

# RISING TIDES OF DIPLOMACY: EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL FOR A GULF MARITIME SECURITY ALLIANCE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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## Abstract

*This research investigates the intricate and historically disputed connection between Saudi Arabia and Iran, two prominent nations in the Middle East, and assesses the possibility of cooperation in marine security. This study employs the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) to examine the geopolitical consequences, impacts on pre-existing alliances, and reactions of other governments. This research emphasizes the importance of incorporating measures aimed at fostering mutual trust, including impartial mediation, diplomatic dialogue, and confidence-building initiatives. It also shows how important global cooperation and making agreements that can be enforced by the law are for encouraging positive cooperation. The possible establishment of a maritime security alliance between Saudi Arabia and Iran holds the potential to exert a substantial influence on regional stability, economic progress, and the global energy market. However, it is crucial to adeptly negotiate the risks and challenges presented by the geopolitical realities of the region.*

**Keywords:** Gulf-Maritime Security Cooperation, Geopolitics, Iran-Saudi Mediation, Regional Security Complex Theory, Middle East.

## Introduction

The protracted and intricate competition between Saudi Arabia and Iran has significantly influenced the political dynamics of the Middle East over an extended period. There has been hostility, indirect military conflict, and

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complicated diplomatic maneuvers between the parties. This is mostly because of differences in how people of different races, religions, political parties, and regions see themselves as superior. The ideological disparities between two prominent regional powers, namely Saudi Arabia's absolute monarchy and Iran's adherence to political Islam, have contributed to heightened tensions. Alongside religious disagreements, the protracted war under examination is situated within a broader historical framework encompassing factors like nationalism, political dynamics, economic competition, and regional power dynamics. The Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1979 witnessed Iran's aspiration to disseminate revolutionary ideologies beyond its national boundaries, which was perceived as a direct affront to the dominant position of Saudi Arabia. The nuclear program of Iran has resulted in heightened tensions, leading to expressions of concern by Saudi Arabia and other Western governments about Iran's aspirations in the nuclear realm.

The mechanics of this competition require a comprehensive comprehension of its historical context, encompassing the longstanding rivalry between the Arab and Persian civilizations that has spanned several centuries. The diplomatic ties between Iran and Saudi Arabia were predominantly cordial until 1979. However, a notable escalation in tensions occurred when Saudi Arabia aligned itself with Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war, a protracted conflict spanning from 1980 to 1988. Despite the diligent diplomatic endeavors undertaken within the framework of the Gulf Cooperation Council and through bilateral meetings, a complete resolution to the issue remains elusive. This article employs the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) as a conceptual framework to examine the prospects of maritime security cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Barry Buzan formulated the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) to analyze the impact of collective security identities and regional actors on security attitudes and behaviors. Using the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) as a framework, this study tries to figure out how the proposed collaboration might affect the region. The main goal of this study is to look at the complicated relationships

between power, the role of outside actors, and the wider geopolitical effects in a global setting.

This research investigates the developing connection between Saudi Arabia and Iran, focusing on the proposed collaboration in maritime security. This study scrutinizes the theoretical foundations of the aforementioned cooperation and assesses its ramifications for both regional and global security. Additionally, this approach takes into account the reactions of other nations and delineates a strategic framework for fostering a collaborative alliance that mutually benefits all involved entities. The possible development of a maritime security collaboration between Saudi Arabia and Iran can significantly impact the region's complex geopolitical environment. This alliance might contribute to enhanced stability, economic prosperity, and the promotion of peaceful relations within the region. However, the entity in question is faced with the complex task of navigating through a challenging landscape characterized by a history of deep-seated distrust, existing alliances, and the possibility of foreign intervention.

### **Historical Context of Iran-Saudi Rivalry**

Prominent regional players Saudi Arabia and Iran have a long history of tense relations, leading to a fierce competition for dominance that has significantly influenced the political dynamics of the Middle East over an extended period. Because of differences in race, religion, and politics, this relationship is very hostile. Often, proxy wars and diplomatic maneuvers make this relationship's hostile nature clear. The antagonism between Iran and Saudi Arabia is fueled by their divergent ideological positions. Iran's adherence to political Islam sharply contrasts with Saudi Arabia's system of absolute monarchy. The historical context of the ongoing conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia is characterized by its extensive duration and intricate nature. The complicated relationship between these two groups includes more than just religious disagreement. Various causes, including political dynamics, nationalist sentiments, regional power struggles, and economic disputes, contribute to the strained nature of the relationship. The occurrence of the

Islamic Revolution in 1979 brought about a significant upheaval in the history of Iran. Saudi Arabia exhibited significant apprehension regarding the aim of disseminating these transformative ideologies beyond its national boundaries. The Saudi Arabian monarchical rulers perceived this as a direct affront to their established power. The Iranian nuclear program has further intensified the conflict. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has conveyed its apprehension regarding Iran's potential acquisition of nuclear weapons, aligning itself with the stance of Western nations. Iran, on the other hand, has consistently defended its position and claimed that the only motivation behind its pursuit of nuclear capability is goodwill. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran, it is imperative to first take into account the historical context. Saudi Arabia and Iran, formerly referred to as Persia, have maintained distinct national identities for an extended period due to divergent sociocultural and geopolitical factors.

As a result, the competition between the Arab and Persian nations escalated. Pre-1979, the diplomatic ties between the two nations were generally characterized by a cordial and friendly atmosphere. Iran's Persian ancestry and the revolutionary ideology it upholds have fueled its regional aspirations. Saudi Arabia's position has been weakened due to its historical role as the guardian of two sacred mosques and the location where Islam originated (Harb, 2023). The Iran-Iraq conflict, spanning from 1980 to 1988, was a significant juncture in the diplomatic dynamics between Iran and Saudi Arabia. In the current era of political instability, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) has allied with Iraq, thereby exacerbating the existing tensions between the two nations and Iran. Iraq's military capabilities were reinforced by Saudi Arabia's provision of tanks, artillery, and other military hardware. Moreover, Saudi Arabia gave Iraq diplomatic support by providing support and condemnation of Iran's conduct on several international platforms, such as the Arab League (Riedel & Harvey, 2020). During the latter part of the 20th century and the early years of the 21st century, significant efforts were undertaken to mitigate this conflict using diplomatic initiatives aimed at

reinstating a state of normalcy in bilateral ties. These efforts encompass the promotion of diplomatic engagement and negotiation between KSA and Iran within the framework of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), with diplomatic meetings and high-level conversations. Intermittently, KSA and Iran have also participated in direct mutual negotiations. The central focus of these discussions typically pertains to the resolution of regional conflicts. Nevertheless, these deliberations have failed to produce a more all-encompassing solution to the persistent condition of conflict (Nawaz, 2023).

Moreover, the fleeting nature of peace became evident as the existing animosity between states was reignited through the United States' 2003 invasion of Iraq, accidentally granting Iran an increased influence in the dynamics of the area (Ilishiev, 2016). Following the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the KSA and Iran became embroiled in a contest for regional supremacy in Iraq and Lebanon through the utilization of proxy entities. The support that both administrations gave to various groupings and political organizations also contributed to the increase in general instability in these countries. The commencement of the Syrian Civil War in 2011 brought forth an additional level of intricacy to the preexisting undercurrents between KSA and Iran. While Iran supported President Bashar al-Assad's regime, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) offered assistance to various rebel groups. Lastly, Iran's nuclear ambitions made things worse because the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia saw Iran's efforts to get nuclear weapons as a sign of its desire to expand and a threat to the current order in the region.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) is commonly associated with Barry Buzan, a renowned scholar in the field of international affairs. The notion in question was introduced by Buzan and his colleagues, with particular emphasis on the contributions made by Ole Weaver within the context of their study in the field of security studies. The Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) is closely linked to the "Copenhagen School" within the realm of security studies. This particular theoretical framework has helped

us learn a lot more about the complicated dynamics of regional security, the importance of identities, and how regional players affect how people think about and act on security issues. The Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) holds substantial academic importance within the field of international relations due to its comprehensive analysis of security dynamics across different regions worldwide. The idea is grounded in several fundamental concepts, including the following:

The Regional Security Coordination Team (RSCT) proposes that the initiation of regional security assessments should take place at the regional level. The delineation of regions is contingent upon the geographical proximity of constituent entities and the existence of mutual security considerations (Buzan & Waever, 2009). A significant number of people hold the belief that the study of this specific subject matter is crucial for gaining a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies involved in government-to-government security relations. The Regional Security Cooperation Treaty (RSCT) places significant emphasis on the importance of interconnectedness and interconnection among nations within a specific geographical region in terms of security. This observation illustrates that the security policies and practices enacted by a particular state within a certain region exert a substantial influence on the attitudes and behaviors of neighboring states. The notion emphasizes the importance of shared security identities and standards in intricate geographical settings. In general, it is common for governments within a specific geographic area to possess similar political, cultural, and historical backgrounds that shape their collective sense of identity and understanding of security.

The collective identities held by states have a significant impact on their perceptions of both their security and that of other states. Regional security complexes, as acknowledged by the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT), have the potential to encompass intricate frameworks. Some places exhibit a distinct pattern of rivalry and competitiveness, whereas others demonstrate a tendency towards cooperative security behavior. The theory

enables the analysis of variations in security dynamics both within and among regions. The prevailing belief posits that the security of any state within a regional complex is primarily its responsibility (Buzan, 2003). Based on the Realist School of International Relations (RSCT), nation-states prioritize their security interests and undertake measures to ensure their survival. By emphasizing individual efforts for personal development, it distinguishes itself from theories that assume a greater degree of international collaboration. The Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) also takes into account the interplay between regional and global dimensions of security. Global powers possess the capacity to exert influence over regional security dynamics, whereas regional governments regularly engage in interactions with other entities. The aforementioned mode of interaction possesses the capacity to either enhance or undermine regional security frameworks.

The concept of Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) allows for the gradual development and transformation of security complexes across a given period. Regional security complexes have a dynamic and malleable nature due to foreign interventions, political tensions, and changes in security standards. The idea can be employed to examine the reasons for complicated changes in security. The Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) focuses primarily on the security policies and activities of the nations that make up a certain regional complex. This study explores how states perceive and respond to threats, form coalitions, engage in warfare, and cooperate to handle matters of security. The prioritization of practices enhances the understanding of the tangible outcomes resulting from security dynamics (Legrenzi & Lawson, 2018). The proposed Iran-Saudi Maritime Security Cooperation and what it might mean for the Middle East can be looked at through the lens of the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT). This theoretical framework allows for the identification of several significant characteristics. The geographical area being examined is the Middle East, characterized by a multifaceted geopolitical terrain. Long-running conflicts and significant

security concerns are what set the region, which includes many countries like Saudi Arabia and Iran, apart.

Saudi Arabia and Iran, the primary actors in this endeavor, have maintained entrenched security perspectives and risk evaluations towards each other over an extended period. The region's security dynamics have become more complex due to the intensification of rivalries and complications arising from political, religious, and ideological divisions. According to the Realist School of International Relations (RSCT), there is a strong link between how different states see security and the chance that another state will worry about the security of another state. The Iran-Saudi Maritime Security Cooperation initiative aims to modify the existing dynamics of regional security. The probability of security views transitioning from rivalry to cooperation, particularly in the marine sector, is heightened. The Regional Security Cooperation Theory (RSCT) can be used to figure out how the proposed partnership will affect how people in the region think about security and how well it will help build a stronger security framework. The RSCT additionally recommends the implementation of a historical context study. This paper examines the enduring rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran, which has exerted a significant impact on the political dynamics of the Middle East (Jarzabek, 2018). The RSCT framework places significant emphasis on the influence of historical factors on contemporary security dynamics.

The Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) recognizes the importance of external players within the regional complex. The text references China, Israel, and the United States as prominent external actors. According to the theoretical framework, these foreign actors' actions and engagement could have an impact on how countries perceive their security and interact with one another within the regional complex. The Regional Security Cooperation Tool (RSCT) can be utilized to assess the probability of inciting rivalry and competitiveness in the Middle East as a result of this suggestion. The acknowledgment is made that there is potential for other global and



regional powers, such as the United States and Israel, to respond with retaliatory actions if they see a threat to their interests arising from the collaboration between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) promotes an analysis of the potential impact that the proposed collaboration may have on regional security dynamics. This statement underscores the potential impacts on power dynamics, the influence of foreign factors, and the broader security landscape in the Middle East. The Regional Security Complex Theory helps us understand how the planned cooperation between Iran and Saudi Arabia on maritime security fits into the complex security situation in the Middle East (Tapan, 2021). The statement not only talks about how different security views affect each other and how competition could turn into cooperation, but it also acknowledges how important historical events and outside players are in shaping the way security works in the region.

### **The Prospects of the Iran-Saudi Alliance**

The practicality of the suggested cooperation between Iran and the KSA is a significant problem due to the enduring distrust and intense rivalry that has characterized their relationship. When put together with different religious groups and government systems, the above issues make it very hard to carry out the collaborative project successfully. Still, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is undergoing significant social and economic changes as outlined in its Vision 2030 initiative. Additionally, Iran is eager to build relationships with other countries, which suggests that their tense bilateral relations may gradually get better. Considerable progress has been achieved in efforts to reconcile this division, as evidenced by the Saudi-Iran détente, which represents a noteworthy turning point in the political trajectory of the Middle East. The continuous process of thawing has resulted in favorable circumstances for the prospective resolution of conflicts and improved opportunities for collaboration in a region that has historically been burdened by persistent challenges. (Abed, 2023).

A delegation from Saudi Arabia recently visited Yemen on a diplomatic mission. The Arab League also gave its approval for Syria to start up again. These events suggest that the focus may shift from military action to building a comprehensive security framework that covers the whole region. The restoration of diplomatic relations and shared dedication to enhancing maritime security in the Gulf region laid the groundwork for a revitalized alliance between Iran and Saudi Arabia. The prospective collaboration between Saudi Arabia and Iran in the realm of maritime security carries enormous implications for the region and beyond, while also giving rise to notable apprehensions regarding the dynamics of global security. The Strait of Hormuz serves as a crucial channel for global petroleum trade and represents a notable maritime bottleneck within the Persian Gulf region. (Anwar, 2023). The establishment of a security alliance between Iran and Saudi Arabia has the potential to significantly impact the dynamics of the international energy market, hence generating far-reaching ramifications for global economies.

The potential significance of this defense alliance extends beyond mere economic reasons. It is interesting to think about how working together could change the balance of power in global politics and make it easier to move toward a multipolar world order. In the given scenario, instead of a limited number of dominant global powers exerting control over the international arena, multiple states would possess substantial influence. This could encourage other areas to work together on regional security in similar ways since it encourages a more regional and collaborative strategy for solving security issues and reduces the reliance on outside forces for regional safety. The aforementioned shift possesses the capacity to significantly modify the worldwide geopolitical landscape. The suggested collaboration presents a persuasive prospect for potentially augmenting regional stability. The Middle East, specifically the Persian Gulf region, has a lengthy history of violence due to a combination of internal and external factors. The prospective establishment of a security alliance between Iran and Saudi Arabia, two prominent regional countries, has the potential to usher in an age characterized

by unparalleled tranquility and stability. This potential outcome may lead to a departure from the enduring and intermittent cycle of conflicts that have characterized the historical trajectory of the region (Jazeera, 2023).

The establishment of this cooperative coalition can facilitate the resolution of disputes and prevent the escalation of conflicts into large-scale warfare. Nevertheless, this hopeful scenario must not overlook the inherent hazards involved. The historical conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia is a significant factor that should not be disregarded. The protracted period of hostilities, stemming from divergent political, religious, and intellectual perspectives, has significantly exacerbated the mutual lack of confidence and enmity between these nations. Hence, the suggested coalition harbors inherent risks, as even a slight provocation can escalate the situation, resulting in increased levels of violence. The assessment of this partnership by other regional countries, notably Israel and Turkey, is an additional essential aspect to take into account. If these states were to regard the cooperation between Iran and Saudi Arabia as a danger, they may potentially respond by implementing countermeasures, such as enhancing their military readiness or establishing counterbalances (Lyer, 2023). The emergence of a possible escalation in regional strife is a matter of immediate worry. This has the potential to exacerbate the already precarious security situation in the Middle East, bringing it closer to the brink of conflict.

Written records show that Iran has consistently refused to grant any regional power the authority to change the dynamics of the Persian Gulf. On the other hand, Iran views itself as a significant participant and actively strives to create and maintain power and influence in its immediate geographical area. The academic discourse has predominantly focused on the geopolitical implications associated with the control of crucial maritime passages, including the Bab el-Mandeb and the Strait of Hormuz. Notwithstanding this, it is imperative to assess the extent to which the mechanisms employed for control possess the capacity to induce coercion (Koelbl, 2023). The consensus is that control, in and of itself, does not hinder economic advancement.

However, utilizing control as a geopolitical tool has the potential to lead to severe consequences for promoting global trade, economies, and the preservation of peace and security. This highlights the crucial importance of utilizing dispute resolution processes and regional diplomacy as proactive measures to prevent such disastrous occurrences.

Moreover, the establishment of an alliance has the potential to significantly alter the power dynamics in the region, leading to consequential effects that may compel regional and global powers to reassess their strategic approaches. The potential consequences of such a reconfiguration can extend well beyond the geographical boundaries of the Middle East region. Changes in alliances, the start of arms races, and the stirring up of hostilities are just some of the possible outcomes that could make the region even less stable. Because of this, it is important to be careful when trying to build such a coalition, taking into account all the different effects it could have.

There are signs of progress, but it is still not clear if the Gulf Maritime Security Alliance, which is based on the détente between Saudi Arabia and Iran, can be set up and last for a long time. This is because there is already a mini-lateral alliance called "I2U2." Iran has continually maintained antagonistic relations with both the United States and Israel since 1979. The aforementioned scenario can engender the view of a newly formed coalition as displaying aggression, presenting further obstacles in the endeavor to seek diplomatic resolutions. Furthermore, the UAE occupies a significant position as a member of the I2U2 and assumes a large role within the Gulf area. Following the signing of the Abrahamic Accords, the UAE forged strategic relationships with both the United States and Israel. Therefore, the UAE's participation in the proposed maritime alliance might be called into question because it could put a strain on diplomatic ties. This is because joining a different coalition that is against the I2U2's goals could have bad results.

Additionally, China's role as a peace mediator and the Gulf States' apparent favoritism of Beijing are factors that support its potential participation in the proposed maritime alliance. There is a chance that the

current situation will lead to a conflict in the Middle East between China and the US. This might make the Gulf Maritime Security Alliance and the I2U2 rivals. The complex and ever-evolving competition between the United States and China in the Middle East holds considerable implications for both local and international security. Both countries have significant economic interests in the Middle East, particularly in its plentiful hydrocarbon deposits. The United States seeks to maintain its geopolitical dominance in the Middle East, a region where China plays a substantial role as a consumer of crude oil imports. The US's desire to safeguard its energy interests in the region and protect its friends is what drives this goal. So, the Gulf Maritime Security Alliance's future success will depend on how well it can handle the complicated dynamics of the rivalry between China and the United States. The organization can improve its standing in the area if it can skillfully balance the different interests of its members while also encouraging other groups, like China, to work together on economic issues. The establishment of a novel alliance can exert an impact on regional dynamics through the attraction of supplementary participants and the potential reduction of reliance on existing coalitions such as I2U2.

### **Geopolitical Implications of the Iran-KSA Maritime Security Alliance in the Middle East**

The potential geopolitical ramifications of such collaboration might be extensive. From an economic point of view, sharing security responsibilities should lead to lower military spending, which will allow resources to be used in a way that helps both countries. Moreover, the establishment of more secure maritime routes has the potential to enhance commercial activities and strengthen the economies of the respective regions. The potential establishment of fruitful cooperation between Iran and Saudi Arabia may indicate the initiation of a new era of diplomatic relations within this particular region. Consequently, this might potentially facilitate the establishment of additional regional collaborations, mitigate sectarian tensions, and potentially facilitate the progression toward peace in the conflict-ridden

territories of Yemen and Syria. As a matter of security, you might want to think about creating a maritime alliance that works together to make it safer for ships to pass through, fight piracy, and act as a strong deterrent against possible armed extortions in the Strait of Hormuz. This might potentially reduce the influence of external forces that frequently complicate the geopolitical dynamics of the region. From an economic standpoint, there exists a promising possibility of mutual benefit for both nations involved. Through the collective assumption of responsibility for maritime security, nations have the opportunity to redirect the financial resources previously allocated to military expenditures toward fostering domestic prosperity and development (Ward, 2023).

This phenomenon has the potential to catalyze fostering diplomatic conversations, potentially leading to improved relations within the region. The existing friendliness between the KSA and Iran carries a significant symbolic value, as it promotes the idea of togetherness amidst differences, which can alleviate sectarian tensions. Iran cannot reasonably desire to be a part of a naval security alliance that is meant to guard waters that are known to be unstable, according to Commander Tim Hawkins, the spokesman for the US Fifth Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces. (Helou, 2023). Hawkins underscored the need for proactive steps by articulating the goal of bolstering defense capabilities in cooperation with regional allies in the locality of the Strait of Hormuz. The UAE has refrained from issuing an official statement; nevertheless, it has declared its decision to discontinue its involvement in operations conducted by a task force led by the United States. This task force is responsible for safeguarding shipping activities in the Gulf region, which has experienced a resurgence in incidents involving the seizure of tankers by Iranian naval forces in recent weeks. There exists a notable deficit in confidence between Iran and the UAE about the territorial clash over the islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb. Nevertheless, it is plausible to anticipate that the UAE may eventually demonstrate a willingness to participate in a coalition on this matter. The Iranian government perceives

the involvement of Israel in a maritime alliance in the Gulf as a significant and explicit endangerment to its national security.

Israel has traditionally regarded Iran's nuclear program and its backing of militant groups in the Middle East, such as Hezbollah, as a significant regional competitor and a potential threat to its security (Barrington,2023). Moreover, Israel has expressed apprehension regarding Iran's escalating regional influence. The potential establishment of a marine security alliance in the Gulf by Iran is expected to attract significant attention from Israel, given its potential implications for regional security dynamics. India's stake in the security and stability of the Gulf stems from its dependence on the region for energy supplies and the substantial presence of its expatriate community in Gulf countries. Nevertheless, there is a dearth of official statistical data about India's endorsement of this particular trend. Indian authorities are expected to diligently observe any advancements in a security alliance in the Gulf area and evaluate the possible implications on India's regional interests. Current maritime security arrangements, such as Combined Task Force 150, function under the guidance of external actors, with the United States being the primary leader. A potentially effective approach would be the establishment of an indigenous framework, spearheaded by Iran and the KSA, which may potentially generate greater local support and enhance its validity among regional players.

CTF 150 was formed to carry out anti-terror and maritime security operations in the Indian Ocean, the Gulf of Aden, the North Arabian Sea, and the Gulf of Oman. The topic of discussion pertained to a collaborative international effort, led by many nations, including the United States, aimed at safeguarding marine security and eradicating unlawful acts such as piracy and terrorism along crucial trade routes. The CTF 150 utilizes proactive strategies to hinder and discourage terrorist groups from engaging in illegal activities at sea. To reach this goal, surveillance measures must be put in place, and ships that are thought to be transporting illegal goods or giving money to terrorist

groups must be stopped. The primary purpose of CTF 150 is to augment maritime security within a strategically crucial zone of global commerce. Through the implementation of maritime patrols, the organization effectively mitigates and eliminates many perils, such as human trafficking, piracy, and smuggling. These acts have the potential to disrupt established economic channels and inflict harm on the global economy. The major purpose of CTF 150 is to facilitate economic development, foster regional collaboration, and encourage unhindered commerce in products and energy resources. The application of security regulations and procedures achieves the maintenance of stability in the designated territory. CTF 150 conducts uninterrupted maritime surveillance operations within the defined boundaries of its approved operational region. As part of the aforementioned investigations, vessels undergo a thorough examination before embarkation to verify the adherence of their cargo to international laws (US, 2022).

CTF 150 demonstrates a steadfast commitment to achieving its primary goal of countering acts of piracy. Furthermore, it routinely participates in collaborative initiatives to improve the operational capacities of regional fleets and organizations responsible for sea law enforcement. The enhancement of regional forces' capacity to address a wide range of maritime security concerns necessitates the promotion of training initiatives and the facilitation of information exchange. CTF 150 frequently participates in collaborative operations alongside additional Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) task forces. CTF 152 prioritizes the augmentation of maritime security in the Arabian Gulf, while CTF 151 primarily focuses on the prevention of piracy. Using a collaborative methodology, a comprehensive strategy is formulated to uphold maritime security within the given zone. (Eckstein, 2022). The non-regional scope of CTF 150, coupled with the participation of the United States, gives rise to an inescapable sense of Iranian mistrust and dread. In addition, CTF 150 is also designed to enhance the security of the Gulf countries in response to the perceived danger posed by Iran while simultaneously protecting the interests of the United States. Once the Gulf



Maritime Alliance is established, it is anticipated that the perceived threat to the Gulf states may be mitigated. Likewise, using an indigenous framework may engender greater acceptance and validity. Additionally, the legislation would serve as a means of conveying the notion of self-sufficiency, emphasizing the ability of local entities to uphold their security.

### **Conclusion and Way Forward**

The enduring impact of the Saudi Arabia-Iran rivalry on Middle Eastern politics can be attributed to a multifaceted interplay of regional, political, religious, and historical factors. Despite the extensive history of struggle and enmity between these two nations, there remains a glimmer of hope for future collaboration in the realm of the maritime security alliance, thanks to recent advances and evolving dynamics. The Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) was used as a framework for this study to explain the possible pros and cons of working together on this project. Using the RSCT made it easier for us to look at how the effects affected regional dynamics, how outside groups were involved, and how the effects might affect global geopolitics. The potential for collaboration between Saudi Arabia and Iran in the domain of marine security is substantial. From an economic standpoint, the potential outcome could entail enhanced resource allocation efficiency, yielding advantages for both states and fostering regional peace and security. This project has the potential to serve as a paradigm for other regions, bolstering regional security strategies and reducing dependence on external actors.

However, other challenges impede the potential for collaboration, encompassing historical grievances, existing alliances, and the potential for external interference. Doing things that motivate people, having diplomatic conversations, and using fair mediation methods are all things that will be needed to reach the goal. Having international support, making legally binding agreements, and putting in place clear punishments for not following through will all boost the alliance's credibility. The responses of several governments, including but not limited to the United States, the United Arab Emirates,

Israel, and India, will have an impact on the project's future trajectory. In the intricate confrontation between China and the United States, it is imperative to exercise restraint over these responses and achieve equilibrium. The proposed maritime security partnership between Saudi Arabia and Iran presents a unique and significant chance to reshape the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East. This phenomenon has the potential to indicate a period characterized by heightened levels of tranquility, stability, and economic advancement within the geographical area. Despite this, there are still more problems that need to be solved, which require smart handling of past wrongs, present alliances, and outside factors. If all stakeholders demonstrate unwavering dedication to the achievement of this endeavor, it has the potential to serve as a pivotal factor in fostering enhanced prosperity and security within the Middle East region.

The establishment of cooperation between Iran and Saudi Arabia is crucial to addressing and alleviating the prevailing mutual mistrust between the two nations. Implementing confidence-building measures, facilitating prisoner exchanges, and reducing proxy wars can all help achieve the aforementioned goals. The possibility of beneficial results exists when neutral nations become involved in the mediation process early. The building of confidence is crucial for the success of this collaborative endeavor. Methods for bolstering self-confidence encompass participating in collaborative economic endeavors and advocating for artistic and cultural pursuits, all of which possess the capacity to cultivate more robust interpersonal relationships. The creation of explicit, legally binding agreements that lay out the repercussions of disobedience can help to mitigate such risks. These activities include breaching collaboration agreements or undermining external projects. Third parties can act as guarantors for the agreement. The attainment of this purpose can be accomplished by establishing an institutional structure that ensures the legitimacy of these agreements or by seeking the assistance of a third party to act as a guarantor.

International cooperation can be greatly improved by giving people a neutral place to talk, helping them come to agreements, and giving them

support from the surrounding community. It is of utmost importance to prioritize the preservation of the sovereignty of the regional framework and to refrain from engaging in any unjustified intervention. Due to its large size and widespread influence around the world, the United Nations has the power to potentially support and protect this agreement, giving it the important element of legitimacy it needs. The proficient administration of the collaborative efforts between Saudi Arabia and Iran has the potential to bring about substantial changes in the geopolitical landscape of the Middle East, ultimately resulting in improved stability and prosperity within the area.

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