

"Entwined Futures: Analyzing The Evolution Of US-Saudi Relations In The Context Of Deepening Saudi-Iranian Connections Within The Framework Of Chinese Involvement"

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to determine the future of American-Saudi relations in light of the expanding Saudi-Iranian relationship under China's supervision. It explored Saudi Arabia's course toward cooperation and reconciliation with Iran, which was facilitated by China, as well as the role of the Arab Gulf. The purpose of the study was to explicate the potential outcomes of reconciliation in terms of political stability in the Middle East and mutual benefits for both parties. The study utilized a historical approach to trace the evolution of Iran's and Saudi Arabia's rivalry throughout history. It utilized historical sources and data to emphasize the intensity of competition between the two parties throughout time. In addition, a descriptive-analytical approach was used to analyze the evolution of Saudi-Iranian relations under China's auspices. The study produced a set of findings and recommendations. It confirmed conclusively that the Saudi-Iranian rapprochement substantially contributes to the achievement of security and stability in the Middle East region. This serves to reduce conflicts and rivalries between the parties.

Keywords: Entwined Futures, US-Saudi Relations, Saudi-Iranian Connections, Chinese Involvement, Political Stability.

Introduction

The changing Saudi-Iranian relations under the influence of China present an opportunity for increased regional cooperation and, potentially, a diminution of Western influence, particularly the United States' involvement in complex Middle Eastern issues. China's involvement in Saudi-Iranian reconciliation could

foster a state of détente as these two major Middle Eastern competitors enter a new phase of cooperation and integration. This transition could pave the way for cooperatively addressing longstanding security, economic, and political issues.

Under China's guidance, Saudi Arabia and Iran share a desire for reconciliation, seeking to identify common interests in the Middle East. This aspiration aims to transition to a phase of cooperation and integration, which could facilitate the resolution of entrenched problems in countries such as Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, and Iraq. These reconciliation efforts seek to eliminate the illusion of sectarian conflict between the two parties.

During the tripartite summit between China, Iran, and Saudi Arabia on March 10, 2023, at the level of foreign ministers, the process of reconciliation became evident. During this summit, the decision was made to restore diplomatic ties and reopen embassies. In addition, discussions centered on previously signed agreements covering economic, commercial, cultural, athletic, and student cooperation. Influenced by China, this shift toward rapprochement has the potential to reshape aspects of the international system.

Examining the future of US-Saudi relations against the backdrop of expanding Saudi-Iranian ties facilitated by China is the stated objective of this study. Due to China's growing presence in the Middle East, the region may become a market for Chinese industries while also contributing to political stability, especially in the wake of the Arab Spring uprisings of 2011. On the security front, rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iran could help defuse conflicts such as Iran's support for the Houthis. This convergence could also alter the dynamics of conflict and cooperation between Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United States.

Significance of study:

The scientific significance:

The scientific significance of study rises for what the study forms it of benefit for national libraries, specialists, and the Jordanian and Arabic libraries about the future of the American Saudi relations in the shadow of growing of the Saudi-Iranian relations under auspices of China, and asserting the new role of China in the Middle East in the specialty of enhancing relations between both traditional competitors: Saudi and Iran.

The practical significance:

The practical significance emerges in explaining the significance of the future of US-Saudi relations in light of the growing Saudi-Iranian relations under auspices of China by studying China's new directions towards the Middle East within the framework of achieving stability that contributes to making the Middle East a consumption market for the Chinese industry.

Study objectives:

The study searched for achieving the following objectives:

1. Showing the future of the Saudi-American relations.
2. Growing of the Saudi- Iranian relations under the auspices of China.
3. Challenges that face reconciliation between Iran and the Saudi Arabia Kingdom.

The study questions:

The study searched to answer the following questions:

1. What is the future of the Saudi – American relations?
2. The how of growing the Iranian – Saudi relations under the auspices of China?
3. What are the challenges that face the reconciliation between Iraq and the Saudi Arabia Kingdom?

Methodology of study:

The study employed the historical method and it was employed to track the course of historical competitive relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia, and to address historical sources and information the two parties throughout history, and also the analytical descriptive method, which is considered a tool and way to analyze the growing of the Saudi-Iranian relations under auspices of China and analyzing the retreat of American sovereignty in the Middle East.

Terms of Study:

The Middle East: a geopolitical term its regions cover the great majority of regions covered by the definition of West Asia, and most of states of the Middle East are part of the Arab World, in addition to Iran and Turkey, and its interior covers ethnic groups the most prominent of them, the Kurds, Turks, Turk man, Persians, Azeri's Copts, Jews, Assyrians, and Greek Copts (Al-Afifi, 2012).

The regional competition: is a state of interaction among international units, and a state of competition emerges as a

result of states' search towards achieving their interests and targets due to available possibilities, and competition may turn into conflict (Al-Jbouri, 2019).

The first demand: future of the Saudi-American relations and their regional repercussions:

The United States connects with historical relations with Saudi Arabia lean on the mutual interests at the political, economic and security level, and both countries differ on a group of private files in the Middle East region, but the language of cooperation is the most prominent, for there are economic and security agreements shared in the consolidation of cooperation between the two sides, but what the world witnesses of diversion from the track of the international relations, because of war prevailing between Russia and Ukraine had made Saudi Arabia in a state of détente towards China. And the Chinese reconciliation had enhanced relations between Saudi Arabia and China (Al-Jbouri, 2022).

The first branch: The Saudi- Iranian competition:

Both Saudi Arabia and Iran maintain relations with the United States, but their interactions are based on their distinct objectives. However, this competition has exacerbated tensions in the Middle East, primarily due to Iran's expansionist ambitions. As a result, the region, including Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen, has experienced an increase in instability due to Iran's actions (Al-Smadi, 2023).

This competition extends to their perception of American influence in the Middle East, which has contributed to the intensification of antagonism, conflict, and divergence between the two countries. This antagonism stems from factors such as ethnic and religious distinctions, as well as the emergence of distinct political and economic loyalties. In addition, both nations compete for leadership in the Islamic world, which exacerbates their political and security disagreements (Abdo, 2016).

In the realm of Islamic religious rivalry, Iraq positions itself as a defender of Shiite Islam. It is home to prominent religious institutions, including the Qom Seminary and the Holy Najaf Seminary, both of which serve as intellectual centers for Shiite students worldwide (Saad, 2023).

Saudi Arabia, reinforced by the presence of the Grand Mosque in Mecca and the Prophet's Mosque, asserts its position as the center of the Sunni Islamic world. These sites attract

pilgrims from around the world and are fundamental to the Sunni religion (Asilan, 2023: 2).

Their political regime structures, however, display differences. Prior to the revolution, Iran was governed by a constitutional regime comprising distinct legislative, executive, and judicial branches. In contrast, the political structure of Saudi Arabia is an absolute monarchy in which the King has authority over all strategic decisions. While the Parliament is more consultative in nature, the King remains central to the executive authority, and the judicial system operates under the direct supervision of the King (Farah Al-Zaman, 2014: 2).

Economically, both countries compete, particularly in the hydrocarbon and gas industries. This rivalry over energy resources has shaped geoeconomic competition within the Islamic world. Moreover, Saudi Arabia views Iran's nuclear program as a serious strategic concern (Naji, 2023: 3).

The second branch: The Saudi and the United States relations:

Despite enduring differences over human rights and the Arab-Israeli conflict, the United States and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have developed a close alliance over the course of more than seven decades. As specified in the alliance document, the United States provided Saudi Arabia with security guarantees in exchange for access to the country's vast oil reserves. This arrangement has survived intermittent conflicts over the years. Recent shifts in the alliance's dynamics, such as the United States' diminishing reliance on Saudi oil and Saudi Arabia's diminished confidence in American protection, have revealed the possibility of alliance fractures (Lain, 2023).

1945 marked the first formal encounter between President Franklin D. Roosevelt and King Abd al-Aziz bin Saud. While they differed on a number of issues, including the United States' support for Israel's rise, they found common ground in establishing security arrangements in exchange for access to energy resources. The relationship was put to the test in 1973, when the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia led an Arab oil embargo against the United States and other countries in response to American support for Israel during the Arab-Israeli war. Following the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, relations between the United States and Saudi Arabia improved. In 1990, the United States intervened when Iraq invaded Kuwait, a concern to Saudi Arabia due to the proximity of the two countries (Muamer, 2022).

In 2001, the United States implicated Saudi citizens, including Osama bin Laden, in the planning of the September 11

attacks, reigniting tensions. In 2017, Saudi Arabia challenged the status quo by imposing a blockade on Qatar, despite the fact that the country harbors the largest American military base in the region. In addition, substantial civilian casualties have resulted from the ongoing bombing campaign in Yemen since 2015 (Al-Minshawji, 2023).

In response to the September 11 attacks, the US Congress passed the JASTA law, which allowed families of victims to file litigation against the Saudi government, thereby straining Saudi-American relations. In 2016, as a result of this development, King Salman convened a session of the Council of Ministers to discuss the evolving law and subsequently reached out to the American administration, emphasizing the need to maintain relations while respecting state sovereignty.

Furthermore, the occurrence of the assassination of Jamal Khashoggi in 2018, followed by the attribution of responsibility for his murder to Saudi operatives, intensified existing tensions, notably for Saudi Crown Prince Bin Salman. However, the dynamics were altered as a result of a shift in oil prices caused by the crisis between Russia and Ukraine in July 2022. In response to these transformative developments, President Biden undertook a diplomatic mission to Saudi Arabia, demonstrating a willingness to overcome past tensions (Al-Jazeera Center for Studies, 2023).

A conviction was born among the Saudis that the United States, despite the deep relations and alliance, could not be relied upon for protection, defense, and security, and the decline in the American role emerged after its withdrawal from Afghanistan in the year 2021, which hastened the fall of its government, and within the framework of friendship, the United States abandoned its ally, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in the protests that led to his downfall, and this is an indicator confirmed by the Saudis in stating the extent of the American retreat in the Middle East (Catherine, 3: 2021).

After Biden assumed the US Presidency in 2023, US lawmakers called for the revival of a bill called the "Oil production and Export Prohibition Acts" Known as NOPEC. That would authorize the US Department of Justice to file an antitrust lawsuit against OPEC, although it is unclear how. An American court may implement a decision against the cartel members. On the other hand, other law makers suggested reducing arms shipments to the Saudis. These two options contributed to the escalation of tensions between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States of America (Al-Bayari, 11: 2022).

The positive development of relations is fraught with a lot of anxiety and mistrust on the part of the Saudi side, which sees a complete American bias towards its internal interests at the expense of the stability of the countries of the region and their aspirations for development and security.

The stand of the United States from the agreement of reconciliation between Iran and Saudi Arabia, so at the political level, the United States of America announced its welcome with the project of reconciliation being shares in achieving political stability in the region, especially in Yemen. And calming tensions in the Eastern region, as US President Joe Biden's visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in July 2022 was shaped by the call for achieving stability and strengthening normalization relations between the countries of the region and Israel within the framework of the peace process in the Middle East (Hatoum, 2: 2023).

This is what is announced from the United States of America about the agreement of reconciliation, but the real thing differs completely, where the United States looks at the reconciliation as a dissolution of the partnership of Saudi Arabia and the United States, but it is getting out of the Saudi Arabia from the American cloak after the tension of relations between both sides, because of differences about human rights and oil production, in addition to anxiety caused by the growing of the Chinese Power in the Middle East and fearing of the United States from the Chinese existence that bothers in preventing arrival of Gulf oil provisions to it in case of conflict breaking and did not cover any sensitive security agreements (Patrisho, 2021: 2).

From other side Anna Jacobs, the greatest analyst in the international crises group, the Iranian- Saudi rapprochement with China does not form a threat to the interests of the United States, because it is with an economic nature, but the agreement may stir a case of tension if the matter concerned affecting the sensitive security issues, especially Saudi Arabia and the United States connect with relations concern nuclear energy and arms sales (Arab Journal, 2023: 3).

The second demand: growing of Iranian-Saudi relations under the auspices of China:

In a statement issued on March 10 of 2023 after seven years of severing the Saudi diplomatic relations with Iran, both regional powers agreed on a deal to restore relations. And negotiations concerning this deal witnessed ups and downs in the past two years, where the Iraqi, and Omani governments and recently the

Chinese government mediated in it. And finally talks continued and ended successfully, the matter that shed light on the mutual political will to resort to diplomatic means to address grievances (Jibril, 2: 2023).

The process of reconciliation appears to be a tactical reduction of escalation to serve the common interests of the parties and signatories to the agreement in the direction of achieving political, economic and security stability in the Middle East region, which contributes to the development of Saudi-Iranian relations in a way that transcends the elements of permanence and continuity. Mutual trust and paving the way for steps that support regional integration, and the Arab Gulf region may witness a state of transformation towards a peaceful and cooperative security system. It is a gradual process in which the Saudi-Iranian reconciliation is one of its inevitable stages. (Abdul Basir, 6: 2023) and it will always be present for the Saudis to achieve a balance through smart programs to produce weapons that are conduit for Iranian missile superiority and its progress in producing marches that have proven their existence and were used extensively by the Russians in their attacks against Ukraine in the war going on there.

The first section: the strategic perspective of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the context of reconciliation:

The Saudi Arabian Kingdom's inclination toward reconciliation suggests a possible transition from political and security rivalry to economic competition from a strategic standpoint. This change stems from the realization that political and security competition imposes significant costs on both sides (Kenneth, 202). As Kenneth (2022) emphasizes, this transformation suggests that Saudi Arabia could transition to economic competition through the reconciliation process.

The Saudi Arabian pursuit of reconciliation is motivated by the following factors. The diminishing significance of the United States in the Middle East has prompted Saudi Arabia to reevaluate its security calculations. Saudi Arabia has reevaluated its reliance on the United States in light of the relative decline of American involvement in the region and its strategic reorientation towards competition with China. Contributing to this transition were President Obama's 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran and his policy advocating for Iran and Saudi Arabia to find a way to coexist peacefully in the region. In addition, the absence of significant US intervention in response to the Houthis drone attack on Aramco energy facilities has undermined Saudi Arabia's faith in the United States' commitment to its security.

In light of these developments, Saudi Arabia has evaluated its strategic options, which could result in either a reduction of tensions with Iran or a strengthening of its existing security guarantees from the United States. The Kingdom intends to diversify its security strategies by leveraging the power competition among key global players (Nawar, 2023). As a result, Saudi Arabia has embarked on a path of de-escalation and diplomatic engagement with Iran. This strategy seeks to cultivate diplomatic opportunities in order to secure new political guarantees with greater influence over Tehran's conduct. In this regard, China emerges as a potential alternative to the United States (Moses, 2022).

Secondly: De-escalation: Saudi Arabia has no interests in any war in the Gulf region.

The failure of the US policy of pressure on Iran, Iran's policy of increasing uranium enrichment, and Israel's threats to bomb Iranian nuclear facilities have led to an unstable situation in the region, even on the brink of war. Therefore, Saudi Arabia does not want to be a party to this escalation that undermine its security and delays its social transformation. And the economist. On the other hand, the openness with Iran sends a clear message to the United States of America and Israel that the Kingdom is not ready to risk a direct war with its neighbor (Abdul Basir, 3 2023).

Thirdly: Security priorities and achieving stability in the region:

Saudi Arabia believes that Iranian support for the Houthi group in Yemen, Iranian interference in Iraq, and support for Hezbollah in Lebanon should not be among Iran's first security measures, because this behavior has led to a high level of escalation and a threat to security and stability in the region. Rather, the security priority is the existence of an alternative path that may contribute to the stability of the region in all Arab countries, especially Iraq, Yemen, Syria and Lebanon (Jabali, 11: 2023).

Fourthly: Vision 2030 and the Social and Economic Transformation on Program:

The priority of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the Social and Economic transformation program is highlighted in Vision 2030. Where the Kingdom sees that the opportunity of transformation to carryout the vision 2030 conditioned with stability in the region that demands performing natural relations with Iran. Therefore, the Saudi Arab Kingdom believes that any case of tension in the Gulf region and the Middle East, that will form an obstacle to social transformation,

and in order to achieve a state of stability, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has chosen a policy of strategic ambiguity towards Ukraine, which helped it protect its interests from the negative results of Russian- Western tensions (Vision 2030, 2023 website).

Fifthly: Preserving the interests:

Saudi Arabia has economic and strategic security interests with China, therefore the agreement with Iran under the auspices of China consolidates relations between both countries. And the most important of that, because China enjoys a political and economic sovereignty with Iran, therefore it makes Iran more inclined to fulfill its obligations in the agreement, in order not to negatively affect its ally's image, so the Saudi Arab Kingdom hopes the Chinese auspices of reconciliation to be more permanent (Al-A'qabawi, 2023: 3).

Sixthly: Achievement of stability in the Gulf and the Middle East:

Saudi Arabia believes that stability in the region has become an urgent case, on the contrary, competition and a high level of escalation will be an economic cost and a costly loss between the two parties. Great economy for the Kingdom, for example, but not limited to benefitting from the large Iranian market within the framework of improving relations between the two countries (Abul Basir, 2: 2030).

The vision of the Saudi Crown Prince 20-30 and the repercussions of the Yemen war and the failure to achieve it militarily, its high financial cost made the thinking mind in Saudi Arabia want to zero problems and strive towards cooperation and economic development, as economic growth in Saudi Arabia reached 8.7%, and this is a great indication of interest in economic aspects and spending billions in capital projects to attract investment, and improve its legal environment.

The Second Section: The strategic perspective of Iran in the framework of reconciliation:

The Iranian motivation for signing the agreement can be situated within a larger strategic framework aimed at distancing itself from Western influence. This framework incorporates two fundamental foreign policy strategies: "looking to the East" and "neighborhood policy." The former strategy entails the pursuit of stronger diplomatic and economic ties with China and Russia, whereas the latter strategy prioritizes cultivating robust relationships with Iran's fifteen neighbors as significant

economic and political partners (Ahmadian, 2021, p. 6). Consequently, the factors underlying the Islamic Republic's decision to enter into the agreement are complex and multifarious.

First: Internal turmoil in Iran:

Iran is facing unprecedented anti-government protests after the killing of the 22-year-old girl, Maha Amini, in police custody. The death of the girl formed public pressure in Iran, and the security establishment in Iran faced criticism from public opinion, and the main state-owned radio and television channels in Iraq lost their positions among the population. Rather, these dynamics and the balance between Riyadh and Tehran. Tehran was previously confident that its position was better because of its influence in Yemen, the dynamic protests after September 2022 revealed its vulnerability to the tools of Saudi influence. The new Saudi influence provided the Kingdom with a powerful bargaining tool for negotiating with Iran, so that if Iran reduces its support for the Houthis, Saudi Arabia will reduce its support for anti-Iranian propaganda (Al-Faqih, 2022: 3).

Following the death of 22-year-old Maha Amini while in police custody, the Islamic Republic of Iran is presently experiencing unprecedented anti-government protests. This incident has generated substantial public pressure against the Iranian government. The Iranian security establishment has been criticized by the public, resulting in a loss of credibility among the population for the principal state-owned radio and television channels. These factors affect the dynamics and equilibrium between Riyadh and Tehran.

Previously, Tehran's position was bolstered by its influence in Yemen. However, ongoing protests since September 2022 have revealed its susceptibility to Saudi influence techniques. This new Saudi influence has provided the Kingdom with a powerful bargaining tool in negotiations with Iran. As part of these negotiations, Saudi Arabia may propose reducing its support for anti-Iranian propaganda if Iran reduces its support for the Houthis.

Secondly: The nuclear issue and reduction of tensions:

Tehran considers that the agreement with Kingdom, of Saudi Arabia may help Iran to pursue its nuclear policy with more freedom after reducing the level of tension with Saudi Arabia, and this becomes a strategic principle of behavior in the Iranian security policy crises at the same time, so that there is no single reason for tension regarding the nuclear file. There is no sign

indicating a change in Tehran's nuclear policy. Therefore, Iran believes that through its agreement with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia it is to avoid facing a regional crisis in the Middle East within the framework of the Iranian tension of relations with the United States and Israel regarding the nuclear issue. Reconciliation may help Iran to take advantage of its rapprochement in the region to push for a better nuclear agreement with the United States, and may request Saudi Arabia's help in stooping its nuclear reactor (3: 2023, Ahmed).

Thirdly: The value of strategic reconciliation for Iran:

Reconciliation for Tehran has a strategic value in deterring the Saudi-Israeli Security cooperation in the future, inspite of the dimension of the Saudi-Israeli normalization, the possibility of security cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Israel may form a kind of threat in the Iranian perspective, and Iran believes that reconciliation and resorting relations with Saudi Arabia does not guarantee the prevention of Saudi- Israeli normalization due to the changing dynamics of regional relations. Therefore, Iran may use the principles of non-interference and respect for sovereignty with Saudi Arabia as a pretext to prevent the emergence of an anti-Iranian security alliance at the regional level, and Iran believes that it can add another layer of complexity to the situation. Israeli military plans successfully through reconciliation with Saudi Arabia (Abdul Basir, 4: 2023).

Fourthly: The détente in Saudi-Syrian relations: détente in Saudi- Syrian relations helps the Islamic Republic of Iran stabilize its gains across Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon. In these hotspots where Iran has the upper hand, easing the competition between Saudi Arabia and Iran can help pressure the status quo. The visit of the Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad to the Arab Emirates in March 2023, and his attendance at the Jeddah conference on May 19, 2023 constituted a conference for the restoration of Syria in its relationship with the Arab countries, and it will also open the door for Saudi Arabia to exercise its influence in the region, and Iran believes that this new dynamic will help stabilize its main regional partner on in addition, as was proven in the case of Iraq, where despite the American presence, Tehran has maintained its influence, the Iranians seen confident that Saudi Arabia's entry into Syria will not endanger their interests in a strategic way (Al-Mayadeen Newspaper, Net 2023: 5).

Fifthly: Growing of the Chinese existence in the region: Iran believes that the Chinese intervention in the security issues of

the Gulf as a stage of disarming America from the regional system. And believes that increasing the number of forms, parties and diplomatic initiative in the shadow of the United States absence will share finally in weakening the security structure led by the United States in the region. And believes that the Chinese existence in the region limits the intervention of the United States in the region (Gahwaji, 2023: 2).

Sixthly: War Techniques: Iran believes that its superiority in drones and high-tech missiles did not last forever. In light of the great development of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in its possession of missiles and drones with Chinese help, it is in the interest of Iran to reach an agreement with Saudi Arabia now before its comparative advantage ends. Cheap drones and low-cost missiles (Nadim, 4: 2022).

The policy of exporting the revolution brought troubles to Iran and losing the West's confidence in it and accusing it of destroying the Arab countries in which it has influence through sectarian racism, and this is what made the bloc of Iran's enemies grow little by little to the point of trying to explode the Iranian internal situation because of its preoccupation with outside. And ending the exclusivity of the United States by highlighting the role of China in the region.

The third demand: Challenges facing reconciliation between Iran and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Relations between Riyadh and Tehran in the past decades witnessed many political disputes, and religious classical ones. The securitization and militarization of relations has become the prevailing trend in this period (Al-Smadi, 2019: 4). The Saudi side Saudi Arabia will continue to improve its missile defense and anti-drone capabilities by working with China, the United States and other partners. It will also seek to acquire nuclear technical knowledges albeit for civilian use, and will do what it needs to strengthen its domestic military industries, which Iran may consider a threat to its security (Youssef, 203: 4).

Secondly: The Saudi openness with the Arab countries constitutes a threat to the influence of Iran: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will open up politically and economically to countries such as Syria, Yemen, Lebanon and Iraq because it believes that stability and security in the region can be strengthened through economic prosperity. Strong Saudi Arabia is with the United States for historical and security reasons (the United States remains the main military resource for Saudi

Arabia), and Iran may remain suspicious of the consequences of this (Anadolu Agency, 2023).

Thirdly: Iranian nuclear reactor: Given that Iran is a nuclear threshold state that is close to developing nuclear weapons if it wished that, and this is not of the interest of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, but its interest is in practicing some pressure on Iran to retreat from the nuclear agreement. And Iran may believe that this pressure contradicts with the spirit of the agreement. And this means that the Kingdom's fear from Iran's attaining nuclear weapons may force the Saudi Arab Kingdom on building its nuclear ability, and then any change in Iran's nuclear policy will contribute to its accounts, thus, the complex puzzle of the nuclear puzzle between the United States, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Israel will remain in place (Ross, 3: 2022).

Fourthly: Iranian intervention in Yemen: Despite the reconciliation between the two parties, Iran believes that its support will continue in Yemen, given that there are external threats represented by Israel and the United States in the region, so Iran will remain supportive of the Houthis with new and advanced offensive weapons systems, and it is unlikely that the Policy of supporting the Iranian-backed axis of resistance will change as a pillar to deter the country in the region as long as its army has conventional alternatives limited in the shadows of the American – Israeli threat that has not changed. This means that Tehran will continue the policy of qualitative improvement of the axis of the operational capacity of the resistance, including through horizontal operational links between the Shite groups and raising their inerrability capabilities (Al-Deeb, 3: 2023).

Therefore, the complications in Yemen will continue. Because Iran views Yemen as a strategic corridor that guarantees operational access to Saudi Arabia during a hypothetical conflict. Iranian influence in Yemen is seen as a decisive asset in imposing a logistical burden on the Saudis and maintaining deterrence against the Kingdom. Iran has worked to strengthen its bases Military near the Gulf Coasts to increase its ability to confront the coastal Arab States.

It is difficult to imagine changing such long-term military planning if reconciliation remains limited to restoring diplomatic relations only. Thus, it is likely that Saudi arms purchases will continue to thwart the perceived Iranian threat (Al-Smadi, 2022: 3).

Fifthly: effects of internal public opinion on reconciliation: domestic reactions are shaping up in Iran. The hard-liners in both countries have contributed to some degree of demonizing the other side. While on the Saudi side, Skeptical voices in Iran can still influence policies and raise doubts about the usefulness of reconciliation, and it is not unlikely that they will make competition in the elections. The upcoming presidency in Iran, the escalation of tensions with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, is beneficial to some opposition factions (The Eight Day Foundation for Media and Studies, 11: 2023).

Sixthly: effects of external public opinion on reconciliation: the influence of external public opinion emerges from Israel's concern and the emergence of sharp criticism within the Israeli government. Opposition leader Yanir Lapid, who described the reconciliation between Iran and Saudi Arabia, expressed that it "constitutes a threat to the directions of Israeli foreign policy" in the Middle East because it constitutes a blow to Israeli relations with Arab countries, especially Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain. At the same time, Israel is looking for ways to disrupt the Arab-Iranian reconciliation to avoid further regional pressure. Israel believes that it moves towards the elements of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard in Syria may lead to an escalation of tensions and endanger reconciliation of Iran decides to respond (Saleh, 3: 2023).

Seventhly: Security problems between the two parties: Reconciliation sponsored by China cannot be achieved unless the two sides reach of solution to the closed security problems between them. Therefore, the two countries need to negotiate and resolve their differences over Yemen, Iraq, Lebanon and Syria. The first step to making reconciliation permanent is for policy makers on both sides to acknowledge the challenges and spoilers that could threaten to undermine the benefits of the reconciliation agreement. And work to expand the different levels of communication at the ministerial, parliamentary, governmental and non-governmental organizations and interpersonal levels that would help in overcoming these challenges (Al-Shami, 2023: 6).

Eighthly: Military and security concerns: Military and security concerns will remain the most serious concerns for both sides, and the two sides should continue and prioritize intensive security talks. Thus, the two sides need to match the dialogue on their basic threat perceptions and help each other better

understand each side's security grievances. On the one hand, the US sanctions against Iran will prevent economic integration between the two rival countries. And Saudi Arabia and Iran can work together in aspects that are less subject to sanctions than economic cooperation, and in areas such as maritime security, climate change, and renewable energy, and coordinate better regarding their political energy (Abdul Basir, 23: 2023).

Conclusion, results, and recommendations:

Firstly: Conclusion:

The conclusion of the study presented outcomes and recommendations, addressing the future of US-Saudi relations in light of growing Saudi-Iranian ties under China's influence. This development has the potential to foster regional cooperation and reduce Western influence, particularly the US's role in complex Middle Eastern issues. A *détente* is evident following China's involvement in the Saudi-Iranian reconciliation, suggesting potential cooperation in security, economics, and politics.

The study revealed both Saudi and Iranian aspirations for Middle East understanding, moving towards cooperation and integration. This approach aims to resolve issues in Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, and Iraq, moving away from the illusion of sectarian conflict. Reconciliation could signify China's presence, evident in the tripartite summit between China and Iran on March 10, 2023. The summit led to resumed diplomatic relations between Riyadh and Tehran, agreements on economic, cultural, and sports cooperation, as well as discussions on past treaties signed in 1998.

The Saudi-Iranian rapprochement might establish new ties with China, contributing to a global shift away from Western influence. China's growing economy, particularly in the Middle East, suggests potential for a cooperative regional arrangement, possibly indicating a decline in US influence with Saudi Arabia. This shift is influenced by disagreements over human rights issues in Saudi Arabia and oil production reduction concerns.

In light of China's economic development, particularly in relation to the Middle East, a new regional framework emphasizing cooperation and integration is possible. This trend also suggests that the United States' influence over Saudi Arabia is diminishing. This change may be attributable to a number of factors, including disagreements over human rights concerns in Saudi Arabia and issues related to the reduction of Saudi crude production.

Results of Study: the study deduced the following results through the conclusion:

1. The study confirmed that the Saudi-Iranian agreement may lead to the creation of new directions towards China that contribute to international transformations towards a new world order that is anti-Western in light of what China is witnessing from the growth in its economy, especially towards the Middle East region, which enhances the elements of cooperation and integration between the two parties.
2. The study proved that reconciliation succeeds in the presence of a desire between the two parties to achieve understanding on bilateral interests in the Middle East and move to a new stage based on cooperation and integration that contributes to opening the way towards settlements of intractable files in each of Syria, Lebanon and Iraq to get out of the illusion of the sectarian conflict between the two sides.
3. The study showed that reconciliation will contribute to the growth of Saudi-Iranian relations under the auspices of China, and may enhance opportunities for regional cooperation between the two sides, and may lead to reducing the Western influence represented by the United States sponsoring complex files in the Middle East, witnessing a stated relief after China's intervention in the framework of the Saudi-Iranian reconciliation.
4. The study confirmed that reconciliation will restore the reopening of frozen cooperation files between the two factions and the resumption of previously signed agreements in the fields of economic, commercial, cultural, sports and youth cooperation, which were signed in 1988.

Recommendations: The study had recommended the following through its results:

1. The study recommended that cooperation between the parties; the Saudi and the Iranian will share in enhancing the political and economic stability in the Middle East region, and reduce the sharpness of escalation and regional tension, and restore the state of relative calmness in the Arab countries that witnessed revolutions of the Arab Spring.
2. The study recommended that Saudia has to enhance the elements of calmness and stability among the rival factions in Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Lebanon, and work to push towards enhancing elements of development and

investment in the framework of Saudi Arabia's orientations towards vision of 2030, which is represented in the social and economic squint program, in condition that this program covers the states of the region adjacent to Saudi Arabia.

3. It is necessary for Iran to reduce the state of supporting fractions loyal to it in Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Lebanon to ensure the success of reconciliation, enhance economic and investment development opportunities, and achieve stability in the Middle East.
4. Saudi Arabia and Iran have to comprehend that the agreement of reconciliation under auspices of China will increase opportunities of investment, trade exchange, and economic development between the two parties and other parties in the Middle East region.
5. Saudi Arabia and Iran must realize that competition and escalation will increase the state of tension and freeze all cooperation agreements, which will lead to a decline in the economies of the two countries, as well as distributing ambitions and economic transformation, which is a pillar in the development of countries.

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