War and World War II in the 1940s marked the beginning of the second expansion period. The third driving force was September 11 events of 2001, which revived U.S military facility construction (Herrera and Cicchini).

During World War II, the United States established its first military outpost in the Middle East. Near the Iranian city of Abadan, the Persian Gulf Command Air Transport Command was founded by the United States in 1943. During the war, this base was positioned strategically to support Allied operations in the Middle East and North Africa. It functioned as a center for logistics and transportation, making it easier to deploy soldiers and supplies to Allied forces battling local Axis forces (Craven 745-750).

The establishment of the Persian Gulf Command Air Transport Command, a United States Air Force unit created in Iran during World War II played a significant role in American military strategy and operations in the region. The location of the airbase near Abadan was strategically important due to its proximity to the Persian Gulf. This allowed for easier access to crucial areas of the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia. The base served as a vital supply route for the Allied forces during World War II. It facilitated the transportation of personnel, equipment, and supplies to support military operations in various theaters, including the Mediterranean, North Africa, and the Soviet Union (Craven 745-750).

This airbase played a crucial role in supporting Allied operations against Axis powers in the Middle East and North Africa. It provided logistical support for campaigns such as the North African Campaign, the Italian Campaign, and the Allied invasion of Sicily. So, the airbase was essential for moving troops and supplies to these important battlefronts. It also had greater objectives in providing military aid to its allies, including the Soviet Union, by supplying them with aircraft, vehicles, weapons, and other equipment. This means the airbase wasn't just supporting local operations; it was part of a larger effort to help Allied countries with necessary resources. The airbase served as a crucial transit point for delivering Lend-Lease supplies to the Soviet Union via the Persian Corridor. This shows the airbase's importance in the broader strategy of helping the Soviet Union fight against Germany by ensuring they received essential supplies (Craven 745-750).

In the early 20th century, the U.S established its first permanent military facility in the Middle East. The exact location and timing can vary based on the definition of the "Middle East" and the extent of the military presence. However, one of the first and most significant American bases in the region was in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Gresh 20–21), This base was the first step of extending American influence and therefor securing strategic interests in the region, and also to boost relations with Saudi Arabia, their most important ally.

The United States and Saudi Arabia signed the Quincy Agreement in 1945, during World War II, allowing the American military to use Saudi Arabian ports and airfields. The Dhahran Airfield, which is close to the Saudi Arabian city of Dhahran in the Eastern Province, became available due to this arrangement. The Gulf War (1990–1991) saw Dhahran Airfield play a major role as a base for U.S military activities in the area (Rider).

Though Dhahran Airfield was not the first American military installation in the Middle East, it was one of the most important early bases from a strategic point of view. When it was established, it marked the beginning of a long-lasting military alliance between the United States and Saudi Arabia, an alliance that continues to this day (Gresh 21) And this is an overview of U.S military presence in the Middle East.

Since 1948, the United States has kept a naval presence in Bahrain. Based there, the Fifth Fleet of the United States Marines covers the Arabian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman, the Red Sea, and the Arabian Sea, including the Suez Canal, the Strait of Hormuz, and the Strait of Bab al Mandeb. And the country contains, Naval Support Activity Bahrain, Shaikh Isa Air Base, Muharraq Air Base (Navy) (Wallin).

Since the Persian Gulf War in 1991, the United States and Kuwait have had a Defense Cooperation Agreement. This makes Kuwait an important non-NATO ally of the U.S. Since 2011, the main reason for U.S. troops in Kuwait has been Operation Spartan Shield, which aim to prevent regional aggression and stabilize countries. In Kuwait, the military currently has 2,200 MRAPs (armored vehicles) in use. Kuwait has several military bases, including Ali Al Salem Air Base, Camp Arifjan, Camp Buehring, and Camp Patriot (Wallin), This alliance with Kuwait was very important to secure interests and goals of the united states due to its location in this critical region.

About 10,000 American service members are stationed in Qatar particularly since the early 2000s, mostly at Al Udeid Air Base. The base was built in the 1990s to attract American

personnel with its facilities. After the initial invasion of Iraq in 2003, the U.S. was able to move its forces from Saudi Arabia to Qatar permanently. Operation Inherent Resolve, the U.S. military's mission to fight ISIS, has relied heavily on this base in Qatar. As well as it was so important that it carried the U.S. forces that withdrawal from Saudi Arabia after the 2003 events (Wallin), Al Udeid Air Base with its location was crucial to secure the air, and also to provide back up to allies in the region.

The U.A.E. started working closely with the U.S. military during the First Gulf War in 1990, allowing American planes and ships to use its territory. After the war, the U.S. kept some military forces in the U.A.E., including the 763rd Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron to help enforce the no-fly zone over southern Iraq. In 1994, the two countries signed a Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA) that allowed the U.S. use U.A.E. military bases like Al-Dhafra Air Base and Jebel Ali Port. Having U.S. troops in the U.A.E. benefits both countries by deterring threats and allowing for quick responses in case of conflict. The U.A.E. hosts about 5,000 American military personnel, mainly at Al-Dhafra Air Base (U.S.-U.A.E. Business Council).

The withdrawal started when all operations at the high-tech command center, which was used to oversee the air war over Iraq, were moved to a similar facility at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar. By the end of the summer of 2003, all aircraft and nearly all military personnel were expected to leave this base, although the infrastructure to reactivate the operations center would remain, according to Dave Nichols, the air war's deputy commander. Additionally, two small training missions would stay in the kingdom (Loeb). This marks the U.S. military's adaptability and the wide spread around the region

"Israel" and the United States have had a long-standing security alliance, and recently, they have collaborated on developing technologies like the Iron Dome air defense system. U.S. 6th Fleet ships regularly visit Haifa for port stops, though American facilities in "Israel"

are still under construction. The limited U.S. deployments in "Israel" are intended to support anti-ballistic missile installations, including the Dimona Radar Facility and Mashabim Air Base/Bisl'a Aerial Defense School (Wallin), the united states consider "Israel" as a highly important ally and center of stability in the region. The involvement of the United States in the Middle East during the Second World War marked how important the region was to it and to its ideological trend

2. U.S. Military Involvement in the Middle East During World War II

During World War II, the Middle East became really important to global powers because of its strategic location and resources. Germany wanted to control the Suez Canal and access oil from the Persian Gulf, which made the region a key battleground as Germany tried to expand its influence in the East. This topic looks at how the United States got more involved in the Middle East during and after the threat from the Axis powers. It covers how the U.S. interacted with British control and the rise of independence movements by looking at major events like the Battle of El Alamein and diplomatic efforts in Syria and Egypt. This helps to understand the complicated relationships between the U.S., Britain, and the Middle East during that time.

The United States government had to develop a continued interest in the Middle East due to the circumstances of World War II. Germany was considering the Middle East as a way to connect with its Japanese ally in south Asia and strengthen its position in the Eastern Hemisphere while it was destroying most of Europe. The Suez Canal and the Persian Gulf oil reserves would be either captured by the Germans or at the very least, denied to the western allies in the event of an advance into the Middle East. Such ambitions drove German and Italian forces to seize control of North Africa and challenge Britain's hegemony over Egypt in 1941–1942. In October 1942, Britain ended the German advance at the Battle of El Alamein, in western Egypt, therefore eliminating the Axis threat to the Middle East (Hahn 3). the

strategic importance of the region during the war led to lasting U.S. and British involvement in the Middle East to stop the axis threat by cutting the roads of connection between them.

During World War II, when the Axis powers threatened the Middle East, the United States let Britain take the lead in dealing with the situation. when the Iraqi leader Rashid Ali al-Gaylani sided with Germany in 1941, Britain swiftly acted by reoccupying strategic areas like the airfield in Habbaniya and the port in Basra. They then moved to oust Gaylani from power. Similarly, a team of British, Indian, Australian, and Free French forces was sent to Syria to counter the Vichy Government's support for Gaylani's actions. They succeeded in liberating Damascus and Beirut. Despite America usually opposing colonialism, the Roosevelt administration allowed Britain to assert its control in these cases due to the urgent wartime situation (Hahn 4).

During World War II, when the Axis powers were a big threat, the U.S. supported Britain's control in Egypt. On February 4, 1942, British forces pressured King Farouk to choose a prime minister who supported Britain instead of Germany. Farouk asked President Roosevelt for help, but Roosevelt refused. Additionally, the U.S. helped build air bases in Egypt for Britain and provided tanks that were crucial in winning the Battle of El Alamein (Hahn 4).

Throughout the region, the United States used a similar strategy. In August 1941, President Roosevelt supported the British-Soviet occupation of Iran to eliminate Nazi influence. He even sent about 30,000 U.S. soldiers to help build transportation systems to supply the Soviet Union with Lend-Lease materials. Even though some of his advisers were worried that the Middle East Supply Centre (MESC) would benefit British businesses more than American ones, Roosevelt still agreed to join the organization. The MESC was created in 1941 to manage trade and deliver war supplies in the region (Hahn 4). This shows how

Roosevelt prioritized defeating the Axis powers over potential economic competition with Britain.

After the Axis powers were defeated, the United States began to criticize European colonialism in the Middle East. After the Battle of El Alamein, President Roosevelt made it clear that the U.S. wanted equal economic opportunities in the region. He did not support Britain's idea to keep the Middle East Supply Centre (MESC) running after the war and generally supported the independence of Middle Eastern countries from European control. After Roosevelt died in April 1945, President Harry S. Truman continued to follow these principles (Hahn 5).

Additionally, the Roosevelt and Truman administrations showed their political strength in Syria by opposing French control. After Allied armies freed Syria from Vichy rule in 1941, Charles de Gaulle, leader of the Free French government-in-exile, took back control over the country. However, Roosevelt noticed that independence movements among Lebanese and Syrian people, which had been quiet since the late 1930s, were starting up again. Determined to show America's power, challenge French dominance, and prevent Soviet aggression, Roosevelt pressured France to give up its mandate. In September 1944, the U.S. recognized Lebanon's independence, and in April 1946, and it did the same for Syria (Hahn 5). This to gain a good reputation and influence among the region and exclude European colonial powers from the competition.

3. U.S. Military Involvement in the Middle East During Cold War

It is impossible to overestimate the Middle East's strategic importance during the Cold War since it served as a battlefield for the Soviet Union and the United States to strive for geopolitical dominance and ideological supremacy. The region became an active scene of conflict right after World War II because of its vast oil resources, strategic location, and ideological rivalry. The intricate dynamics of the Cold War struggle in the Middle East are

examined in this title, along with significant incidents, decisions made by both superpowers, and their calculated moves to maintain their power and influence over the area.

It is quite clear why the struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union for influence or dominance in the Middle East quickly intensified right after World War II. A number of significant issues were raised, including the superpowers' desire to gain a strategic advantage in the region, Bruce R. Kuniholm, an American academic and the former dean of Duke University's Sanford School of Public Policy, argues that the region was home to about two-thirds of the world's oil reserves at a time when oil has become more and more important to the Western world's economy, and the fact that the Cold War was, in a way unique from previous power struggles, an ideological struggle between two very different political, social, and economic systems. 'This war [the Second World War] is not as in the past; whoever occupies a territory also imposes on it his own social system ...' Stalin said to Josip Broz Tito and Milovan Djilas (qtd. in Fawcett 62).

U.S. main goals in the Middle East was to prevent state-sponsored terrorism, preserve "Israel's" security and that for other friends, limit and minimize Soviet influence, and maintain reasonable access to oil. U.S strategic interests and concerns were expressed in Presidential Decision Directives, National Security Council policy documents, and official memoranda. These documents often focused on the Middle East during the Cold War. NSC 47/2 of 1949 highlights the Middle East's importance to American security and the need for pro-Western ties to prevent Soviet penetration (Hajjar 5).

Given the growing importance of Gulf oil to the global economy and the region's strategic value during the Cold War, U.S. involvement in the Gulf region increased significantly. One key lesson from World War II was that the West's future oil needs would largely come from the huge oil reserves in Iran and the Arab nations. Oil exports started from Iran in 1913, Iraq in 1928, Bahrain in 1932, Saudi Arabia in 1938, and Kuwait in 1946. As

demand for oil rose, it quickly became a crucial strategic resource in the region. By the mid-to-late 1940s, the Middle East supplied at least 42% of the world's oil. This made the region the main oil source for Western Europe and Japan from the 1950s to the 1970s (Fawcett 65).

Various administrations adopted policies to secure America's strategic interests in the Middle East since the Cold War, influenced by the grand strategy of containing the Soviet Union. The Truman Doctrine which was announced by president Harry S. Truman, established a Mutual Security Program to assist free Middle Eastern nations. In which he stated:

One of the primary objectives of the foreign policy of the United States is the creation of conditions in which we and other nations will be able to work out a way of life free from coercion. This was a fundamental issue in the war with Germany and Japan. Our victory was won over countries which sought to impose their will, and their way of life, upon other nations. ... We shall not realize our objectives, however, unless we are willing to help free peoples to maintain their free institutions and their national integrity against aggressive movements that seek to impose upon them totalitarian regimes. This is no more than a frank recognition that totalitarian regimes imposed on free peoples, by direct or indirect aggression, undermine the foundations of international peace and hence the security of the United States (qtd. in "The Truman Doctrine")

In the Middle East, the Truman Doctrine served as a guiding light, aiding the United States in supporting countries facing tough times. It revolved around standing up for nations dealing with external threats or internal challenges. For instance, Turkey and Greece are currently worried about the Soviet Union's proximity, so the U.S. stepped in to ensure that they remained strong and independent. Over time, this support extended to other Middle Eastern countries, especially those vulnerable to communist influence.

The Truman Doctrine focused on safeguarding the fundamental aspects of freedom and strength within a nation. Therefore, the U.S. did not merely observe; it forms alliances like the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and provides aid to ensure these nations remain secure from external invaders or internal unrest. Essentially, the objective is to maintain stability and independence in the Middle East. The U.S. currently uses its military, financial resources, and diplomacy to follow the principles of the Truman Doctrine, protecting the region from threats and preserving its freedom ("Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), 1954"), ("The Baghdad Pact (1955) and the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO)").

Conflicts emerged over the postwar political orientation of Germany, Poland, and other formerly Axis-dominated areas; the Berlin Crisis of 1948–1949 and the Korean War of 1950–1953 served as flashpoints. An atomic and nuclear arms race started when diplomacy failed to create international control over atomic energy. The Communist victory in the Chinese Civil War in 1949 increased tensions by arousing fears of a global communist threat. The conflict was intensified by disagreements over economic aid, particularly the Soviet Union's exclusion from the Marshall Plan, an American plan to reconstruct the economy of Europe (Hahn 5).

Some of the first Cold War conflicts happened in the Middle East. Tensions between the U.S. and the Soviet Union grew between 1945 and 1946 because of the withdrawal of Allied forces from Iran, ruled by Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi since 1941. The U.S., Great Britain, and the Soviet Union had agreed to remove their troops from Iran within six months after World War II ended, by March 2, 1946. British troops left on time, and American forces left before the deadline. However, Soviet soldiers stayed in northern Iran, in a region called Azerbaijan, where they supported a separatist movement led by local Communists to get oil deals like those the Western powers had. Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin ordered his troops to

leave Iran in May 1946 after strong protests from American and British officials at the UN and other meetings. Once the Shah regained control in Azerbaijan, the separatist movement ended. These events made Western officials think that, although the Soviet Union wanted to expand, it would back down if faced with strong opposition from the West (Hahn 6).

Another significant clash between the great powers happened over Turkey. In 1945, as Allied troops took control of Berlin, Soviet officials made several demands to Turkey. One of these demands was to allow them specific naval basing rights in the Dardanelles, a crucial canal linking the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. The Soviets said they needed these rights for their national security because German ships had crossed the Black Sea during the war. However, U.S. authorities encouraged Turkey to keep rejecting these Soviet demands and showed their support by setting up a new naval command in the Eastern Mediterranean. The U.S. wanted to prevent the Soviet Union from gaining influence in the region (Hahn 6). This demonstrates the U.S.'s commitment to counter Soviet influence and supporting allies in strategic locations.

During the Cold War, the U.S. aimed to prevent the Soviet Union from gaining influence in the Middle East, as this region was crucial for security matters. They believed that having military bases in Arab countries was essential in case of a war with the Soviets. These bases would allow the U.S. to launch significant attacks, deploy tanks for combat, and conduct secret missions and spying close to the Soviet borders. The strategic importance of the Middle East grew even more due to the Suez Canal, flight routes, and other important transportation links between regions. (Hahn 8).

After 1949, the Pentagon saw "Israel" as really important. They saw that because of where it is located, many important resources, like oil pipelines and also transportation routes, went through it. They thought that if there was a big war, "Israel's" air bases would be super helpful. Having access to "Israel" would be a key for Western countries to defend against a

possible Soviet attack. So, U.S. military planners thought of "Israel" as extremely important for their strategy, especially after it became a stable democracy in 1949 and stopped staying out of conflicts in 1950–1951 (Hahn 11).

Closely located to the rich oil commerce in the Middle East was the Soviet Union, which may try to seize control of the canal itself and cut off the West from the oil resources. Experts in oil in the region, such German émigré Walter Levy, who worked as an oil consultant for the State Department, thought Soviet could use the Middle East as an entry point for advances into India or Europe, cutting off the free world from Suez and all of Asia. The oil that flowed from the region's numerous wells was important to the United States and the rest of the free world (Dietrich 77).

The Increased nationalist self-assertion, especially in Egypt, where economic nationalism and economic imperialism resulted in an overlapping conflict, was the source of the worry in the United States. Egypt's king Farouk was overthrown in a coup in 1953 because of his emphasis on economic sovereignty and its relationship to decolonization (Dietrich 74).

The Suez Crisis of 1956, when Egypt took control of the Suez Canal, had major impacts on U.S. relations with Middle Eastern countries and European allies. The crisis threatened British and French stock holdings and Europe's oil supply. The U.S. wanted a diplomatic solution, while Britain and France, along with "Israel", chose military action. The U.S. and the Soviet Union called for a ceasefire, which tensioned U.S. relations with its European allies. The U.S. took on a moderating role, which improved its relations with Egypt, but tensions between "Israel" and its neighbors remained unresolved ("The Suez Crisis, 1956").

4. The Eisenhower Doctrine

During the Cold War, President Dwight D. Eisenhower introduced the Eisenhower Doctrine in 1957, marking a big shift in U.S. foreign policy toward the Middle East. This policy was a response to growing tensions with the USSR and aimed to stop the spread of communism in the region. The doctrine was designed to help Middle Eastern countries defend themselves against communist aggression. This was clearly seen in 1958 when the U.S. intervened in Lebanon to support the government against communist interference and internal instability. This military action showed the doctrine's commitment to maintain stability and protecting Western interests ("The Eisenhower Doctrine, 1957").

The Eisenhower Doctrine had a few main goals. First, it aimed to stop communism from spreading in the Middle East by providing money and military help to countries facing communist threats. Second, it wanted to strengthen U.S. friendships in the region and ensure that Middle Eastern countries could defend themselves. However, it also had significant effects. While it managed to address problems and increased U.S. power in the region, it also made some people in the Middle East worried about U.S. interference. The focus on military aid and involvement in other countries' affairs led to debates about whether this approach was right. Despite these complications, the Eisenhower Doctrine changed how the U.S. dealt with the Middle East and influenced its relationships and military actions there for a long time ("The Eisenhower Doctrine, 1957").

5. The Carter Doctrine

In 1980, President Jimmy Carter introduced the Carter Doctrine during his State of the Union speech, marking a shift in U.S. foreign policy. This doctrine brought back the traditional containment strategy against the Soviet Union. Carter warned that the U.S. would use military force against any country attempting to control the Persian Gulf region. This announcement marked a significant change in U.S. foreign policy. Carter had previously focused on improving relations with the Soviet Union and promoting human rights globally.

However, with the signing of the SALT II nuclear arms pact in 1979, Carter's détente program ended (Samuels).

6. U.S. Military Involvement in the Middle East During Gulf War

The Gulf War began on August 2, 1990, when Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein's forces invaded Kuwait, an oil-rich country. Hussein wanted Kuwait's oil to pay off Iraq's huge debt from its recent war with Iran and to gain more control over Middle Eastern oil. U.S. officials were concerned that this invasion could be the first step in Iraq's plan to dominate other Middle Eastern countries, like Saudi Arabia. At the time, Iraq had about one million soldiers, making its army the fourth largest in the world ("The Gulf War").

The Gulf War developed rapidly. With strong leadership from the U.S., the United Nations condemned Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, and demanded their immediate withdrawal, and also imposed an economic embargo when Iraq did not comply. The XVIII Airborne Corps U.S. forces were sent to defend Saudi Arabia on August 8, starting Operation Desert Shield. In November, the U.S. began sending the VII Corps from Germany to prepare for a potential offensive to remove Iraqi forces from Kuwait if Iraq did not withdraw. By the end of the month, the U.N. authorized using any necessary means to enforce its resolutions if Iraq did not comply by January 15, 1991 (Lacquement).

Despite diplomatic efforts by American and Soviet diplomats, Iraq refused to withdraw from Kuwait. However, diplomacy did secure the release of hostages held by Iraq. With support from Congress, the U.S.-led military cooperation started airstrikes operations, on January 17, 1991, which was the beginning of Operation Desert Storm. In late February, the cooperation launched a ground attacks that successfully drove Iraqi forces out of Kuwait. A cease-fire was agreed upon on March 3 at Safwan in southern Iraq (Lacquement).

It is unlikely that the West and the United States would have stopped Saddam's invasion of Kuwait, motivated as it was by his belief in Kuwait's wealth and fear of his own leadership. Saddam was encouraged to invade Kuwait with confidence by the administration's confused strategy, which mixed threats with attempts to keep good relations with a regime involved in extortion and resistance to U.S foreign policy aims.

Even though the United States was the strongest country, Saddam still invaded Kuwait and did not want to leave peacefully. His bad economy and determination to take over made him stay. It wasn't possible to make him retreat without losing face or giving up the benefits of invading Kuwait. Even though the U.S. tried talking to Kuwait and offering to change leadership, Saddam did not budge, which led to the Gulf War. They even tried one last time on January 15, 1991, but Saddam had other plans (KARSH 284).

Not because of developments in Europe, but because of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1991, regional realism was completely destroyed. The aggression was unexpected by the U.S, which saw it as harmful to American interests. For the purpose of organizing the coalition against Iraq and defending its political and economic interests, the U.S required the assistance of Saudi Arabia and other Arab nations.

Saddam Hussein's attempts to justify his actions by calling for the liberation of Palestine worsened the "Israeli"-Palestinian conflict. This led to a secret collaboration between "Israel" and the Arab members of the anti-Iraq coalition, who were less publicly involved in the military operations against Iraq. U.S Secretary of State James Baker saw an opportunity to initiate the peace process in Madrid as a result of this cooperation. Syrian President Assad's involvement in the liberation of Kuwait and his refusal to end the conflict before Saddam's downfall further contributed to the reconciliation between "Israel" and the Arab nations (KARSH 289).

The chapter covers the history and impact of U.S. military bases in the Middle East, focusing on periods like World War II, the Cold War, and the Gulf War. It looks at why the U.S. set up these bases, the political and military reasons behind them, and how they have affected the region. During these periods, U.S. military bases have been crucial for extending American power in the Middle East. These bases helped the U.S. protect its interests, deal with regional issues, and influence the political landscape.

The chapter also discusses the complex issues and challenges of U.S. military involvement in the Middle East. It talks about managing different interests, adapting to political changes, and handling regional conflicts. It highlights the balance between strategic goals and diplomatic concerns, and the effects of U.S. military presence on local populations and international relations.

Chapter Two

The U.S. Saudi Arabia Political Relations and Mutual Economic Prosperity

The relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia has been strong and important for over than eight decades, with deep connections in diplomacy, trade, security, education, and culture. Since they first established diplomatic ties, the U.S. has supported Saudi Arabia's efforts to grow and prosper. This partnership has evolved to cover many areas, including trade and security. As Saudi Arabia works on its Vision 2030 plan to transform its economy and society, the U.S. continues to be a supportive ally. This long-lasting relationship shows how working together with shared goals and respect can lead to growth and stability for both nations.

1. The Roots of Diplomatic Ties Between U.S. and Saudi Arabia

Relations between the United States and Saudi Arabia started unofficially in 1933 when Saudi Arabia allowed the American company Standard Oil to exclusively drill for oil in the eastern province. This led to the profitable U.S-Saudi joint project called ARAMCO. Official diplomatic relations were established after King Abdulaziz Al-Saud met with President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1945 (Richardson), The dialogue between the two leaders reaffirmed the mutual interests in oil and economic development, and also addressed geopolitical concerns.

President Roosevelt, returning from the Yalta Conference, wanted to meet King Abdulaziz on an American ship in the Bitter Lakes of the Suez Canal. The USS Murphy picked up King Abdulaziz and 48 companions from Jeddah, and on February 14, 1945, they arrived near the USS Quincy, where Roosevelt was. King Abdulaziz, with three princes and two ministers, crossed the bridge between the ships to meet Roosevelt, who was in a

wheelchair. They talked for an hour and a quarter before having Arabia to remain independent. Roosevelt promised King Abdulaziz, and confirmed in a letter on April 5, 1945, that he wouldn't act against the Arabs and would consult with both Arabs and Jews before changing U.S. policy on Palestine ("The Historic Meeting between Saudi King Abdulaziz, U.S President Roosevelt").

King Abdulaziz considered these assurances as an agreement but did not expect Roosevelt's sudden death. During the historic meeting, they talked about ensuring Saudi Arabia's sovereignty since World War II was ongoing and there were foreign ambitions for the country. They also discussed developing the Saudi army, the independence of Arab countries under colonial rule, and economic issues like free trade, services, and oil relations. The meeting represented the largest Western-Islamic alliance, and symbolized the integration with the Islamic world with its resources, population, products, oil, strategic location and warm water ports. As it was the beginning of a unique friendship that lasted for over seven decades and still ("The Historic Meeting between Saudi King Abdulaziz, U.S President Roosevelt"). This meeting was significant because it marked the beginning of a strong friendship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia.

2. Post WWII Era Relations

In January 1945, top U.S. officials were worried about communism in Saudi Arabia. Although the U.S. and the Soviet Union were allies against Nazi Germany, U.S. diplomats feared the Soviets might use political instability to gain control in Saudi Arabia and block U.S. access to Saudi oil. Every U.S. administration from Truman to Reagan aimed to counter Soviet influence in the Middle East to secure their interests (Bowman 96).

Looking back, the U.S. fear of Soviet influence in Saudi Arabia was mostly unjustified. The Saudi regime, founded by Ibn Saud, strongly opposed communism because of its expansionist goals and success in nearby countries like South Yemen, Ethiopia, and

Afghanistan. The Saudis also disliked communism because it promoted atheism and persecuted Muslims. In 1948, Amir Faisal told a British Ambassador that communists would become unbeatable if given ten years of peace, suggesting that anti-communist countries should start a preventive war against the Soviet Union before it was too late. The Saudis consistently turned their fear and dislike of communism into real action. In 1974, Crown Prince Fahd said, "I intend to get the Russian communists out of Somalia. My policy will be to help the moderate forces in South Yemen. I will help the Sudan resist communist subversion" (qtd. In Bowman 97).

By 1978, Saudi Arabia was spending about \$5 billion each year on foreign aid, much of it to fight communism. In that same year, Saudi Arabia paid for the airlift of 1,500 Moroccan troops to Zaire to fight left-wing insurgents supported by Angola's Marxist regime. The Saudis strongly opposed Soviet aggression and communism's atheistic philosophies, often taking concrete steps to combat it. Looking back, there was no reasonable scenario where the Saudi regime would tolerate any significant communist presence in their country. The only way the Soviets could have controlled Saudi Arabia would have been through a direct invasion, which the United States would never have tolerated (Bowman 97). This shows that Saudi Arabia's consistent anti-communist stance and active efforts to counter Soviet influence were crucial in shaping its international relations and ensuring stability in the region during the Cold War.

3. U.S-Saudi Arms Deals

In 1951, the United States and Saudi Arabia made their first formal defense agreement called the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement. This deal allowed Saudi Arabia to buy weapons from the U.S. and also to get a training program for the its military. Right after this agreement, Saudi Arabia got into a conflict with Soviet-supported Egypt that lasted until 1967. During these years, the U.S. sold a massive worth of military equipment to Saudi

Arabia. This started a long history of the U.S. supplying Saudi Arabia with weapons to fight against the Soviet Union in Middle Eastern conflicts (Richardson).

During the 1950s and 1960s, the relationship grew, and more U.S. weapons were sent to Saudi Arabia. From 1950 to 1969, the U.S. sold \$218 million worth of military equipment to Saudi Arabia. In the early 1970s, after Britain left the Gulf region, the U.S. increased its focus on the area. Between 1970 and 1972, U.S. arms sales to Saudi Arabia jumped from \$14.8 million to \$296.3 million. This rise in weapon purchases happened as Saudi oil revenues also increased significantly, from \$1.2 billion in 1970 to \$25.7 billion in 1975. Today, Saudi Arabia supplies about 9% of U.S. crude oil imports, but U.S. weapons continue to be sold to the Kingdom. Between 2013 and 2017, Saudi Arabia bought about 18% of all U.S. arms sales, totaling around \$9 billion. This is almost the same as the \$8.1 billion weapons sale to Saudi Arabia and the UAE backed by the Trump administration despite objections from Congress (Khalel). The increase in arms sales reflects both the growing importance of Saudi Arabia as a key ally in the region and the significant role of oil sales in paying these arms deals.

The “special relationship” between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia grew stronger after 1981 when the Saudis turned to President Reagan to help secure advanced weapons despite opposition from the "Israel" lobby. Caspar Weinberger, the new Secretary of Defense, supported strengthening Saudi defenses after the fall of Iran's shah. On March 6, 1981, the U.S. planned to sell new arms to Saudi Arabia, citing a decline in Western security in the region. Despite opposition from "Israeli" officials and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the administration expanded the deal to include five advanced AWACS planes, totaling \$8.5 billion. President Reagan insisted on the sale, arguing that Saudi Arabia must not fall like Iran and that blocking the sale would damage U.S. credibility in the Middle East. After intense efforts by Reagan, the Senate approved the deal in late October by a narrow 52

to 48 vote (Marshall). This marks how much important Saudi Arabia was to the U.S. as it approved to this arms deal to strengthen Saudi defense.

Saudi Arabia has been a major buyer of U.S. arms, leading to large transactions over the years, these arms deals became controversial and raised questions about its rightness. From 2009 to the present, the Obama and Trump Administrations proposed arms sales to Saudi Arabia worth over \$120 billion, marking Saudi Arabia's importance to U.S. strategy in the Middle East. In May 2017, during his first foreign trip, President Trump announced several proposed arms sales to Saudi Arabia. These significant arms transfers strengthen U.S.-Saudi relations (Thomas 11).

Saudi Arabia has been trying to get arms from different sources and build its own defense industry. In May 2017, just before President Trump's visit, Prince Mohammed bin Salman (now Crown Prince) announced the creation of a government-owned company called Saudi Arabian Military Industries (SAMI). SAMI will manage the production of air and land systems, weapons and missiles, and defense electronics. This move is similar to the UAE's established state arms company, Emirates Defense Industries Company (EDIC). The goal is for 50% of Saudi military spending to be domestic by 2030. During President Trump's visit, a high-value arms deal was announced. Part of this deal includes plans to produce certain items in Saudi Arabia. For example, there is a \$6 billion agreement with the Saudi Technology Development and Investment Company (TAQNIA) to assemble 150 Blackhawk helicopters in Saudi Arabia (Thomas 12). Saudi Arabia aim was to enhance its military capabilities and reduce dependency on foreign arms. This reflects the Kingdom's ambition to strengthen its regional influence and its defense.

4. Impact of Oil in Shaping the Relations

4.1. Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO)

Saudi Arabia's relationship with Standard Oil of California (SOCAL) began in 1933 when they made an agreement to explore for oil. At that time, no one knew about Saudi Arabia's oil reserves. SOCAL wanted to explore because Saudi Arabia had a similar geological profile to Bahrain. This risky move paid off in 1938 when the Dammam well started producing over 1500 barrels of oil per day, much more than the average U.S. well's 100 barrels per day. In 1944, after merging with Texas Oil in 1936, SOCAL renamed their subsidiary in Saudi Arabia to the Arabian American Oil Company (Aramco). Aramco became a key player in U.S.-Saudi relations and the development of Saudi Arabia until it was nationalized. Although the U.S. recognized Saudi Arabia in 1931, the establishment of Aramco in 1944 marked the true beginning of their strong relationship (Korlu 8).

In the 1940s, Aramco slowly increased its oil production, hitting 500,000 barrels per day by 1949. The country was able to export more oil smoothly in 1951 after opening the Trans-Arabian Pipeline. This pipeline was over 1,200 kilometers long, connecting the Gulf region to the Mediterranean Sea, making it easier and faster to load oil onto tankers. By 1954, just five years after reaching 500,000 barrels per day, Aramco's production had doubled to one million barrels daily (Martin).

At the beginning, Aramco wasn't owned by Saudi Arabia. But that changed in 1973 when the Saudi government bought 25% of the company. This happened after the Arab-"Israeli" war, where the USA helped "Israel" with military supplies. In response, OPEC raised oil prices for Western countries and cut production. Saudi Arabia then started to take control of Aramco, increasing its ownership to 60% in 1974 and fully nationalizing it in 1980. By then, the government controlled all of Aramco's oil rights and facilities. In 1988, Aramco was renamed Saudi Aramco by the Saudi Council of Ministers. The company grew rapidly,

opening new oil production facilities and making acquisitions. By 2009, Saudi Aramco could produce up to 12 million barrels of oil per day (Martin).

4.2. Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) is made up of 13 major oil-exporting countries. It was established in Baghdad in 1960 to help its members with oil policies and provide technical and economic support. OPEC is a group that controls the supply of oil to keep prices stable, helping both the countries that produce oil and those that buy it. The original members are Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela. Other members include Algeria, Angola, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Libya, Nigeria, and the United Arab Emirates. The organization first set up its Secretariat in Geneva, but in 1965, it finalized its location in Vienna (Hayes).

OPEC calls itself a permanent intergovernmental organization. It aims to "coordinate and unify the petroleum policies of its Member Countries and ensure the stabilization of oil markets." This helps to provide a steady oil supply for consumers and a regular income for oil producers. OPEC is the biggest producer and exporter of crude oil and petroleum products in the world. Its members produce about 40% of the world's oil and supply 60% of the world's petroleum. In 2021, they had over 80% of the world's proven oil reserves. Because of this, OPEC's decisions greatly affect global energy prices. If they produce more oil, prices can drop a lot. But if they cut production, prices are likely to go up (Hayes).

4.3. The 1973 Oil Embargo

On October 19, 1973, after President Nixon asked Congress to provide \$2.2 billion in emergency aid to "Israel" during the Yom Kippur War, the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) put an oil embargo on the United States. This embargo stopped the U.S. from importing oil from OPEC nations and led to production cuts (Corbett). Over the next five months, the embargo caused major problems for oil-consuming economies, created

tensions in the Atlantic Bloc, and gave Arab oil producers a lot more wealth and power. Besides stopping oil exports to the U.S. and the Netherlands, the Saudis reduced their overall production by 20 percent. This led to market speculation and made oil prices skyrocket worldwide. These cuts caused the price of oil to almost quadruple, going from \$2.90 per barrel before the embargo to \$11.65 per barrel by January 1974 (Sher 27).

The 1973 Oil Embargo hit the U.S. economy hard because it depended a lot on foreign oil. President Nixon's attempts to end the embargo showed how oil-producing countries were gaining power and led the U.S. to reduce its reliance on foreign oil. By 1973, OPEC wanted higher prices and more money from oil companies. Nixon responded by launching a new energy plan to increase domestic oil production and reduce imports. The embargo caused oil prices to rise four times higher, creating global economic instability and the risk of a recession. U.S. allies in Europe and Japan had stored some oil but still faced long-term high prices and recession risks, which caused tension within the Atlantic Alliance. The U.S., being more dependent on imported oil, had to negotiate an end to the embargo under economic pressure, with the embargo also linked to peace efforts between "Israel" and its Arab neighbors. ("Oil Embargo 1973–1974").

In November 1973, Nixon announced Project Independence to promote domestic energy independence and tried to form consumers' union and cartel, which only had limited success. Nixon and Secretary of State Kissinger saw the need for peace talks with Arab OPEC members and "Israel". These talks led to the First Egyptian-"Israeli" Disengagement Agreement in January 1974 and ended the embargo in March 1974. This crisis showed the U.S. struggle to balance support for "Israel" with maintaining ties to Arab oil producers, especially Saudi Arabia. The U.S. response included energy-saving measures, creating the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, a national speed limit, fuel economy standards, and the International Energy Agency. The crisis was worsened by the declining influence of U.S. and

European oil companies, reduced Texas oil field capacity, and the decision to let the U.S. dollar float freely ("Oil Embargo 1973–1974").

4.4. The Petrodollar Agreement

The petrodollar deal between the United States and Saudi Arabia, made in 1974, was a key economic agreement after the 1973 oil crisis and OPEC oil embargo. U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and Saudi Crown Prince Fahd signed the deal in Washington D.C. The main idea was that Saudi Arabia would sell its oil only in U.S. dollars, which would keep the dollar in high demand. In exchange, the U.S. provided Saudi Arabia with military aid and advanced technology, and Saudi Arabia could invest its oil profits in U.S. debt. (Robinson). This agreement was very beneficial to both countries to boost their economy.

This agreement had some important parts. First, it required that all Saudi oil to be sold in U.S. dollars, which strengthened the dollar's role as the main global currency. Second, Saudi Arabia would reinvest its extra oil money into U.S. debt securities, helping to fund the U.S. government. Third, the U.S. promised military and technological support to Saudi Arabia, building a stronger relationship between the two countries (Basosi). This deal was kept mostly secret to avoid public backlash and political problems (Robinson).

The petrodollar system helped the U.S. economy by increasing the demand for U.S. dollars and supporting U.S. debt. It made sure the dollar was always needed globally, helping to stabilize the oil market and keep the dollar strong. In addition to that, the investments in U.S. Treasuries provided a steady source of funding for the U.S. government (Robinson, 2012). Politically, the deal gave the U.S. more power, as it could also use its financial and military support to keep stability and influence in the Middle East (Basosi).

Over time, the petrodollar system created a global financial order centered on the U.S. dollar, helping the U.S. manage its economy and attract foreign investments. However, it also meant the U.S. economy was closely tied to the global oil market and the political stability of the Middle East. This showed how important it was for the U.S. to maintain good relations with major oil-producing countries like Saudi Arabia (Robinson).

The U.S.-Saudi petrodollar agreement was a crucial moment in economic history, making the dollar the dominant global currency and ensuring a steady market for U.S. debt. By requiring Saudi oil to be sold in dollars and encouraging reinvestment in U.S. debt, this deal boosted the U.S. economy and strengthened its financial position worldwide. It also helped both countries by improving their economic stability and deepening their strategic alliance. Overall, this agreement was key in making the dollar central to global trade and finance.

5. Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA)

In 2003, the United States and Saudi Arabia signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA). TIFA is a broad agreement that sets up regular talks between the U.S. and other countries about economic reforms and trade improvements. This agreement helps to create legal protections for investors, better protection for intellectual property, more efficient customs procedures, and clearer government and business regulations. TIFA meetings happen every one to two years to discuss various trade issues. The most recent TIFA meeting was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in March 2023 ("Saudi Arabia - Country Commercial Guide").

6. Saudi Arabia Joins WTO

Saudi Arabia saw joining the World Trade Organization (WTO) as a way to gain international respect and acceptance. It was the only Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) country and the world's largest oil producer that is not a member in the WTO. Initially, Saudi

Arabia did not join the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the WTO's predecessor, because oil, its main export, was not included. But as the country expanded its oil and petrochemical industries, joining the WTO became important to protect its exports from high tariffs in other countries. However, joining the WTO is not easy. New members have to make deals with all existing WTO countries that ask for one. These deals then apply to all other WTO members. After that, a final agreement with all WTO members is needed for full membership (Zahid).

U.S. Trade Representative Rob Portman announced that the United States and Saudi Arabia have finished talks about Saudi Arabia joining the World Trade Organization (WTO). This deal will open new markets for U.S. farm products, goods, and services, and help Saudi Arabia finalize its WTO membership. The ongoing negotiations in Geneva are seen as progress for Saudi Arabia, the U.S., and the WTO, leading to more openness and reforms in Saudi Arabia. The U.S. and Saudi Arabia have also strengthened their cooperation on trade issues ("U.S. and Saudi Arabia Conclude Bilateral WTO Accession Agreement").

The U.S. has been working with Saudi Arabia on this for over ten years. The negotiations were challenging, but Saudi Trade Minister Yamani and his team have made significant economic reforms. The U.S. Congress has been involved to ensure Saudi Arabia keeps its promises. Saudi Arabia has agreed to follow WTO rules and will not enforce certain parts of the Arab Boycott of "Israel". The country has updated its trade laws, including better protection for intellectual property and improved customs procedures. This agreement also helps U.S. service providers in areas like banking and telecommunications ("U.S. and Saudi Arabia Conclude Bilateral WTO Accession Agreement").

Saudi Arabia started negotiating to join the WTO in July 1993. On October 28, 2005, it finished its documents for membership. The legal texts, around 600 pages long, were approved by the 148 WTO member governments at a special meeting. Dr. Hashim A.

Yamani, the Minister of Industry and Commerce, signed the Accession Protocol for Saudi Arabia. The country officially became the 149th WTO member on December 11, 2005 ("WTO General Council successfully adopts Saudi Arabia's terms of Accession"). By joining to WTO, Saudi Arabia committed to international trade standards and opened up new opportunities for economic growth and global partnerships.

7. Contemporary Developments in Bilateral Relationships

On May 2023, the U.S. Embassy celebrated the 246th anniversary of the United States' independence and the 80th anniversary of its first diplomatic presence in Saudi Arabia. The theme of the celebration, "Shared History, Strong Partnership, United Vision," emphasized the long-lasting strategic ties and friendship between the two nations. The U.S. has always supported Saudi Arabia in its journey towards success. Over the years, their relationship has expanded to include trade, culture, education, security, and strong personal connections between the people of both countries. Despite changes over the past 80 years, the shared vision of cooperation has remained constant ("The United States and The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Eight Decades of Shared History, Strong Partnership, and United Vision").

As Saudi Arabia works towards its Vision 2030 goals, the U.S. is supporting these efforts with the same spirit of partnership. Today, Americans and Saudis work together in many areas, including trade, research, and cultural activities like concerts and sports. This partnership leads to \$54 billion in annual trade and investment between the two countries. U.S. companies have an important role in Saudi Arabia's economic changes under Vision 2030. The two nations also have strong cultural and educational ties and cooperate as strategic partners on global issues like post-pandemic recovery, climate change, food security, environmental protection, and regional stability ("The United States and The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Eight Decades of Shared History, Strong Partnership, and United Vision").

7.1. Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030

Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 program is a big plan to change the country's economy, society, and culture. Launched in April 2016 by Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, it aims to move away from an oil-dependent economy and promote progress in other sectors. This program presents great opportunities for companies wanting to expand into Saudi Arabia (Schulte, 2024). The vision was created by the Council of Economic and Development Affairs, chaired by the Crown Prince. It includes goals like creating a sovereign wealth fund, partially privatizing Saudi Aramco, and reforming industries such as tourism and defense ("Vision 2030 is built around three primary themes: a vibrant society, a thriving economy and an ambitious nation").

The Vision 2030 plan has three main themes: a vibrant society, a thriving economy, and an ambitious nation. To create a vibrant society, Saudi Arabia will focus on its people and the Islamic faith. This includes several goals: increasing Umrah visitors from 8 million to 30 million each year, building the largest Islamic museum in the world, doubling the number of Saudi heritage sites on the UNESCO list, expanding cultural and entertainment options in the country, promoting healthier lifestyles so that the percentage of citizens who exercise weekly rises from 13% to 40%, and developing three Saudi cities to be among the top 100 cities in the world ("Vision 2030 is built around three primary themes: a vibrant society, a thriving economy and an ambitious nation").

One of the main goals of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 program is to build a thriving economy by expanding the country's industrial base. The Saudi government plans to attract significant foreign investment in industries beyond petrochemicals. This will be achieved by privatizing state-owned companies and creating tax-free special economic zones. Additionally, the Kingdom is promoting ambitious projects like the NEOM megacity to businesses, governments, and tourists from around the world (Schulte).

Sustainability is a big part of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 plan. The country wants to grow its Public Investment Fund (PIF) and invest in renewable energy, mining, and new research. By 2030, Saudi Arabia aims to reach several goals: increase non-oil exports, have the private sector make up 65% of GDP, boost foreign investment to 5.7% of GDP, and be among the top ten in the Global Competitive Index. They also want to grow PIF assets from \$159 billion to over \$1.86 trillion, become one of the top 15 largest economies, localize 75% of the oil and gas sector, increase women's participation in work to 30%, raise the contribution of small and medium businesses to GDP from 20% to 35%, and cut unemployment to 7%. To attract investors, Saudi Arabia is showing its big projects in foreign media. While these big projects get a lot of attention, the long-term goals are just as important (Schulte).

To be an ambitious nation, Saudi Arabia will focus on being accountable, transparent, and effective in its governance. Achieving lasting success requires strong foundations. To reach this potential, the Kingdom will: enforce zero tolerance for corruption; enhance transparency by expanding online services and improving governance standards; launch the King Salman Program for Human Capital Development to train over 500,000 government employees in best practices; and improve the non-profit sector's efficiency and impact ("Vision 2030 is built around three primary themes: a vibrant society, a thriving economy and an ambitious nation"). The Vision 2030 plan is a crucial step towards fulfilling Saudi Arabia's economic goals and improving the lives of its citizens.

The U.S.-Saudi relationship is a great example of how countries can work together to achieve common goals and benefit both sides. It all started with the search for oil which became even more important during World War II. Over the years, the U.S. and Saudi Arabia have worked together to fight communism during the Cold War, deal with regional conflicts, and handle global crises. Their partnership includes trade, security, and cultural exchanges.

They had strong connections through business, joint security efforts, and shared cultural activities.

As an example the U.S. helping Saudi Arabia with its Vision 2030 plan, which aims to change and improve the country's economy and society. Their long-lasting partnership shows how alliances can grow over time. By tackling important issues and big projects together, the U.S. and Saudi Arabia keep making their relationship stronger and showing how cooperation can lead to long-term success and stability.

Chapter three

The U.S-Saudi Alliance During Conflicts

The military bases and operations in Saudi Arabia had a significant history that shaped the dynamic geopolitical landscape of the Middle East. This chapter explores the establishment and evolution of key airbases, such as King Abdul Aziz Airbase and Prince Sultan Airbase, which have played key roles in regional military strategies. Additionally, this chapter delves into significant military operations and political stands, including the Desert Storm Operation and Saudi Arabia's position during the U.S. invasion of Iraq. It also examines the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Saudi Arabia and the reasons behind this strategic move. This chapter provides an understanding of the military and political collaborations that have shaped the U.S.-Saudi Arabia relations.

1. Establishment and Evolution of King Abdul Aziz Airbase

By the end of World War II, the United States had built 4,433 military bases around the world. It became a major military power, even bigger than Great Britain during the Cold War. After the war, the U.S. used these bases to protect against the Soviet Union in Europe, Asia, and the Gulf. U.S. officials thought these bases were necessary and showed America's role in the world. Keeping these bases was important for rebuilding Europe, because Gulf oil was essential for reconstruction (Gresh 6).

When the United States started talking to Saudi Arabia about building a military base there in 1945, Saudi Arabia was not very open to the idea. From the start, Saudi Arabia had to balance its internal and external security needs. Inside the country, the Saud family had to deal with rival tribes who felt threatened by foreigners. King Abdul-Aziz bin Abdul Rahman Al Saud also needed the support of the Al-Wahhab followers, who were strongly anti-Western and could disrupt important decisions. Ibn Saud worried about defending the two holiest cities in Islam and keeping up the image that Saudi Arabia was independent from Western countries

like the U.S. and Great Britain. Outside the country, Ibn Saud was concerned about the Axis powers expanding into the Gulf and his regional rivals, the Hashemites of Iraq and Transjordan, who wanted to take back the Hejaz region that he had conquered in the 1920s. therefore Saudi King Ibn Saud was concerned about external threats (Gresh 20).

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt became interested in Saudi Arabia because of its oil. During World War II, the U.S. needed a lot of oil, and in February 1943, Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes told Roosevelt that Saudi Arabia had the richest oil deposits in the world. Less than a week later, Roosevelt declared Saudi Arabia "vital to the defense of the United States" and made it worthy for Lend-Lease aid. Roosevelt also invited King Ibn Saud to visit Washington or send representatives. The king sent his sons, Faysal and Prince Khaled (Riedel).

Several factors changed King Ibn Saud's mind: Britain's quiet support for the U.S. presence, the need to balance against the Axis powers and regional rivals, and, most importantly, significant U.S. military and economic aid through the Lend-Lease Aid program. In 1943, Saudi Arabia had a deficit of 30 million riyals and expected a 72-million-riyal deficit in 1944. Because of this financial strain, Ibn Saud was open to more U.S. economic and military aid (Gresh 21).

At the end, Saudi Arabia approved a U.S. military presence mainly because of external security threats and promises of military equipment and other military and economic aid. The initial negotiation between Saudi Arabia and the United States was significant because it was the first time the United States established a considerable military presence in the Arabian Peninsula, a sign of the evolving U.S. belief that its strategic national interests were tied to that region, including interests involving oil and national security matters This first agreement set the stage for future U.S. involvement in the region (Gresh 21). The 1933 contract included a clause to prevent any foreign company from interfering in Saudi Arabia's internal matters.

Despite not being confident in their ability to defend their borders alone, Saudi Arabia has tried to balance having American military support without becoming too dependent on it. This has resulted in a continuous, but small, U.S. military presence from the end of World War II to now, mainly for training missions.

In 1945, President Franklin D. Roosevelt met with King Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia, which strengthened the ties between the United States and Saudi Arabia. However, the U.S. had shown interest in Saudi Arabia earlier during World War II. The U.S. War Department, now the Department of Defense, saw Saudi Arabia as a strategic location due to its proximity to the Pacific Theater. Rachel Bronson, in her book *"Thicker than Oil: America's Uneasy Partnership with Saudi Arabia"* explains that Saudi Arabia was important for resupplying Allied forces, including the Russians. This led to Saudi Arabia being included in the lend-lease program in 1943, providing vital support during the war. By 1944, the U.S. requested to build an airfield near Dhahran, and despite some resistance from the British, the Dhahran Airfield Agreement was signed in August 1945 (Herring).

The Dhahran Airfield became a crucial site during the early Cold War. After World War II ended, the U.S. and Saudi Arabia renegotiated the lease of the airfield into a yearly agreement in 1949. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers expanded the airfield further, and in 1951, a new agreement included military training for Saudi forces. Despite construction challenges, Fluor Corporation completed the expansion in 1955. King Saud later met with President Dwight Eisenhower in 1956, resulting in more agreements to improve civil aviation facilities and provide additional military training, finalized in a formal agreement in April 1957 (Herring).

Dhahran Airfield, later called Dhahran International Airport, remained important to U.S. and Saudi operations. A new civil air terminal designed by Minoru Yamasaki was completed in 1961 and became an architectural landmark. The terminal, which combined

traditional Islamic and modern designs, received praise and was even featured on Saudi currency and stamps. U.S. forces stayed at the airfield until 1962 when Saudi Arabia chose not to renew the lease. The airport operated until King Fahd International Airport opened in 1999, after which it became a military airbase, now known as King Abdul Aziz Airbase. The airfield's changes over the years highlighted the close relationship and cultural exchange between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. (Herring).

2. Desert Storm Operation

Operation Desert Storm was the first big crisis for the United States after the Cold War. On August 2, 1990, Saddam Hussein led the Iraqi army into Kuwait, which was a major oil supplier to the U.S. The U.S. had given Iraq military aid during its war with Iran, making Iraq's army the fourth largest in the world. This posed a threat to Saudi Arabia, another big oil exporter. If Iraq took over Saudi Arabia, it would control one-fifth of the world's oil. The Iraqi leader also broke many United Nations rules, so the U.S. had U.N. support to respond to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait (Collins).

More than 500,000 American troops were sent to Saudi Arabia as part of Operation Desert Shield to protect against an Iraqi attack. On January 17, 1991, Desert Shield became Operation Desert Storm after diplomacy failed. This became the largest air campaign since the Vietnam War. The U.S. and 40 allied nations, including some Arab countries, flew over 18,000 air missions, more than 116,000 combat sorties, and dropped 88,500 tons of bombs (Collins). After six weeks of air attacks, the ground war lasted only 100 hours before Kuwait was freed. Iraq tried to break the coalition by launching missiles at "Israel", but "Israel" did not retaliate due to its partnership with the U.S. Desert Storm saw the first use of the Patriot missile system to intercept missiles and the first use of stealth and space systems in combat. About 697,000 U.S. troops were involved, with 299 losing their lives (Collins).

The United States and Saudi Arabia worked together during Operation Desert Storm to achieve a common goal, showing the strength of their partnership. Their cooperation was essential in responding to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, which threatened regional stability and global oil supplies. By working together, they showed how shared interests could lead to effective military and political action. Saudi bases, especially Dhahran Air Base, were crucial for supporting and launching air operations, showing how important Saudi Arabia was to the mission. This teamwork not only freed Kuwait but also highlighted the importance of U.S.-Saudi relations in keeping the Gulf region secure and stable.

3. Prince Sultan Air Base

Prince Sultan Air Base (PSAB), once called Al Kharj, was picked by the U.S. Air Force because it was in a good spot southeast of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. They had help from Rapid Engineer Deployable, Heavy Operational Repair Squadron, Engineer (RED HORSE), who was the first of the builders to step off the airplane at Prince Sultan. These civil engineering airmen (specialized units within the U.S. Air Force that focus on rapid construction and heavy engineering projects) and the 4th Civil Engineer Squadron (engineering unit within the U.S. Air Force that provides support in constructing, maintaining, and managing base infrastructure) to build it up (Gertz). In just two months, it went from a plain runway to a full base with tents, food places, hangars, a hospital, and more for nearly 5,000 Air Force folks. During the Gulf War, it was a busy place with lots of different planes, like C-130s, F-16s, and F-15s (Grant).

After the Gulf War, things slowed down at PSAB for five years. The 4404th Provisional Wing in Dhahran took over. But in 1996, after a terrorist attack at Khobar Towers, they changed plans and went back to PSAB to focus on Operation Southern Watch. Even though the base wasn't perfect at first, the USAF and Saudi Arabia worked together (Grant).

They made big improvements at the base, like building Tent City for people to live in and later finishing the Friendly Forces Housing Complex for better living. It was not easy at first, but they added fun stuff like rec areas and places to eat. By 1999, the whole base was huge and cost Saudi Arabia over \$1 billion. PSAB always kept its focus on its job, even though the facilities were simple. It played a big role in supporting air missions, especially during Operation Southern Watch (Grant).

During the 1991 Gulf War, Saudi officials requested U.S. troops to deploy to Saudi Arabia. These troops stayed to enforce a no-fly zone over southern Iraq as part of U.N. Security Council Resolution 688. After the Khobar Towers bombing in 1996, which killed 19 airmen and injured 400, Prince Sultan Air Base became the main spot for U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia. Aircraft from the base supervised the no-fly zone, and during Operation Iraqi Freedom, it hosted the Combined Air Operations Center and supported air refueling missions. During these years, the base housed about 5,000 troops and 200 aircraft during the operation (“Americans Officially End Era at PSAB”).

The base got bigger and more modern, with a new command and control center called the Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC). This center was key for coordinating air operations during Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. During Operation Iraqi Freedom, PSAB was crucial for combat operations and logistics. But because the base was getting too small and had some limitations, the USAF moved to Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar by summer 2003. Overall, Prince Sultan Air Base was very important for the USAF's work in the Middle East for over ten years before they moved to other places in the region (Grant).

Prince Sultan Air Base was crucial for the U.S. Air Force in the Middle East. It transformed rapidly to support important operations. Despite its limitations, PSAB played a vital role in U.S. military efforts until moved to Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar in 2003. This base

represented the strong cooperation between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia during a critical period. The collaboration at PSAB demonstrated the strategic importance of Saudi Arabia in U.S. military planning and highlighted the enduring partnership between the two nations.

3.1. U.S.-Saudi Joint Force at PSAB

This collaboration allows the 378th Expeditionary Security Force Squadron to use the firing range three days a week. Both services decided to work and train together, defending Prince Sultan Air Base as a team. “Our main range is multi-purpose and goes up to 100 meters,” said Tech. Sgt. Brady Craddock from the 378th ESFS. “We also have a machine gun range that goes up to 400 meters, where we can shoot from vehicles.” (qtd. in Tancer) Although the Air Force’s training manuals are based on the Army’s, there are differences in how they train. The Air Force focuses on things like reloads, transition drills, individual movements, and small team maneuvers.

The Army usually brings multiple teams to the range at once and focuses on basic skills first, then movement drills without live ammo. The current setup at the range helps both groups work on basics and movement together. “It’s important for Airmen and Soldiers to train the same way,” said Craddock. “That’s what we’ll need to do in a real fight.” (qtd. In Tancer), The Air Force and Army use the same weapons but with some differences, like the Air Force’s M18 handgun and the Army’s M17 handgun. They both use the same ammo, so shooting techniques are similar. “At the range, we help each other out,” Craddock declared, “If someone is having trouble, it does not matter if they’re Air Force or Army. We help them become better shooters” (qtd. In Tancer). Off the range, 378th ESFS Airmen and Soldiers from Task Force Americans work together to guard and patrol different areas at Prince Sultan Air Base.

“We have one mission, one fight, and one team” Craddock stated. “We work together as a Joint Force” (qtd. In Tancer). Even though Air Forces Central Command and U.S. Army

Central have different roles, they both support U.S. Central Command mission for regional stability. To do this, Soldiers and Airmen must regularly qualify on their weapons, which they do together at Prince Sultan Air Base.

4. Saudi Arabia's Stand in the U.S. Invasion of Iraq

The relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia has seen significant changes over the years, especially during times of conflict and crisis. From military cooperation to political tensions, these two nations had a complex partnership. This cooperation became particularly evident during and after the Gulf War, as well as in the 2003 invasion of Iraq War, marking the strategic importance of their alliance despite the challenges they faced.

When Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, the relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia became much closer. After a meeting between Saudi leaders and U.S. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney (who later became Vice President), Saudi Arabia, under strong U.S. pressure, invited American forces to use its land to push back the Iraqi occupation. As a result, about 700,000 U.S. troops went to Saudi Arabia. After the war, Saudi Arabia agreed to keep about 5,000 American troops in the country and allowed hundreds of U.S. warplanes and pilots to be based at Prince Sultan Air Base. This base also houses a high-tech command center covering the Middle East, the Gulf region, and Central Asia (Hamadouche and Zoubir 109-110). Additionally, U.S. and coalition aircraft conducted attacks, reconnaissance, and intelligence missions from three Saudi air bases, not just Prince Sultan Air Base, which is the only one U.S. officials have openly acknowledged. (“Saudi Arabia’s Help During War Was More Extensive”)

However, this close relationship went through times of tension. In 1995, a car bomb killed five U.S. military advisers in Riyadh. The following year, the Khobar Towers bombing killed 19 U.S. servicemen, made the U.S. military to move to a more remote location. There were some tensions between the two countries over the investigation of the bombing, but their

relationship stayed stable until the 9/11 attacks. Since the U.S. invasion of Iraq happened not long after 9/11, it raises questions about the Saudi-American relationship and whether the invasion of Iraq signaled a major change in their relation. It is interesting how these tragic events did not immediately destroy relations but instead led to adjustments in military strategy and location (Hamadouche and Zoubir 110). Despite these tragic events causing some strain, the U.S. and Saudi Arabia adjusted their military strategies rather than ending their alliance. This shows that their relationship is resilient and based on critical needs.

Shortly after 9/11, King Abdullah sent a letter to President George W. Bush, which was announced in Saudi Arabia. In the letter, the king stated, "A time comes when people and nations part. We are at crossroads. And it is time for the United States and Saudi Arabia to look for their separate interests" (qtd. In Hamadouche and Zoubir 118). King Abdullah's letter to President Bush at that time signals growing tensions and made clear that the once strong U.S.-Saudi relationship is failing. This message clearly showed that there were serious problems between the two countries and This shows that both nations need to rethink their partnership and possibly go their separate ways.

Saudi Arabia was the main staging area for American forces during the 1991 Gulf War. In a significant sign of continuous cooperation, Saudi officials quietly allowed American warplanes based in the kingdom to bomb targets in southern Iraq in response to Iraqi violations of the no-flight zone in October and November 2002. However, after the 9/11 attacks and due to bin Laden's popularity and his criticisms, the Saudi monarchy became less cooperative. The Saudi foreign minister, Prince Saud al-Faisal, rejected the idea of an American-led war against Iraq. He emphasized that Saudi Arabia would not participate in any American attack on Iraq. Regarding the possibility of allowing the U.S. to use Saudi territory for such an attack, he stated, "I never said that Saudi Arabia will agree on the use of its territories for attacking Iraq"(qtd. In Hamadouche and Zoubir 119), He added that even if the

UN Security Council issued a decision under Article 7 of the UN Charter, it would require cooperation but would not force any country to participate in the war or allow its airspace or land to be used. Here, apparently Saudi Arabia was trying to distance itself from being too closely associated with U.S. military actions.

Despite such statements, American commanders said they had received private assurances that they could lead an air war against Iraq from a command center at Prince Sultan Air Base. This was the same base from which the air campaign in Afghanistan had started after the 9/11 attacks. Saud al-Faisal's public declaration was seen as not credible, evidenced by the rapid preparation of a Qatari alternative. However, American commanders noted that relations with their Saudi military counterparts had not been seriously affected by the political tensions between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. As one American military official put it, "members of the Saudi Arabian military are our trusted friends and vice versa" (qtd. in Hamadouche and Zoubir 119). Despite political tensions and public declarations, the military cooperation between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia remained strong. It showed how deep and resilient the military ties were, which allowed them to continue working together even when the political landscape was challenging.

Saudi Arabia provided the U.S. with much more support than publicly acknowledged, allowing operations from at least three air bases and enabling special forces to launch attacks from Saudi soil. They also provided cheap fuel. The U.S. air campaign against Iraq was largely coordinated from Saudi Arabia, where military commanders managed an air command center and deployed refueling tankers, F-16 fighter jets, and intelligence flights. While ground attacks were mainly launched from Kuwait, thousands of special forces staged their operations into Iraq from within Saudi Arabia. During the height of the war, 250 to 300 Air Force planes, including AWACS, C-130s, refueling tankers, and F-16s, operated from Saudi

bases. Additionally, military operations were launched from Tabuk air base and Arar regional airport near the Iraq border (“Saudi Arabia’s Help During War Was More Extensive”).

Even though there were some problems, like bombings in Riyadh and the Khobar Towers, the U.S. and Saudi Arabia maintained their military partnership. After the 9/11 attacks, tensions rose, but Saudi Arabia still secretly helped the U.S. in its military operations in Iraq. Despite public disagreements, the strategic cooperation between the two countries remained strong. This ongoing partnership showed how critical Saudi Arabia was to U.S. military efforts in the region.

5. U.S. Forces Withdrawal from Saudi Arabia

Both the United States and Saudi Arabia had said before the Iraq War ended that it would be good for both if U.S. forces, mostly Air Force, left the country once Saddam Hussein was no longer a threat. Richard Murphy, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations and a former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, told The New York Times: "Our presence has become more of a burden than a benefit." The long U.S. presence made people resentful and angry at Saudi Arabia's rulers and increased Islamic extremism. One of the main complaints of Saudi-born Osama bin Laden was that U.S. troops, who he called "infidels," were in Saudi Arabia, which has Islam's two holiest sites, Mecca and Medina (Otterman) A senior defense official said the decision to leave Saudi Arabia was partly made to help reduce internal political pressure on the royal family (Loeb).

The decision to remove U.S. troops from Saudi Arabia was due to several reasons. Firstly, the presence of American forces caused resentment among Saudi people and Islamic extremism. Secondly, it put pressure on the Saudi royal family, making their rule more difficult. And thirdly, the end of the major combat operation in Iraq and Saddam Hussein's government means the American military mission is over. By moving the troops out, the U.S.

aimed to reduce these problems while maintaining strong military ties and operations in other nearby countries.

The United States military presence in Saudi Arabia was at its peak during the 1991 Gulf War, with around 550,000 coalition troops stationed in the Saudi desert. Their main tasks, working with the Saudi military, were to protect Saudi oil fields from Iraqi troops in Kuwait and to use Saudi land as a base to drive Saddam Hussein's forces out of Kuwait. U.S., Saudi, and other coalition air forces used Saudi bases for the air campaign against Iraq (Otterman)

President George H.W. Bush promised Saudi Arabia's King Fahd that the troops would leave once the mission was over. However, the mission to free Kuwait turned into a campaign to contain Saddam. About 5,000 U.S. combat troops and air crews stayed to enforce the southern Iraqi "no-fly" zone, where Iraqi aircraft were banned, and to help defend Saudi Arabia from at least seven Saudi military bases (Otterman)

After months of uncertainty before the war, the Saudi government allowed the U.S. to use some of its military facilities. The number of U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia doubled to 10,000, and coalition air attacks were coordinated by U.S. commanders at Prince Sultan Airbase, south of Riyadh, the capital. The Saudis allowed U.S. planes and missiles to fly over their territory and reportedly provided secret bases for U.S. Special Operations Forces to launch attacks into western Iraq. Additionally, Saudi Arabia used its large oil reserves to keep the global oil market stable during the war. This close cooperation was reported in the American press, but Saudi leaders, facing strong domestic opposition to the war, repeatedly denied that they were allowing attacks from Saudi soil (Otterman)

The withdrawal started when all operations at the high-tech command center used to oversee the air war over Iraq were moved to a similar facility at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar. By the end of the summer of 2003, all aircraft and nearly all military personnel will be out of

this base, although the infrastructure to reactivate the operations center will stay in place, according to Rear Adm. Dave Nichols, the air war's deputy commander. Additionally, two small training missions will remain in the kingdom (Loeb). The U.S. moved troops from Saudi Arabia to reduce local pressure on the Saudi royal family, while still maintaining strong military operations in nearby countries. This move highlights the need for strategic military flexibility and local cooperation to handle regional conflicts effectively.

6. Reasons of the U.S. Military Withdrawal from Saudi Arabia

The main problem was terrorism. Terrorists attacked U.S. soldiers in Saudi Arabia twice in the 1990s. In 1995, a car bomb in the capital, Riyadh, killed seven people, including five U.S. servicemen. In June 1996, a bomb exploded at a U.S. military residence called Khobar Towers near Dhahran, a major port on the Persian Gulf, killing 19 U.S. servicemen and wounding about 400 people. U.S. troops were then moved to an isolated base in the Saudi desert. Despite this, their presence remained a point of contention for domestic critics and caused political issues for Saudi leaders (Otterman).

Another problem was that the Saudis placed increasing restrictions on U.S. forces operating on their soil, limiting their ability to fly attack missions from Saudi airbases. Some U.S. officials suggested finding a "strategic alternative to Saudi Arabia;" in *The Washington Post*, a senior Saudi official responded that the United States had "overstayed its welcome". This shows that Saudi Arabia as host country, wanted to preserve its sovereignty and refused to maintain U.S. military bases or even launching air attacks from its airspace anymore, and the U.S. respected that (Otterman).

Saudi Arabia warned the U.S. about the dangers of invading Iraq in 2003, though it quietly allowed the U.S. to use its airspace for recovery missions and provided other facilities. The differences in religion, culture, and politics have caused ongoing tensions and misunderstandings between the two countries. Some Americans familiar with Saudi Arabia

appreciate its progress and have Saudi friends, but most Americans do not fully understand Saudi history and culture. Many Saudis have studied and lived in the U.S., but they also generally lack a deep understanding of American culture. The relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia is more about shared interests than mutual understanding (Cordesman).

The 2003 Iraq War caused so much instability that extremist groups like al-Qaida and later ISIS could flourish in neighboring countries like Iraq, Syria, and Yemen, posing bigger threats to Saudi Arabia. The war eliminated Iraq's role in balancing Iran's power just as Iran was becoming more influential. Third, the high costs of the war led to anti-war feelings in the U.S., which made Saudi Arabia doubt America's willingness and ability to intervene when needed. These events made Saudi Arabia feel more insecure, a feeling worsened by the Arab uprisings that overthrew long-standing rulers, including close Saudi allies (Telhami).

In conclusion, the establishment and evolution of King Abdul Aziz Airbase and Prince Sultan Airbase highlights the strategic importance of Saudi Arabia to the U.S. military operations. These bases have not only served as critical points for launching and supporting military actions but have also symbolized the strong military cooperation between Saudi Arabia and the United States. The Desert Storm Operation and Saudi Arabia's support during the U.S. invasion of Iraq further marked the kingdom's significant role in regional security.

The withdrawal of U.S. forces from Saudi Arabia came after the invasion of Iraq which made the kingdom suffer from opposition from the inside and the outside. This strategic withdrawal had several reasons behind it, including political, social, and cultural factors which left no chance for the U.S. military to stay in Saudi soil. The U.S. moved its forces to Qatar and this magnificent collaboration has come to its end.

Conclusion

This dissertation explores the evolving relationship between the United States and the Middle East, with a specific focus on the U.S. military presence and its alliance with Saudi Arabia since the early 19th century. By examining historical events such as World War II, the Cold War, and the Gulf War, it provides a deeper understanding of how these relationships have shaped the region's geopolitical landscape.

In the first chapter, the establishment of U.S. military bases in the Middle East was explored, tracing their origins from the beginning to significant developments during World War II, the Cold War, and beyond. The U.S. military involvement in the Middle East has significantly influenced the region's stability and American foreign policy. The Eisenhower and Carter Doctrines marked the strategic importance of the Middle East to the United States, with the Gulf War serving as a clear example of U.S. military intervention to protect its allies and interests in the region.

The second chapter focused on the political and economic relationship between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia, a partnership rooted in mutual interests, particularly oil. From the early diplomatic ties to the creation of ARAMCO and the impact of OPEC, the U.S.-Saudi relationship has been crucial in shaping global energy markets. The 1973 Oil Embargo, in which relationships were shaken, was followed by the Petrodollar Agreement, which strengthened this bond, leading to significant arms deals and economic agreements. Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 plan, supported by the U.S., indicates the ongoing evolution of this relationship.

In the third chapter, the dissertation examined the U.S.-Saudi alliance during conflicts. The establishment and evolution of military bases like King Abdul Aziz Airbase and Prince Sultan Air Base, as well as operations like Desert Shield and Desert Storm, highlight the strategic military cooperation between the two nations to safeguard the stability of the Middle

East. However, the U.S. military's eventual withdrawal from Saudi Arabia, influenced by both internal and external pressures, occurred after achieving their goals and maintaining order in the region.

In conclusion, this dissertation answered the thesis that although the U.S. military bases were important in securing American interests in the Middle East, they faced many challenges and regional opposition during their establishment. Through the research, we answered the main questions posed. First, we explored the historical factors that led to the creation and development of U.S. military bases in Saudi Arabia, influenced by key global events like World War II and the Cold War. Second, the impact of U.S. military forces on regional security was discussed, showing how their presence contributes to stability in the Middle East. Third, the research covered diplomatic, economic, and strategic considerations that shape the U.S.-Saudi military alliance, including oil security and mutual benefits. Fourth, we examined how the presence of U.S. military forces affects the security of oil, demonstrating how military protection ensures the continuous flow of oil. Finally, the study looked at how U.S. military bases coordinate with neighboring military installations to achieve regional security objectives.

This dissertation has shown that the U.S.-Saudi relationship is not fixed; it evolves with the changing global and regional landscape. While the military and economic aspects have been the foundation of this alliance, contemporary developments like Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 suggest the future of this relationship may shift toward broader economic collaborations. The study underscores the importance of understanding the historical context to appreciate the current and future path of U.S.-Middle East relations. Further studies could explore how emerging global challenges, such as energy transitions and regional conflicts, will impact this long-standing alliance.

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