



# United States Security Strategy for the Middle East

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One of the most controversial questions the United States faces in the aftermath of the Cold War is when to use military force in this complex world. But there is little dispute that we must be prepared to use force to defend our vital interests: when the survival of the United States or its key allies is in danger, when our critical economic interests are threatened, or when dealing with the emergence of a future nuclear threat. Nowhere are these criteria met more clearly than in the Middle East.

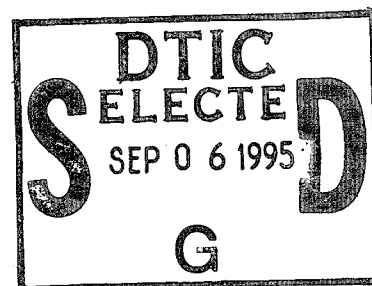
This United States Security Strategy for the Middle East is the second in a series of regional reports undertaken by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs with the aim of defining U.S. interests and commitments in critical parts of the world. It outlines a strategy for promoting stability and peaceful change through a combination of diplomacy, peacetime engagement, forward presence, and rapid response capabilities. It also explains how we can carry out this strategy without formal alliances or permanent basing arrangements that are familiar elsewhere in the world.

The prospects for stability in the Middle East in the coming decades are mixed. On the positive side, unprecedented progress has recently been made in the Middle East peace process, holding forth the hope that Israelis and Palestinians alike can finally be integrated fully into the political and economic life of the Middle East. Furthermore, U.S. capabilities to defend its vital interests in the Middle East are at an all-time high, in stark contrast to the situation less than two decades ago. Yet daunting problems remain:

- ethnic, ideological, and national conflicts;
- burgeoning populations with stagnant economies;
- unresolved pressures for political development; and
- a poverty of every resource except the one that has prompted three major U.S. force deployments in less than ten years—oil.

As this report demonstrates, the United States has to remain militarily engaged in this crucial area of the world. Our interests and those of our friends and allies demand it. Only the United States has the power and prestige to help shape a brighter future for the people of the Middle East. And only U.S. forces have the capability to meet and defeat the very real military threats to the stability and security of the region. This is a challenge we must and will meet.

*William J. Perry*  
William J. Perry



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# Introduction

The United States has enduring strategic interests in the Middle East. As a result of these interests, the U.S. armed forces have been engaged in combat in the Middle East more often in the past 20 years than anywhere else in the world. The Middle East contains more than 70 percent of the world's oil, is the home of extremist groups that use terrorism to pursue goals hostile to U.S. interests, has a higher incidence of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) than any other part of the world, and has spawned repeated conflict in recent decades. It sits astride a number of maritime chokepoints and the key sea- and air-lanes connecting Europe and the Mediterranean with Africa, Asia, and the Indian Ocean. The Middle East's recurrent instability and its contiguity with the Caucasus and Central Asia also give it the potential for complicating reform and aggravating political and ethnic conflicts in parts of the former Soviet Union.

The ability of the U.S. armed forces to protect American interests in the Middle East has grown exponentially since 1975. Before the Iranian revolution in 1979, the only U.S. forces normally in the Persian Gulf at any one time were a U.S. Navy command ship and two or three destroyers. Our forces had regular access to only one country in the Gulf—Bahrain. Without the use of land bases, the only way tactical air power could quickly be brought to bear against a potential adversary was with aircraft carriers. The closest war reserve materiel was in Europe and the Far East. Had the newly created Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force—the predecessor of U.S. Central Command—been required to send land forces to the Gulf in 1980, it would have been difficult

if not impossible to get even one heavy division there in less than three months. Sustaining that force in combat would have been even more challenging.

A decade of hard military and diplomatic work had already transformed this bleak picture by the time Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990. In less than three weeks, U.S. forces fielded a combat-ready force of seven brigades, three carrier battle groups, and 14 tactical fighter squadrons, with a much larger force well on the way. Ultimately, the United States mobilized and led a multinational force of over a half-million men and women drawn from more than 30 countries to defend Saudi Arabia, liberate Kuwait, and restore the legitimate Kuwaiti government—achievements that would have been unthinkable ten years before.

Today, it is not unusual for the United States to have 20,000 military men and women in the Persian Gulf at any one time. Where once we had two or three ships, today we have 20, teamed with scores of land-based aircraft and other units. We enjoy access to facilities in all six of the moderate Arab states of the Gulf. A robust exercise program puts significant ground combat power into the Gulf on a regular basis, while measures taken both alone, such as procurement of additional strategic lift capability, and in concert with our regional friends and partners, such as the prepositioning of equipment, have further improved our ability to deploy forces in a crisis. Thanks to these measures, our ability to defend U.S. interests in the region is already much stronger than it was 1990, as the October 1994 deployment of forces to forestall renewed Iraqi aggression clearly demonstrated. It took not three months, as

it would have in 1980, nor three weeks, as it did in 1990, but three *days* to get the initial U.S. heavy units from Fort Stewart, Georgia, to Camp Doha, Kuwait. This operation, named VIGILANT WARRIOR, was a highly successful example of the deterrent use of military power that forced the Iraqis into a hasty withdrawal and, thanks to new UN restrictions on Iraqi troop movements and the addition of additional U.S. ground attack capabilities, left the region safer than it was before. Moreover, programs now under way to add more prepositioned equipment in the region will enable us to get an even larger force in place, should it again prove necessary, quickly and effectively.

The security of U.S. interests in the Middle East has been enhanced in other ways as well. Twenty years ago, the 1973 Arab-Israeli War and the ensuing oil boycott were fresh memories. U.S. relations with most of the Arab world were strained. Israel was surrounded by neighbors bent on its destruction and still very much in a state of war. Today, the picture is radically different. The United States has close military relationships not only with Israel but also with most of the Arab countries. In the aftermath of the U.S.-led victory over Iraq, the 1979 Camp David accords have been joined by two major new achievements in the Middle East peace process: an Israeli-Palestinian agreement in September 1993 to implement interim Palestinian self-rule, and the October 1994 Peace Treaty of Wadi Araba, ending the state of war between Israel and Jordan. Both these breakthroughs were fostered in large measure by the sponsorship of the United States, which remains instrumental as discussions continue on the remaining obstacles to a comprehensive peace settlement.

These military and diplomatic achievements demonstrate the United States' central role

in the Middle East. They have given us unprecedented opportunities for advancing our interests. Nevertheless, we still face serious challenges—threats from potentially aggressive states such as Iraq, Iran, and Libya, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, the rise of violent religious and ethnic movements, the instability that might result from a collapse of the Arab-Israeli peace process, and barely latent disputes over the distribution of natural and economic resources, such as water.

In the broadest terms, the U.S. approach to Middle Eastern security is one of engagement, forward presence, and rapid response. The United States seeks to sustain and adapt security partnerships with key states throughout the region, broaden economic and cultural ties, and promote peaceful settlement of regional disputes before they widen into open conflict. In the Persian Gulf, we aim to achieve these regional objectives by ensuring that Iraq and Iran adhere to international norms, enhancing U.S. and friendly capabilities to defend our shared interests, and demonstrating our enduring commitment to Gulf security. With respect to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the United States engages in intense diplomacy aimed at a negotiated peace, use of security assistance to foster confidence, rigorous arms control efforts, and active bilateral relationships with Israel and within the Arab world.

Considering the threats in the Middle East, the United States and its partners must maintain and enhance their combined ability to protect their interests with military force, even while working to defuse regional tensions through diplomatic means. The peacetime presence of U.S. naval, air, and land forces is a key component of this capability and is the symbol of our commitment to deter regional aggressors. It also provides an immediate reaction force with

which to respond initially to any crisis. However, such peacetime forces are not designed by themselves to meet a full-scale attack. A major regional conflict, such as another Iraqi invasion of Kuwait or Saudi Arabia, would require the dispatch of substantial U.S. and coalition forces from outside the Gulf.

In summary, the Middle East will still face enormous difficulties even after the peace process reaches a successful conclusion. Furthermore, the United States will still have the same national security interests there that it has had for many years:

- The world will be even more dependent on Persian Gulf oil in the early 21st century than it is today.
- As long as the United States is a maritime commercial nation with global interests, it will have a stake in protecting freedom of navigation and access to regional markets.

- We will always seek to protect our citizens abroad, promote the democratic and free-market values that are the core of our national identity, and support the fundamental human rights on which those values are based.
- And as long as we have these interests, we will have an interest in the security of those states with which we must work to protect them.

The United States must therefore remain engaged in the security of the Middle East diplomatically, economically, and militarily. The challenge the Department of Defense faces is to apply our military strength in ways that reduce the tensions afflicting the region, deter potential aggressors, and ensure that attempts to endanger our interests are decisively defeated.



Joint Combat Camera, SGT Smith

*The President's National Security Strategy affirms U.S. determination to contain and resist those who foster conflict in the Middle East. Here, the President, accompanied by the Commander in Chief, U.S. Central Command, General Binford Peay, visits soldiers of the 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized) who were deployed to Kuwait in October 1994 in response to renewed Iraqi threats.*

# America's Enduring Interest in the Security of the Middle East

*The Middle East is an area in which the United States has a vital interest. The maintenance of peace in that area, which has so frequently seen disturbances in the past, is of significance to the world as a whole.*

— Franklin Delano Roosevelt  
March 1944

Since its earliest days, the United States has had important interests in the Middle East, including trade, freedom of navigation, and the safety of American citizens and property. In this century, the discovery in the Persian Gulf of the world's greatest oil reserves, the development of a petroleum-dependent global economy, the creation in 1948 of the State of Israel, and 50 years of worldwide struggle against expansionist totalitarianism all went to establish the Middle East as a region of vital interest to the United States. At the same time, the 500-year-old combination of Ottoman and European colonial domination suffered a lingering death, leaving the Middle East from the 1950s on without a workable region-wide security system. Meanwhile, the people of the region began grappling with ideological, economic, and social challenges to their traditional way of life, the results of which are still uncertain.

Today the United States finds itself with vital, intertwined interests in a region characterized by conflict and instability, vast and contradictory imbalances of wealth and power, emotional religious and ideological clashes, the widespread quest for weapons of mass destruction, and an uncertain path of internal political development. At stake in the Middle East are all three of the

principal objectives identified in the President's *National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*:

- Enhancing our security by protecting the lives and personal safety of Americans, maintaining our political freedom and independence as a nation, and providing for the well-being and prosperity of our nation;
- Promoting America's prosperity through efforts both at home and abroad, including enhancing access to foreign markets, providing for energy security, and promoting sustainable development; and
- Promoting a stable and secure world where political and economic freedom, human rights, and democratic institutions can flourish.

Building on the President's objectives, the Secretary of Defense has identified three criteria for determining whether a threat affects U.S. vital interests:

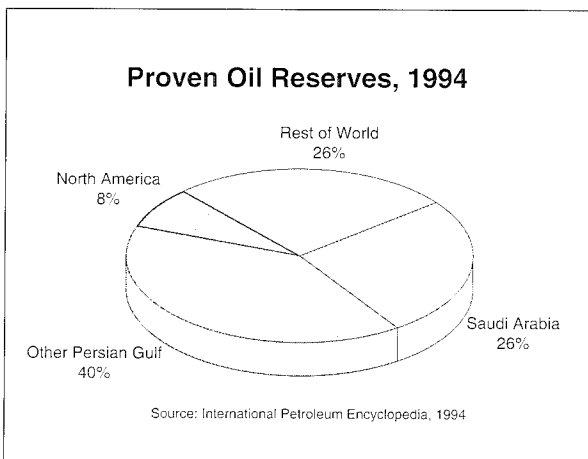
- If it threatens the survival of the United States or its key allies;
- If it threatens critical US economic interests;
- If it poses the danger of a future nuclear threat.

Nowhere are these criteria met more clearly than in the Middle East. Any threat to Gulf security would endanger the critical economic interests of the United States and its trading partners. The survival of some of

our key security partners—certainly their survival as we know them—is endangered by the ambitions of their neighbors. And the Middle East is the scene of one of the most disturbing competitions to acquire weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, anywhere in the world. Thus, while the Middle East is volatile and dangerous, it is also crucial to our vital interests. It is the juxtaposition of these two realities that requires the United States to stay engaged in promoting the region's security.

### *Assured Access to Gulf Oil*

Our paramount national security interest in the Middle East is maintaining the unhindered flow of oil from the Persian Gulf to world markets at stable prices. Nearly two-thirds of the world's proven reserves of petroleum lie beneath the Persian Gulf and the countries around it. Additional reserves in North Africa and elsewhere bring the total for the Middle East as a whole to more than 70 percent. To put this in perspective, North America's combined reserves are exceeded by those of five of the eight Gulf littoral states taken individually. Saudi Arabia alone has more than ten times as much oil as the United States.



The United States and its principal economic partners are increasingly reliant on Persian Gulf oil to fuel their interdependent economies as reserves outside the Gulf are gradually depleted. Already, non-OPEC supplies are rising only about one-sixth as fast as global demand, meaning that more than 80 percent of incremental petroleum demand must be met from OPEC—largely Gulf—sources. Demand will grow even faster if sluggish economic growth in Europe and Japan gives way to a more robust global recovery, and especially if the former communist states of eastern Europe and Eurasia succeed in reconstructing their economies. Moreover, only the Persian Gulf has any significant excess oil production capacity. Producers outside the region could not quickly make up for a substantial reduction of supplies from the Gulf.

The importance of Gulf oil to the United States must be understood in its global context. Oil is traded on a worldwide market; a blockage of Gulf supplies or a large increase in prices would immediately resonate throughout the international market, driving up energy costs to consumers everywhere. Moreover, the simultaneously recessionary and inflationary effects of such a disruption on the international economy—the effect known as “stagflation”—would cripple the ability of American producers to market their goods and services overseas, further damaging our own economy.

Control over Gulf oil fields would thus enable a potential adversary to try to blackmail the United States and its allies in Europe and East Asia. The poorest countries would be at even greater risk, as would the newly democratic states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, whose ability to complete the reforms they have under-

taken depends in large measure on access to reasonably priced energy. Moreover, the financial resources stemming from domination of Gulf oil supplies would provide an almost unlimited capability for an aggressive state to pursue WMD and other dangerous programs without having to maintain production anywhere near current levels. Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait provides an instructive case study. Had Saddam Hussein been allowed to retain Kuwait, he could have cut Kuwaiti production in half and still increased his own revenues by 50 percent and perhaps more. Moreover, he would very likely have used the example of Kuwait to extort production cutbacks from other Gulf producers, thus forcing up prices even further.

The importance of continued access to Gulf oil supplies was made clear by President Carter in his 1980 State of the Union message, when he pledged that "an attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force." It has since become equally clear that we cannot tolerate attempts by hostile forces *within* the Gulf to gain hegemonic control, either. This commitment, upheld in the face of great risks and costs in the 1990-91 Gulf War and reemphasized in the October 1994 deployment of forces to confront renewed Iraqi threats, will continue to guide U.S. policy.

### *A Durable Arab-Israeli Peace*

Both our increasing dependence on Gulf oil and our commitment to Israel and our other regional partners give us a clear stake in ensuring continued progress toward a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace

between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Such a peace—a peace that is not merely the absence of active hostilities but a real peace of productive, normal international relations—is an essential element of the long-term security and prosperity of the Middle East. The development of a more peaceful Middle East would help undermine the popular appeal of radical states, such as Iraq, and radical political movements among many Arabs.

### *Security of Key Regional Partners*

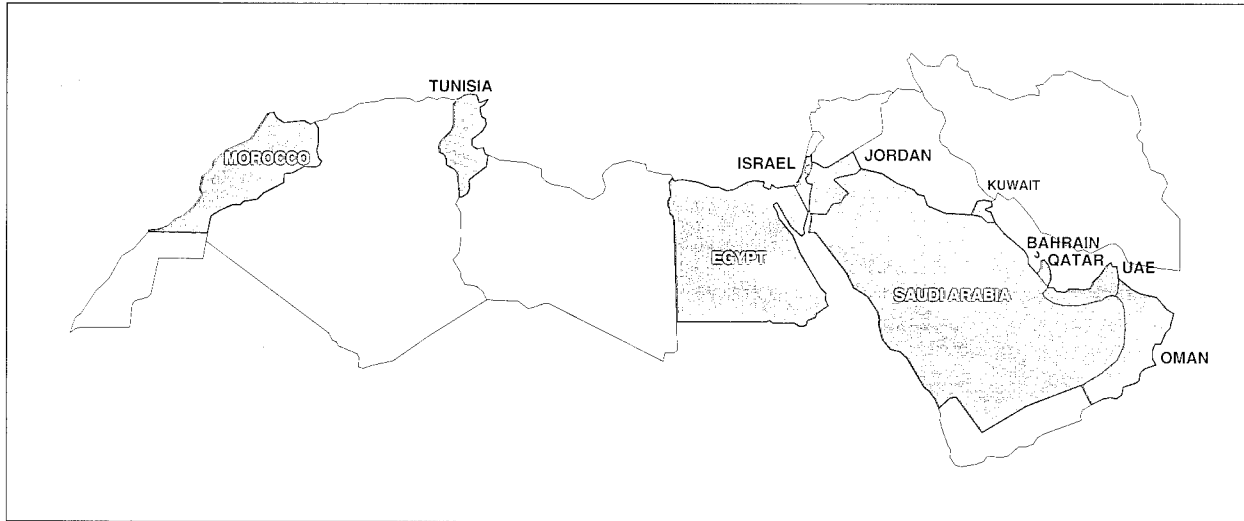
Part of the importance of the peace process lies in the interest, asserted by successive Presidents over many decades, in the security of our key partners in the Middle East. Their security is important to us not only because of the need to ensure the flow of oil from the region and to maintain the credibility of U.S. commitments but also because of the constructive role these countries play in the region.



DoD, Helene C. Stikkel

*During a January 1995 visit to Israel, Secretary of Defense William J. Perry laid a wreath at the Yad Vashem memorial to the victims of the Holocaust.*

For historic, political, and moral reasons, the United States has an unshakable commitment to the security of Israel. In the aftermath of the Nazi Holocaust of World



*U.S. Security Partners in the Middle East.*

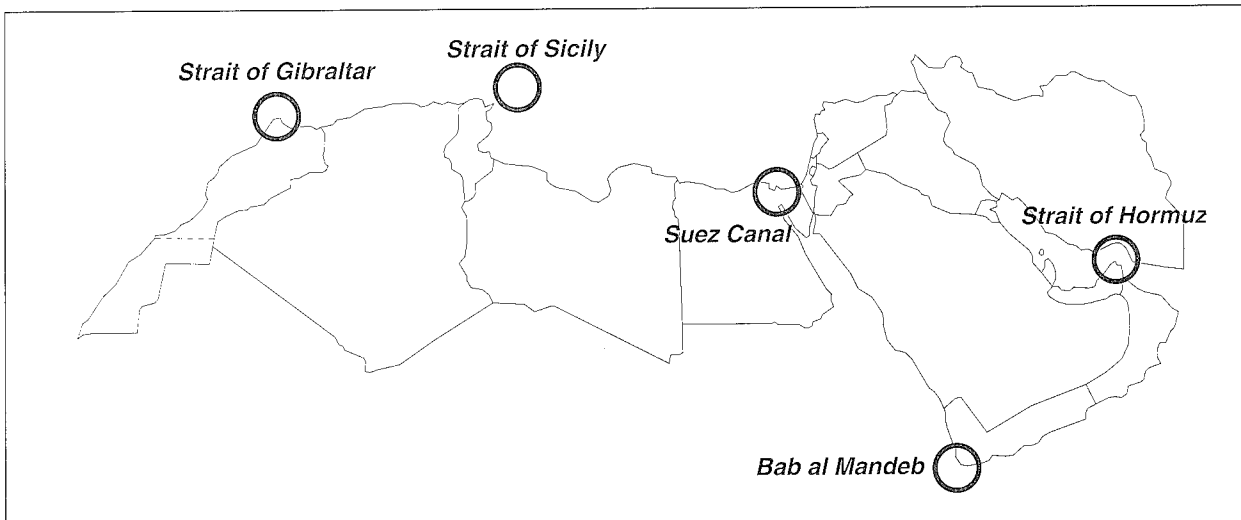
War II, the United States promptly recognized the new state and has been pledged to its survival ever since. Today we support Israel's security through a combination of measures, including security assistance to maintain its qualitative military edge over any likely combination of aggressors. In the longer run, we look to a successful peace process to enhance the security of Israel and its neighbors.

We have parallel interests in the security of our principal Arab partners. Egypt and Saudi Arabia offer two examples among many. Egypt is the Arab world's most populous country and Cairo—with its universities, publishing houses, film and television studios, and newspapers—its premier cultural center. Egypt's willingness to make peace at Camp David was the first major breakthrough in the peace process. Cairo continues to take a leading part in promoting our shared interests throughout the Middle East, whether in rallying Arab League backing for Kuwait after the Iraqi invasion, providing two divisions and a special forces regiment to DESERT STORM, or offering key support as the Middle East peace process continues today.

Saudi Arabia has a similar leadership role thanks to the resources generated by its oil sales and the King's stature as custodian of the holy places of Mecca and Medina, the most sacred sites of Islam. The security of such key Arab states is an enduring U.S. interest that has been reiterated by a succession of American Presidents over several decades. For example, President Truman told Saudi Arabia's King Abdul Aziz as early as 1950 that "no threat could arise to your kingdom that would not be of immediate concern to the United States." The Gulf War and the VIGILANT WARRIOR deployment of 1994 demonstrated the firmness of this and similar commitments.

#### *Protection of U.S. Citizens and Property*

The need to safeguard U.S. citizens from endangerment and their property from destruction or confiscation is a permanent U.S. interest throughout the world. It is a matter of particular concern in a region of recurrent instability like the Middle East. We have used military forces in support of this interest on numerous occasions, from the wars with the Barbary pirates in the early nineteenth century to the evacuation of American citizens from Yemen in May of 1994.



*Maritime Choke Points in the Middle East.*

### *Freedom of Navigation*

The Middle East's position astride the air and sea lanes connecting Europe and the Mediterranean with Africa, Asia, and the Indian Ocean makes it important to America's ability to trade and project military power around the world. Five major maritime choke points are vulnerable to interference by adjacent Middle Eastern countries: the Strait of Gibraltar, the Strait of Sicily, the Suez Canal, the Bab al Mandeb, and the Strait of Hormuz. Major air transportation routes also traverse the region. Attempts to close the Strait of Hormuz to tanker traffic would be of particular concern, since they would touch directly on the availability of oil on world markets. Likewise, attempts to interfere with the passage of U.S. military traffic anywhere in the region in time of war could require the use of force to keep these vital lines of communication open.

### *Successful Reform in the Former Soviet Union*

Although promoting the reform of the former USSR is not primarily a Middle Eastern issue, eight of the fifteen newly independent states

have strong historic and cultural affinities to the Middle East. What happens in the Middle East affects them and the course of their social and political development. The turmoil that could be created by the export of Iranian-style radical Islam to the Caucasus or Central Asia, the spillover of conflict from adjoining countries, or unrest resulting from other events in the Middle East could derail fragile reform efforts. It could also complicate relations between Russia and the newly independent republics; disorder near Russia's southern borders has historically been a source of conflict between Russia and its neighbors. The USSR's successor states face serious enough challenges without having to contend with those who see lands in turmoil as fertile ground for promoting radical ideologies. The stability of the southern republics, and the influence of Middle Eastern countries on them, must therefore be addressed by any policy aimed at preserving the continued independence of the former Soviet republics.

### *Human Rights and Democratic Development*

The United States has a fundamental interest in the development of political systems that respect human rights according to

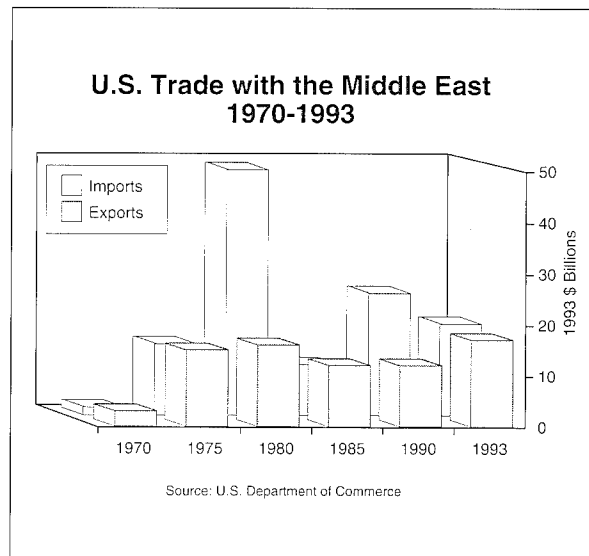
internationally accepted standards, permit popular participation in government, and reflect popular will. Enlarging the world's free community of market-oriented democracies is at the core of the United States' global national security strategy. At the same time, experience has shown the hazards of trying to impose Western political models on societies where indigenous institutions may provide a more enduring basis for political, social, and economic liberty.

Disenchantment with both traditional and modernizing ideologies has frequently led to bitter civil and international conflict in countries across the Middle East, ranging from Iran to Algeria. Moreover, human rights violations in some countries pose the threat of creating destabilizing flows of refugees across international borders, as occurred on the Iraqi-Turkish border following Iraq's suppression of a Kurdish uprising in early 1991.

Although we cannot prescribe for the countries of the Middle East how they should govern themselves, there is a clear need for greater respect for the fundamental human rights that are recognized by all the world's great ethical and religious systems and that are part of the heritage of both Islam and the West. There is also a need for progress toward greater popular participation in public life in many Middle Eastern countries. These developments would make major long-term contributions to the stability and peace of the region.

### *Access to Regional Markets*

The oil boom of the 1970s and the vast expansion of wealth in the hands of the oil-producing states created a large market for Western goods that has survived despite recent declines in oil prices. This market embraces everything from highly sophisticated defense equipment and nationwide infrastructure projects to the full panoply of consumer goods. The United States seeks to ensure that U.S. exporters enjoy access to this highly competitive commercial arena and that they enjoy fair treatment. This includes taking steps to bring about the end of the Arab boycott of companies that do business with Israel, an area in which we have recently made considerable progress.



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## The Middle East Today

Events in the last five years have dramatically altered the security situation in the Middle East. For more than 40 years, American strategists planned against the possibility that the USSR or its proxies would attempt to gain control of the Persian Gulf, obtain warm water ports in the Indian Ocean, or threaten the existence of Israel. Those concerns vanished with the end of the Cold War. At the same time, the breakup of the Soviet empire reduced the amount of foreign patronage available to radical regimes. The end of the Cold War contributed to the political and military miscalculations that started the 1990-91 Gulf War, but also facilitated its successful termination. Acting outside the framework of superpower rivalry, the United Nations could confront Iraqi aggression decisively and unanimously. With the relaxation of East-West tensions, the United States could withdraw forces and supplies from NATO's central front and send them to help drive the Iraqis from Kuwait. Furthermore, a variety of nations that never would have cooperated with U.S. forces in the past—including former members of the Warsaw Pact—took a military role in the victorious coalition. As a result, the U.S.-led force dealt Iraq a crushing defeat that reduced Baghdad's appeal as a political model and as a leader of the Arab world, partially redressed the imbalance of military power in the Gulf, elevated U.S. credibility, and helped make possible the rejuvenation of the Arab-Israeli peace process. Furthermore, the remarkable progress of this peace process in the past two years offers hope for the resolution of a source of turmoil that has wracked the Middle East since the demise of the Ottoman Empire. Success by Israel and its Arab neighbors in reaching a just peace would set the stage for fuller integration of

Israelis and Palestinians into the Middle Eastern political and economic fabric, a development that could only be to the region's lasting benefit.

### The Roots of Persistent Conflict

Peace between Arabs and Israelis, however, is not the same as peace throughout the Middle East. While a comprehensive Arab-Israeli accord would do much to eliminate one of the grievances from which radical states and movements have derived their appeal, many of the conflicts that have plagued the region for so many years have little or nothing to do with Israel. They involve dynastic rivalries, boundary disputes, struggles among Arab states for regional leadership, conflicts over scarce or unevenly distributed resources, and ethnic, ideological, and religious tensions. A comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace settlement might, in fact, be followed by the reemergence of yet other regional conflicts, much as the end of the Cold War heralded the reemergence of ethnic conflicts in Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Indeed, it was a dispute that had nothing to do with Israel—Iraq's pretended claim to Kuwait—that led to the largest deployment of U.S. troops since the Vietnam War and the greatest armored warfare campaign since World War II.

The Middle East also faces serious social and economic challenges. Populations are growing rapidly in countries with stagnant economies; even the oil-rich countries of the Persian Gulf are feeling the pinch. Throughout the Middle East, the dislocations caused by the move of unskilled workers from farms to cities, the creation of a large class of underemployed university graduates, and the

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challenge of Western ideas, culture, and political thought are challenging societies that have been deeply traditional. The problem has been aggravated for some countries, such as Jordan and Yemen, by the repatriation of laborers as a result of the Gulf War and the region's economic recession.

At the same time, there is a growing belief among many in the Middle East that they should have a greater voice in how their countries are governed. Demands for such a voice take a variety of forms, including democratic reform movements working lawfully within various Middle Eastern political systems. In many cases, however, radical religious movements and separatist nationalism have provided alternative outlets for discontent with the status quo, outlets that are particularly attractive to those most deeply affected by the region's social and economic transitions.

### The U.S. and the Middle East Since the 1980s

Notwithstanding these many problems, the 1990s have been a period of success for U.S. policy in the Middle East, success that has been most evident on two fronts: in strengthening the security of the Persian Gulf and in promoting a just and lasting peace between Arabs and Israelis.

#### *On the Battlefield: The Persian Gulf*

Militarily, the stage for the recent U.S. successes in the Middle East was set in the late 1980s by Operation EARNEST WILL, in which U.S. forces protected merchant shipping in the Persian Gulf against Iranian attacks and thus demonstrated American willingness to back up security commitments in the region with military force. A new peak of U.S. credibility was attained with DESERT

SHIELD and DESERT STORM, the operations to defend Saudi Arabia and then liberate Kuwait from Iraqi aggression. The magnitude of this achievement is apparent on several levels:

- American leadership and the experience of decades of military cooperation with U.S. forces led the Gulf countries to accept quickly the deployment of large numbers of American troops despite historic sensitivities to the presence of foreign forces.
- Without any formal alliance structure, the United States marshaled an assortment of disparate units drawn from more than 30 countries and welded them into an effective fighting force, reducing the length of the conflict, bolstering the international legitimacy of the effort, and positioning the United States to play a similar key role in future coalitions.
- U.S. forces demonstrated their ability to fight effectively and decisively against threats to our interests, reinforcing the United States' ability to deter other potential aggressors.
- The rapid withdrawal of the vast majority of U.S. forces following the victory proved to regional countries that the United States is a reliable security partner willing to return if necessary, and not another occupying foreign power like some that preceded us.
- The coalition victory made a major contribution toward redressing the serious strategic imbalance in the Gulf region. Beyond the destruction of more than half of Iraq's forces during the war, the cease-fire terms imposed severe

constraints on Iraqi weapons programs, instituted extremely intrusive UN inspections, and maintained the most sweeping and tightly enforced economic sanctions ever instituted by the United Nations.

That Saddam Hussein's Iraq still possesses a force capable of threatening the region only attests to the outlandish size of that force before the war and underlines the need for continued tight containment. Despite his humiliating defeat in 1991, Saddam Hussein continues to defy the international community and flout the cease-fire terms under which his army escaped utter destruction. The most serious challenge came in early October 1994. After several weeks of increasingly bellicose public comments as to what Iraq would do absent rapid progress toward lifting sanctions, Iraq moved elements of two Republican Guard armored divisions from garrisons in the north and center of the country and positioned them as close as 20 kilometers from the Kuwaiti border. The pattern of their deployment was strikingly similar to that of the assault units before the 1990 invasion. Moreover, they had deployed with ammunition, artillery, and other

support—everything needed to strike into Kuwait.

In response, President Clinton ordered a massive reinforcement of U.S. forces in the region. An aircraft carrier battle group and an amphibious ready group with a Marine expeditionary unit embarked moved into the Gulf almost immediately. Within three days, a brigade of the 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized) had flown into Kuwait to begin marrying up with the equipment prepositioned there. Two days later, the brigade had moved forward into fighting positions. A week after the President ordered the deployment, the United States had more than three times as many combat aircraft in the Gulf as it had when the crisis started. Including units on alert, the United States was poised to put more than 150,000 men and women into the region.

With the United States and its partners visibly prepared to resist and defeat renewed Iraqi aggression, the UN Security Council not only ignored Saddam's demand that it relax sanctions but went on, on October 15, to pass a unanimous resolution condemning



Joint Combat Camera

*Coalition forces destroyed or captured more than half of Iraq's armored force, including this T-55 tank, during Operation DESERT STORM's six weeks of fighting. Even so, Iraq still has more tanks in service than any other country in the Gulf region.*



DoD, Helene C. Strikkel

*Less than a week after being ordered to Kuwait in October 1994, U.S. Army mechanized and armor units, including this M1A1 Abrams tank of the 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized), were deployed in defensive positions in the Kuwaiti desert.*

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the Iraqi troop movements, and demanding that the forces sent south leave and not come back. Even before that, we had begun seeing signs of an Iraqi withdrawal; in short, credible deterrence worked.

The conclusion of Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR left us even better postured to protect our interests in the Gulf than we were before. Iraq is now forbidden by UN Security Council resolution to strengthen its forces in the south. We have made it clear that we are prepared to respond to movements across the 32nd parallel. The net effect is to give coalition forces more than 100 extra miles of warning time. Moreover, the United States will be maintaining a more robust presence in the region than we did before, including the extended deployment of aircraft, such as A-10s, designed to destroy enemy armored forces.

The defeat and subsequent containment of Iraq have affected the security of the Middle East far beyond the Gulf area, as well. By invading another Arab country, Saddam Hussein destroyed Iraq's ability to exert malign influence on moderate states in the name of Arab unity. By siding with Iraq against the moderate Gulf states, the Palestine Liberation Organization lost its principal sources of funding, a reality that was partly responsible for the PLO's realization that it would have to come to terms with Israel. Moreover, Iraq's failed attempt to conquer Kuwait shattered Baghdad's pretensions as leader of the Arab world and weakened its ability to throw up obstacles to constructive action on the peace process and a wide range of other regional issues. These consequences of the Gulf War helped create the opportunities for progress in the Arab-Israeli peace process that have yielded such remarkable results in the past year.

### *At the Bargaining Table: The Peace Process*

A second U.S. achievement in the Middle East, one whose historical magnitude fully equals the victory in the Gulf, has been the remarkable string of advances in the Middle East peace process. Beginning with the convening of the Madrid Conference on October 30, 1991, under the joint sponsorship of the United States and the Soviet Union, the peace process has made strides toward a just, lasting, and comprehensive peace between Arabs and Israelis that would have been inconceivable at the beginning of the 1990s. The United States played a leading role in helping the parties structure the Madrid process into a series of bilateral tracks and a number of multilateral working groups, such as that on arms control and regional security. The first fruits of this process were borne with the Declaration of Principles signed on the South Lawn of the White House on September 13, 1993, in which the State of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization formally recognized one another and undertook the implementation of interim Palestinian self-rule. Within less than a year, the South Lawn was also the scene of another historic ceremony, the issuance of the July 25, 1994, Declaration of Principles by King Hussein of Jordan and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel, a step that paved the way for the signing of the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty at Wadi Araba on October 26, 1994.

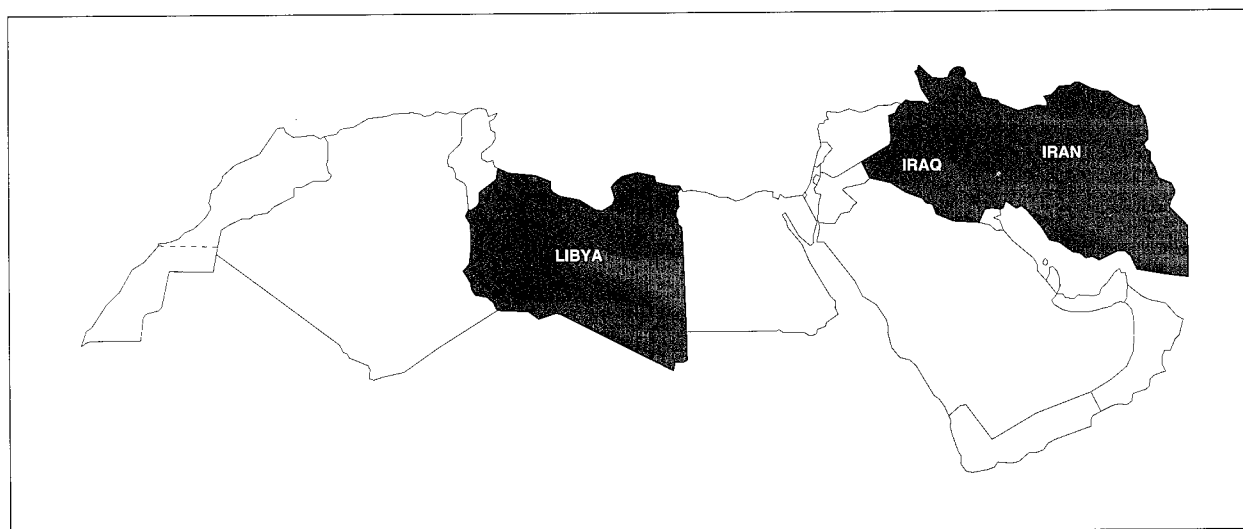
# The Challenges and Opportunities Facing America in the Middle East

The end of the Cold War, the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the success of DESERT STORM, fears of Iraqi resurgence and Iranian hegemonism, and the achievements of American diplomacy in furthering the peace process leave the United States as the pivotal power in the Middle East. We have unprecedented opportunities to secure our interests and help shape a better future for the region. Despite our successes, however, we still face a range of serious threats, threats that are diverse and often interrelated. They include not only potentially aggressive states but also regional processes and trends—trends that endanger long-term stability, cases where the United States needs to mesh its interests with those of its security partners, and regional cultural and political attitudes that impede the attainment of U.S. strategic objectives. These challenges are inherent in politico-military engagement in the Middle East, but the fact that we have recognized them for many years diminishes neither their difficulty nor their importance.

## The Persian Gulf: Iraq and Iran

Iraq and Iran are the most serious dangers to the secure flow of oil from the Persian Gulf to world markets. Not only do they pose a direct military threat individually, but the dynamic established by their contention for regional hegemony raises the value to each of dominance established through extortion and threats. Moreover, there is a high risk that their rivalry could spill over into the countries of the Arabian Peninsula. Rather than strengthening one country to play off against the other, therefore, the Clinton Administration's policy is to contain both threats simultaneously—"dual containment."

- Despite losing more than half its conventional military capability in the Gulf War, Iraq still possesses the largest military forces in the region and poses a significant threat to the moderate Gulf countries. Iraq's ominous troop



*Backlash States of the Middle East.*

movements in October 1994 demonstrated that it still has capabilities that threaten regional peace and stability. Baghdad has rebuilt much of its conventional military industrial infrastructure. If UN controls were removed, it could resume production of proscribed ballistic missiles and chemical and biological weapons within a year and develop a nuclear weapon in less than a decade.

- Iran harbors ambitions of establishing Iranian hegemony over the Persian Gulf and expanding its influence over radical Islamist forces. It has pursued these objectives through every means at its disposal, including subversion and terrorism, applying such tactics not only within the Gulf but also in places as distant as Egypt, Sudan, Algeria, Lebanon, the former Yugoslavia, and the newly independent Caucasian and Central Asian republics. Teheran has been the most vocal and active critic of the Middle East peace process and provides support to some of the most violent opponents of peace, including Hamas. While Iran's conventional military capability will remain limited throughout the 1990s, recent purchases such as submarines, attack aircraft, and antishipping missiles, and the build-up of Iranian forces on several disputed islands near the Strait of Hormuz suggest that it is actively seeking the capability to menace merchant ships moving in and out of the Gulf. It is obvious that Iran is assertively flexing its muscles *vis-à-vis* its smaller Gulf neighbors. Of even greater concern in the long run, Iran is also clearly dedicated to developing weapons of mass destruction, including chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, a prospect that would have serious repercussions for regional stability and perhaps for our ability to protect our interests in the area.

The task of providing for Gulf security is complicated by factors other than Iraq or Iran. The United States' preference worldwide is for countries to take primary responsibility for their own defense. The countries of the Persian Gulf are no exception, and we have undertaken a variety of steps, discussed below, to enhance their ability to defend themselves. Nevertheless, we must recognize that the ability of our Gulf partners to provide a credible deterrent to would-be hegemonies is limited by demographic and other constraints. It is evident that neither we nor they can provide for the security of the region without each other's cooperation.

### The Security of Israel

The threat to Israel is at an historic low as a result of the coalition defeat of Iraq and the peace accords between Israel and the Palestinians and between Israel and Jordan. Continuing efforts to bring about peace between Israel and its other Arab neighbors have further reduced the likelihood of war. Israel's high technology weaponry, the superior education, training, and motivation of its defense forces, and its better battle management capabilities ensure that Israel will be able to deter potential adversaries from launching wars against it, or help it win if another war occurs. The United States is, of course, firmly committed to ensuring that Israel can preserve this qualitative military advantage.

While the peace process has progressed steadily in the past few years, however, its complete success is not yet assured. The collapse of the process, whether because of actions by extremists or the parties' own intransigence, could revive the tensions and hostilities that endanger U.S. interests throughout the Middle East and elsewhere. Even as the process moves ahead, groups

that would be marginalized by its success will seek to disrupt it. In the longer term, peace process or no, serious challenges will be presented by the general political situation in the region and the growing WMD capabilities of Iran and rejectionist Arab states such as Iraq, capabilities either developed indigenously or acquired from sources such as China and North Korea.

### Terrorism and Radical Islam

Since the end of the Cold War, some have asserted that radical Islam is the principal danger to the Western democratic world. We reject the claim that this is a clash of civilizations. The true clash is within civilizations, between extremists and moderates. Nevertheless, some Islamic extremist groups have used violence to promote their agenda and could present a threat to U.S. interests in regional stability as well as to American citizens and property. As the World Trade Center bombing showed, even the U.S. mainland is not immune from this threat. The use of terrorism, however, is not confined to Islamic radicals. Numerous non-Islamic extremist groups around the world, both religious and secular, use terrorist methods. Furthermore, of the four Middle Eastern countries on the Department of State's list of state-sponsors of terrorism—Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Syria—only one, Iran, could be described as radical-Islamic in orientation.

The United States does not presume to instruct Middle Easterners or anyone else on their religious beliefs. Rather, we try to work with our friends in the region to address the causes of extremism and channel potentially destructive impulses toward more peaceful, productive ends. At the same time, we must be prepared to counter, by force if necessary, violent manifestations of radicalism that endanger our interests.

### The Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Nowhere is the need for steps to limit proliferation more pressing than in the Middle East, where many states are actively pursuing WMD and the means to deliver them. Three of the world's most dangerous proliferation threats—Iraq, Iran, and Libya—are in the Middle East. A number of Middle Eastern countries, including all our likely regional adversaries, are developing chemical or biological warfare capabilities. Some already have them. Combined with the increasingly widespread distribution of short to intermediate range ballistic missiles and other delivery systems, such weapons are seriously destabilizing and have implications not only for the Middle East but also for southern Europe, the former Soviet Union, South Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa. The development of WMD in the Middle

#### Middle Eastern Participation in Major WMD Nonproliferation Agreements

	BWC	CWC	NPT
Algeria		•	•
Bahrain	•	•	•
Egypt			•
Iran	•	•	•
Iraq			•
Israel		•	
Jordan	•		•
Kuwait	•	•	•
Lebanon	•		•
Libya	•		•
Morocco		•	•
Oman		•	
Qatar	•	•	•
Saudi Arabia	•	•	•
Syria	•		•
Tunisia	•	•	•
UAE		•	
Yemen	•	•	•

BWC: Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, April 10, 1972

CWC: Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling, and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, opened for signature January 13, 1993

NPT: Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, July 1, 1968

East is also intertwined through supplier and technology-transfer relationships with proliferation issues elsewhere in the world.

Traditional efforts to control the spread of WMD and missile delivery systems in this region have been largely unsuccessful. Many Middle Eastern states have either refused to participate in control regimes, such as the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention, or pursued clandestine WMD programs despite their international commitments. The willingness of external suppliers to collude with covert WMD programs further restricts our ability to control proliferation.

## Resource Disputes

When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990, he did so on the pretext that Kuwait was "stealing" Iraqi oil from a reservoir that underlies both states. He went on to cast the dispute between Iraq and the rest of the world as one of rich versus poor, haves versus have-nots. Although these claims were a red herring (Iraq has the second largest oil reserves in the Gulf and is far from a "have-not" nation), the resonance they evoked illustrated the serious sense of grievance many in the Arab world feel over inequalities in the distribution of wealth and resources. Even among the oil-producing states, there are contentious disputes over pricing, production levels, and other oil policy issues.

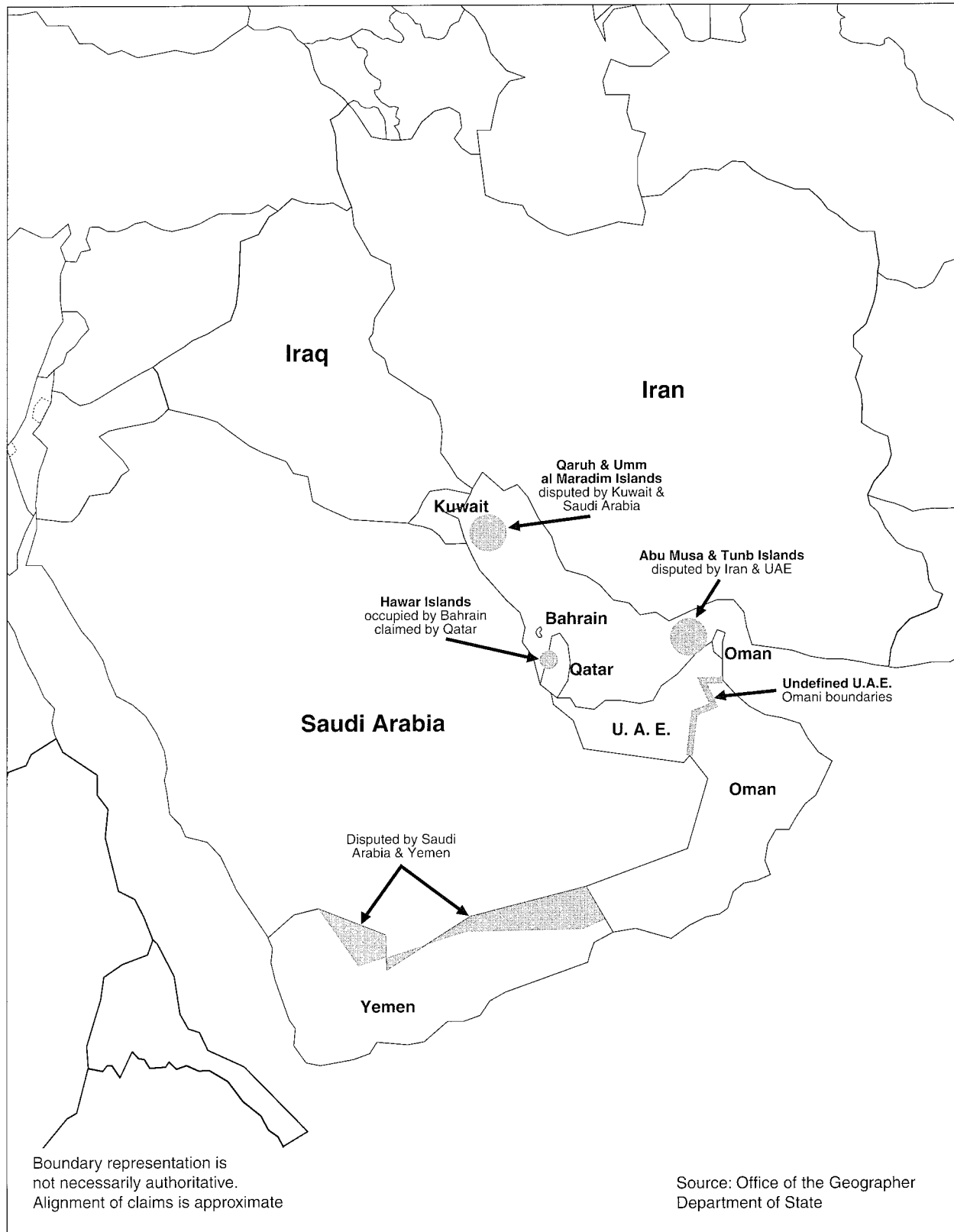
Ironically, these problems all stem from one resource the Middle East has in abundance—petroleum—not those that it lacks, such as water. Disputes over riverine rights are likely to intensify in the few portions of the Middle East with perennially flowing streams, as upstream states seek to make fuller use of water for power production

and industrial and agricultural development. Meanwhile, the aquifers of the region, especially in the Arabian Peninsula, are being rapidly depleted. Clashes over such scarce resources, especially water but also arable land and offshore fisheries, may be even further aggravated in the long run by the region's rapid population growth. Moreover, when one considers that the Middle East, especially in the vicinity of the Persian Gulf, is criss-crossed by disputed land and sea boundaries, the potential for instability and even war over such resource disputes is clear.


## Challenges Across the Middle East and Beyond

The security of the Middle East is not endangered solely by threats emanating from within the region itself. Some Middle Eastern states also threaten or are threatened by events crossing regional boundaries. Egypt, for example, perceives a clear danger from the radical Islamic regime in Sudan, both because of concern that the Sudanese revolution could be exported and because of the implications Sudanese hostility could have for control of the Nile. Similarly, disputes between states or groups outside the region, such as those between India and Pakistan, Armenia and Azerbaijan, or among the various factions in Afghanistan, could spill over if Middle Eastern states take opposite sides between contending factions.

A paradoxical risk posed by the United States' position as premier arbiter of Middle Eastern security is the high value Middle Eastern states now place on getting us involved in local conflicts. Meanwhile, the disappearance of the prospect that intervention in regional disputes could provoke a global confrontation with the Soviets may make us more susceptible to such efforts.



*Territorial Disputes in the Persian Gulf Region.*



A further complication in our ability to cope with the challenges facing us in the Middle East is that our Western allies, as well as our regional partners, sometimes have interests that do not necessarily parallel ours. Even where strategic interests are complementary, the pursuit of conflicting economic interests sometimes strains cooperation with our allies and other friendly countries around the world.

Our policy toward the region is vulnerable to succession issues and potential instability in a number of key states. Radical change in such states, particularly the emergence of hostile regimes, could have a serious impact on our initiatives and operations, especially access to military and transportation infrastructures.

U.S. military influence may be reduced by restraints on the availability of security assistance funds, whether for modernizing local militaries to make them more interoperable with us or for access and other forms of cooperation. Reductions in foreign assistance budgets will also limit the possible use of security assistance to buttress the peace process.

# Defense Engagement in the Middle East: Strategy and Forces

The basic U.S. strategic approach toward the Middle East is one of engagement, forward presence, and rapid response. We seek to sustain and adapt security partnerships with key states throughout the region, broaden the economic and cultural underpinnings of these official relationships, and promote peaceful settlement of regional disputes before they erupt into open conflicts that threaten our interests. To deter aggression and ensure that this policy of engagement can be carried out in a secure atmosphere, we maintain a substantial forward military presence in the region. Finally, should deterrence fail, we have and are continuing to improve a capability to deploy and apply decisive force against any potential aggressor. At the same time, we fully understand that neither the United States nor its partners can ensure the security of the Middle East alone; collective efforts will be necessary.

These efforts, however, must occur within a security framework that differs sharply from those in other regions where the United States has vital national interests: the United States has no formal defense treaty, multilateral or bilateral, with any country in the Middle East. Instead, our role and commitments are embodied in an accumulation of unilateral public pronouncements, assurances to foreign leaders of U.S. intentions, and a range of executive agreements for military access, prepositioning, status of forces, and security assistance.

## The Persian Gulf

U.S. strategy in the Persian Gulf is intended to achieve our regional objectives by simultaneously containing Iraq and Iran, enhancing U.S. and friendly capabilities to defend our shared interests, and demonstrating our commitment to Gulf security. The United States seeks Iraqi compliance with all applicable UN Security Council resolutions, the emergence of a government in Baghdad that respects human rights and does not threaten the peace and stability of the Gulf, and preservation of Iraq's territorial integrity. Simultaneously, the United States seeks to deter Iranian political and military adventurism; deny Iran access to sophisticated defense technologies and weaponry, particularly WMD; promote consensus among our allies and partners on the need to contain Iran; and counter Iranian-sponsored subversion and terrorism.

### *The Gulf Cooperation Council Countries: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, and Oman*

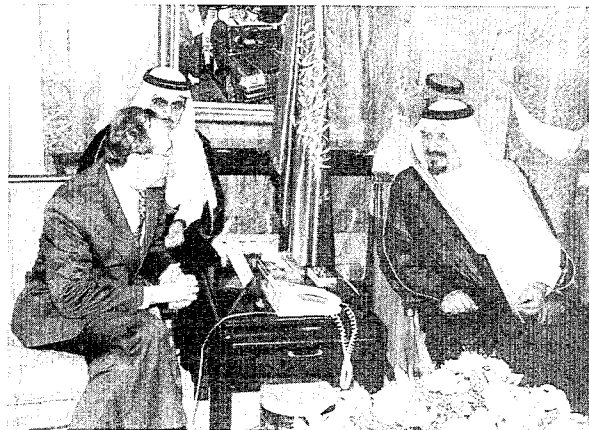
With the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council, we pursue a three-tier cooperative approach toward Gulf security:

- Strengthening local self-defense capabilities;
- Promoting GCC and inter-Arab defense cooperation; and

- Enhancing the ability of Western forces to return and fight effectively alongside local forces in a crisis.

As part of this three-tier approach, the Department of Defense is helping its Gulf partners strike the proper balance as they modernize their military establishments. On the one hand, we are encouraging them to take first responsibility for their own defense. On the other, they must avoid overcommitting themselves financially or buying forces they cannot maintain and operate. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in particular have had little choice but to devote a sizable share of their national resources to pay for new defense upgrades in the wake of the Gulf war. When added to the financial burdens associated with paying for the Gulf war itself, these expenditures have resulted in serious near-term cash flow problems. To help our partners get the best return on their investment, U.S. military personnel have worked closely with their counterparts from both Saudi Arabia and Kuwait to conduct exhaustive defense requirements reviews that take into account each country's financial and manpower resources and capabilities as well as its defense needs.

The United States also recognizes its responsibility to ensure that defense equipment is provided only to meet the legitimate defense needs of responsible states. U.S. arms sales in the Persian Gulf and throughout the world are made only after careful assessment of the purchaser's security needs and the effect the sale would have on the regional balance. The United States actively urges other arms exporting countries to take similar precautions, and in particular to refrain from providing destabilizing weapons to states with a clear record of irresponsible and aggressive behavior, such as Iraq and Iran. We



DoD, Helene C. Stikkel

*Secretary Perry meets with Prince Sultan bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud, the Saudi Minister of Defense and Aviation, in October 1994.*

are especially concerned about recent purchases of Russian Kilo submarines and Chinese and North Korean missiles by an Iranian government that makes no secret of its desire to dominate maritime traffic in and out of the Persian Gulf. Indeed, U.S. law provides for the imposition of sanctions against states that provide destabilizing conventional weapons to either Iraq or Iran.

Even as we help the moderate Gulf countries enhance their individual capabilities, we are also working closely with all of them to overcome the impediments to improved inter-Arab cooperation in defense of shared interests in the Gulf. The United States has applauded the Gulf Cooperation Council's decision to expand its standing PENINSULA SHIELD force and to hold more multilateral exercises. We also believe other, smaller-scale forms of military cooperation should be pursued as well. We will continue to work with the GCC states to improve their ability to defend themselves individually and in concert. Doing so is important not only militarily—properly designed local forces can play a key role in the defense of the Arabian Peninsula—but also politically. Both within the Gulf and in the Western

coalition countries, publics must see the Gulf Arabs as full contributors to their own security.

The third tier of our strategic approach to Persian Gulf security—enhancing the ability of U.S. and other coalition forces to deploy to the region quickly and fight alongside indigenous forces—has seen the greatest progress but remains one of the most essential. Before DESERT SHIELD, U.S. military forces enjoyed significant prepositioning rights in only one Gulf country, Oman. Oman was also the only GCC member that regularly participated in major combined exercises with U.S. forces. Since the war, we have signed defense cooperation agreements with four more GCC members. These agreements provide the framework for prepositioning, access to facilities, and combined exercises and are the underpinning for both our peacetime presence and our ability to return rapidly in a crisis. Moreover, we have robust bilateral exercise programs with each of the GCC states that would have been unthinkable before the war.

### **The Levant and Eastern Mediterranean**

U.S. strategy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict comprises diplomatic efforts toward a negotiated peace, security assistance to foster confidence, arms control initiatives, and active bilateral relationships with Israel and its Arab neighbors. Attaining a comprehensive peace is essential to protecting U.S. security interests and is a goal toward which we must sustain our vigorous diplomacy and support. Such an agreement will allow Israelis and Palestinians alike to be integrated into the strategic and economic fabric of the region, enhancing regional prosperity and reducing the motivations and opportunities for destabilizing conflict.

The Department of Defense's principal role in this strategy is to help create an environment that will facilitate the peace process by working closely with U.S. security partners and other regional countries. A prime example is our contribution to the work of the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO), established by a protocol to the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty with the mission of observing and reporting on security arrangements established by the treaty. The MFO carries out this mission by operating checkpoints, patrolling the international boundary in Sinai and the Strait of Tiran, and traveling throughout the area to verify that Israeli and Egyptian forces are complying with agreed limitations on personnel, equipment, and deployments. The United States provides roughly 1,000 military personnel (an infantry battalion and a logistic support unit) to this force on a continuing basis. U.S. personnel likewise participate as military observers with the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) in Syria, Jordan, Egypt, and Israel, originally established following the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. Both these peacekeeping forces enhance the confidence of regional states that the agreements ending hostilities will be faithfully observed, helping promote an atmosphere of trust that permits the peace process to move ahead. The President has expressed our willingness, following consultations with Congress, to consider U.S. troops' playing a similar role, if both sides so desire, in support of a peace agreement between Israel and Syria. DoD has also been involved in promoting peace by providing excess non-lethal equipment for the Palestinian police force created under the September 1993 Declaration of Principles, as agreed by the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

In parallel with these efforts, we are also pursuing initiatives in the areas of security assistance and arms control that can contribute in interrelated ways to creating a secure environment. Security assistance is designed to make Israel and selected other regional countries feel secure enough militarily to take risks for peace. Given diminishing resources and the need to support other security assistance clients worldwide, we need to develop innovative ways to accomplish this task. In the area of arms control, we emphasize preventing the spread of WMD and associated delivery systems, the proliferation of which exponentially increases the risks associated with making peace.

### *Israel*

In 1988, the United States and Israel signed a memorandum of agreement on strategic cooperation that reflected, as the White House spokesman said at the time, "the enduring commitment to Israel's security." We continue to build this strategic partnership in areas that ensure Israel's security and qualitative military edge while accommodating any regional security arrangements that may emerge from the peace process. To this end, the United States has provided \$1.8 billion annually for Israel's defense purchases since 1986. We help Israel further stretch its defense budget by making additional defense articles available under various statutory authorities. We also have extensive technology-sharing arrangements, such as cooperative research and development programs, in which Israel is eligible to participate as a designated non-NATO ally. The most significant of these is the ARROW anti-tactical ballistic missile (ATBM) program funded jointly by the United States and Israel.



DoD, Helene C. Stikkel

*During his visit to Israel in January 1995, Secretary Perry traveled to Ramat David Air Base. There he was briefed on the base's mission and shown a display of its equipment, including this F-16 Fighting Falcon.*

The Israel Defense Force recognizes that it can no longer gear its long-term defense planning purely to the capabilities of its immediate Arab neighbors. We will work with the Israelis as they deal with a changing world of limited means, new threats from countries like Iran, and the necessity for constructive relationships with the Palestinians and other Arabs. The Israeli focus on air defense (including procurement of the advanced F-15I aircraft) and ATBM systems reflects a healthy awareness of the new and upcoming regional challenges. In addition, combined planning and exercises between U.S. and Israeli forces and the positioning in Israel of materiel under the War Reserve Stocks for Allies program help ensure that Israel maintains its qualitative military advantage against the longer term threats in the region.

### *Egypt*

The United States has focused its strategic partnership with Egypt on improving the Egyptian armed forces' ability to defend the country against external threats, ensuring that the United States retains strategic

access to the Suez Canal and other Egyptian facilities, and encouraging the Egyptian government to find ways to deal constructively with the country's diverse political and social forces. To these ends, we provide Egypt \$1.3 billion in foreign military financing annually. By encouraging well-planned military restructuring, sound long-term economic reform, and realistic tolerance of dissent, the United States will strengthen an important security relationship and help ensure Egypt's continued positive influence in regional affairs. At the same time, U.S. involvement in the modernization of Egyptian forces will improve their interoperability with U.S. and other Western forces and facilitate continued Egyptian contributions to coalition warfare (as in DESERT STORM) and peacekeeping operations.



*The Egyptian Minister of Defense, Field Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, welcomes Secretary Perry to Cairo in January 1995 with an armed forces honor ceremony.*

DoD, Helene C. Stikkel

## *Jordan*

With the signing and ratification of the historic Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty, we are in the midst of an effort to help rebuild and modernize the Jordanian Armed Forces to meet the challenges of the next century. The Administration is committed to help Jordan meet its legitimate defense needs in the context of regional peace. In light of fiscal realities on both sides, however, a cooperative defense relationship with Jordan must be based in large measure on shared strategic perceptions, combined training and exercises, and intelligence exchanges. Jordan's constructive attitude toward the October 1994 crisis provoked by Iraqi troop movements toward the Kuwaiti border, combined with the breakthrough on peace with Israel, has facilitated the revival of the U.S.-Jordanian military relationship. Jordan's ability to take on a role in regional security commensurate with the capabilities of its armed forces will depend on whether strains with several key Gulf states over Jordan's wartime support of Iraq can be overcome.

## *Syria*

Syria is now the only one of Israel's immediate neighbors that still poses a clear and present conventional military threat, although it is a threat with which Israeli forces could deal under any foreseeable circumstances. Syria also possesses a substantial force of ballistic missiles capable of reaching targets throughout Israel. It remains on the Department of State's list of state-sponsors of terrorism. On the other hand, Damascus played a constructive role in the 1990 Gulf War, sending an armored division and a special forces regiment to participate in the liberation of Kuwait and rigorously enforcing United Nations sanctions against Iraq.

Furthermore, Syria has participated in face-to-face negotiations with Israel since the Madrid conference, although as yet without a breakthrough. Syria's historically radical stance and its long-time status as a client of what was then the Soviet Union have precluded any defense relationship with the United States for many years.

### *Lebanon*

The Department of Defense is supporting the reestablishment of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) as a viable security force through the transfer of appropriate excess defense articles. Consistent with U.S. support for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon, we want to enhance the ability of the LAF to assume responsibility for security throughout the country. The longer term direction of U.S. efforts will depend in large measure on progress on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks of the peace process.

### *North Africa*

Three challenges to U.S. interests in the Middle East are especially relevant to North Africa: Islamic extremism, terrorism, and proliferation. To some degree these are interrelated, with radicalism fueling terrorism and Libya's rogue regime engaged in both terrorist and proliferation activities.

### *Libya*

Although Muammar Qadhafi remains in power and continues to defy international efforts to force his compliance with recognized norms of behavior, the conventional threat posed by his forces, both to his neighbors and to freedom of navigation in the Mediterranean, has subsided since the 1980s. The Department of Defense supports the

international sanctions against Qadhafi's regime—designed to secure compliance with United Nations demands that the suspects in the Pan Am 103 bombing be turned over for trial in either Scotland or the United States—by monitoring Libyan activities in the Mediterranean, assisting Tunisia in strengthening its defense capabilities, and working with other agencies in countering proliferation of WMD. Libya has yet to join the world community as a responsible member and continues to pursue capabilities to threaten its neighbors and the world beyond.

### *Morocco and Tunisia*

Morocco and Tunisia are the United States' two key security partners in North Africa. Tunisia perceives a modest threat from an extremist Islamic movement called An Nahda. Police and military measures against the extremists have enjoyed popular support, albeit at a considerable cost in terms of human rights. These measures, combined with a healthy economy, mitigate any immediate danger of a major gains by Islamic extremism in Tunisia. We have strong military relationships with both Morocco and Tunisia. That with Morocco in particular was enhanced by Morocco's prompt support and participation in coalition operations following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Our relationships with both countries include the full scope of training, U.S. access to ports and facilities, sales of defense equipment, combined exercises, and annual military-to-military staff talks. The Tunisian armed forces in particular are equipped with predominantly U.S. equipment and their officer corps is largely U.S.-trained. Virtually every officer in the Tunisian Air Force, for example, has received training in the United States at some point in his career. The commonalities in equipment and doctrine and

## U.S. Defense Engagement in the Middle East

	Defense Reps	High Level Visits	Formal Mil-Mil Talks	Deployed Forces	Exercises	Access Agreement	Education & Training	Port Visits
Algeria	•						•	
Bahrain	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Egypt	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Iran								
Iraq								
Israel	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Jordan	•	•	•		•	•	•	
Kuwait	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Lebanon	•						•	
Libya								
Morocco	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Oman	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Qatar	•	•	•		•	•	•	
Saudi Arabia	•	•		•	•		•	•
Syria	•							
Tunisia	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
UAE	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Yemen	•						•	

mutual familiarity with each other's forces that result from these close contacts have been invaluable in facilitating cooperation among U.S., Moroccan, and Tunisian troops in such operations as DESERT SHIELD (in the case of Morocco) and peacekeeping in Somalia and Rwanda.

### *Algeria*

While extremist Islam poses challenges throughout the Middle East, nowhere is the issue more salient than in Algeria, where an Islamist insurgency is strengthened by a combination of a narrowly based political system and a weak economy. As a result, Algeria is a state at risk in the midst of a virtual civil war. Movement to implement the recommendations of the International Monetary Fund indicates that government

officials have begun to make economic adjustments that could remedy some dissatisfaction and gain popular support, but fundamental political reform, preceded by a dialogue among all factions willing to renounce violence, remains essential. DoD's ties with the Algerian armed forces have never been close or extensive. They have consisted mainly of financing U.S. military training for about 10 Algerian students a year in an effort to promote military professionalism and respect for democratic authority and human rights. Beyond that, we have sold minimal quantities of non-lethal defense equipment on a cash basis. Since the deterioration of Algeria's domestic situation, DoD has reduced its already modest contacts with the military, but has tried to keep channels of communication open in an attempt to discourage abuses.

## Meeting the Proliferation Challenge

In the Middle East as elsewhere, keeping states from acquiring nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and associated missile delivery systems is our first line of defense against the threats posed by these destabilizing weapons of mass destruction. We advance this goal through a range of non-proliferation efforts, including the interlocking network of regimes and export controls that try to build norms against proliferation and ensure that the technology required to develop WMD cannot be easily obtained by the countries of greatest concern. We also seek to reduce the incentives to acquire wmd by quelling regional conflicts where possible.

In the Middle East in particular our effort has several aspects. One of the most important is ensuring Iraq's compliance with the

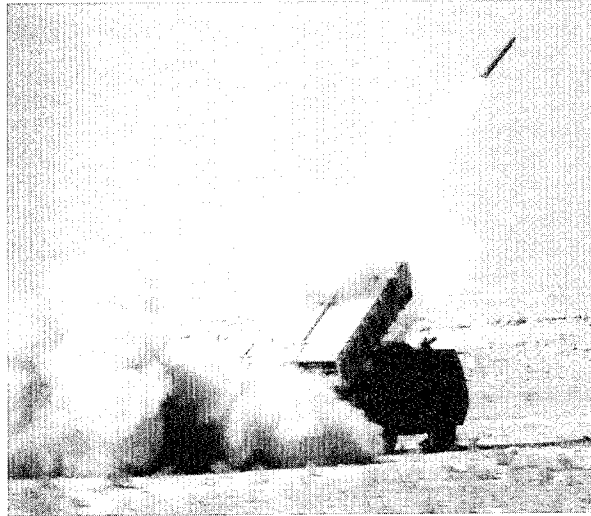
UN Security Council resolutions governing its weapons programs. The Department of Defense has provided significant support for the work of the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM), including personnel for inspections, specialized equipment and support services, and our best available expert advice on the various technologies involved in missile development and chemical, biological, and nuclear warfare. In addition, we are working with our allies to strengthen export control efforts with particular reference to Iran and Iraq.

Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, certain states will inevitably acquire WMD in some form at some point. This was demonstrated by Iraq before the Gulf war. It is being confirmed by Iran's ongoing efforts and Baghdad's own attempts to evade international controls. Given the probability that such weapons will someday be fielded by



UNSCOM, Gerald Brubaker

*U.S. Army soldiers are a vital part of UNSCOM's Chemical Destruction Group, which destroyed over 550,000 liters of Iraqi mustard and nerve agent and thousands of tons of munitions and chemical weapon precursors in 1992-1994 under the terms of UN Security Council Resolution 687.*



Joint Combat Camera

*Patriot was the only system giving any protection against tactical ballistic missiles during Operation DESERT STORM. The Department of Defense has a major effort under way to develop more capable and effective ATBM systems for deployed forces.*

our potential adversaries, we must ensure that U.S. forces can fight effectively against a foe that possesses them; we cannot allow an opponent to undercut our ability to project military power in a region as important as the Middle East. The Department of Defense has many efforts under way to protect this ability, ranging from reconfigured programs of tactical missile defense to expanded programs of passive defense against chemical and biological weapons and the development of capabilities to neutralize wmd before they can be used. Having these capabilities may be the best way to deter the use of WMD if our regional adversaries acquire them.

## U.S. Forces in the Middle East

### *Forward Presence*

A central component of U.S. strategy in the Middle East is the maintenance and

enhancement of our ability to protect our interests through military force. The peacetime presence of naval, air, and land forces is one aspect of this capability and is the key symbol of our commitment to deter regional aggressors. It also enables us to train with local forces and enhances our ability to deploy additional forces quickly without building permanent bases. Despite the clear need to maintain such a presence, however, the Middle East is distinguished by the absence of permanent U.S. military bases. Our presence instead consists of a varying mix of rotating, temporarily deployed forces and capabilities, one we have enhanced since the October 1994 VIGILANT WARRIOR operation.

For more than forty years, the U.S. presence in the Persian Gulf has included a naval surface force, comprising anywhere from two to six surface combatants plus support vessels. In recent times, we have normally kept an aircraft carrier battle group and an amphibious ready group either in the Persian Gulf itself or close enough to respond quickly in a crisis. Forces in Europe and the Mediterranean, where we have also historically maintained a carrier battle group and an amphibious ready group, provide a U.S. presence in support of interests in the Middle East west of Suez that can quickly be moved to the Red Sea or elsewhere if circumstances demand, just as the USS *George Washington* aircraft carrier battle group was moved when Iraqi troop movements threatened Kuwait in October 1994.

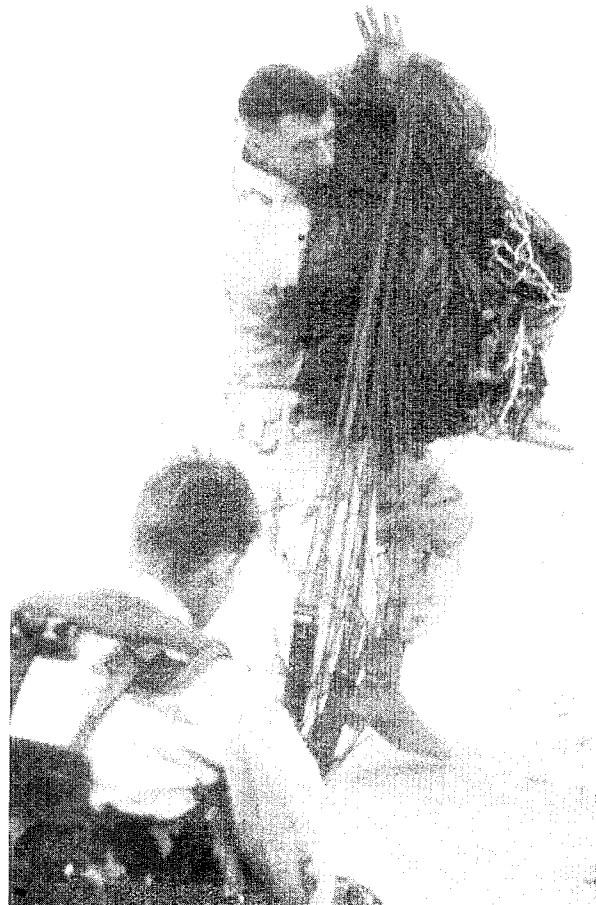
Our military presence in the Middle East has increased dramatically since the 1990 invasion of Kuwait as we and our coalition partners have continued to deter possible aggression by the Baghdad regime. Before 1990, the only U.S. combat aircraft in the Middle East, other than occasional squadrons deployed for exercises, were those

based on Navy carriers in the Arabian, Red, and Mediterranean Seas. Since then, by contrast, substantial numbers of combat aircraft operating out of the Arabian Peninsula and Turkey have enforced two no-fly zones over Iraq, north of the 36th parallel and south of the 32nd, in an effort to monitor developments and deter attempts by the Government of Iraq to violate the human rights of its citizens in defiance of UN Security Council Resolution 688. In addition, with the passage of Security Council Resolution 949 in October 1994, U.S. and British aircraft now monitor southern Iraq for any attempts by Iraq to strengthen its ground forces in violation of that resolution. The ability of U.S. air forces in the region to respond effectively to violations of Resolution 949 was enhanced by the extended deployment of A-10 attack aircraft operating out of Kuwait.

Another contrast with the pre-1990 period is that the United States also maintains a land force presence in the Gulf region, primarily through an expanded program of combined exercises with the GCC states and our other coalition partners. This program enables us to rotate Army and Marine combat units through the region periodically without resorting to the establishment of permanent bases. Before the Gulf war, the largest regularly scheduled U.S. exercise in the Middle East involving land forces was the biennial BRIGHT STAR series with Egypt. Smaller exercises were conducted with Morocco, Tunisia, and Jordan, but in the Gulf, only Oman's land forces routinely exercised with their U.S. counterparts. Since the war, we have established exercise programs of varying scopes with all of the Gulf countries. The most significant of the newly established exercises are the Army's INTRINSIC ACTION and the Marine Corps's EAGER MACE, both of which involve the deployment of battalion-sized U.S. units for extended

training with the Kuwaiti armed forces. INTRINSIC ACTION also permits U.S. forces to practice the process of falling in on equipment prepositioned in Kuwait. All told, U.S. Army and Marine units conduct nearly 20 different series of exercises in the Middle East on a regular basis, some of these as often as quarterly, the longest of them lasting up to 75 days.

In addition to these exercise programs, there are two other significant aspects of U.S. land force presence in the region since the Gulf war. First, in connection with SOUTHERN



DoD, PFC Tracey L. Leahy

*On November 5, 1994, American soldiers from the 5th Special Forces Group, along with British Royal Marines and Kuwaiti commandos, participated in a combined airborne insertion exercise in the Kuwaiti desert as part of Exercise IRIS GOLD.*

WATCH's air operations, the U.S. Army maintains a PATRIOT air defense capability in Saudi Arabia. These units can be relocated quickly in response to the evolving threat if that proves necessary. Secondly, in northern Iraq, a small but important Military Coordination Committee (MCC) made up of U.S., Turkish, British, and French military personnel is on the ground as part of Operation PROVIDE COMFORT, where it monitors local conditions including Iraqi respect for the coalition-defined security zone. The MCC also oversees the implementation of DoD-funded relief programs for the people of northern Iraq, maintains liaison with local leaders, and provides a visible presence for deterring the Iraqis and reassuring the local inhabitants.

At sea, the U.S. Navy provides the largest component of the Multinational Interception Force (MIF) that enforces economic sanctions against Iraq. Since October 1994, U.S. Navy ships have intercepted and diverted an increasing number of ships attempting to export oil and other goods from Iraq in violation of UN sanctions. In addition, DoD personnel are major participants in the efforts of the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) to preclude the revival of Iraqi WMD programs and the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM), which monitors the internationally demarcated and guaranteed border. Most importantly, U.S. forces stand ready to respond once again, if necessary, to Iraqi violations of the Gulf War cease-fire agreement and the associated UN Security Council resolutions.

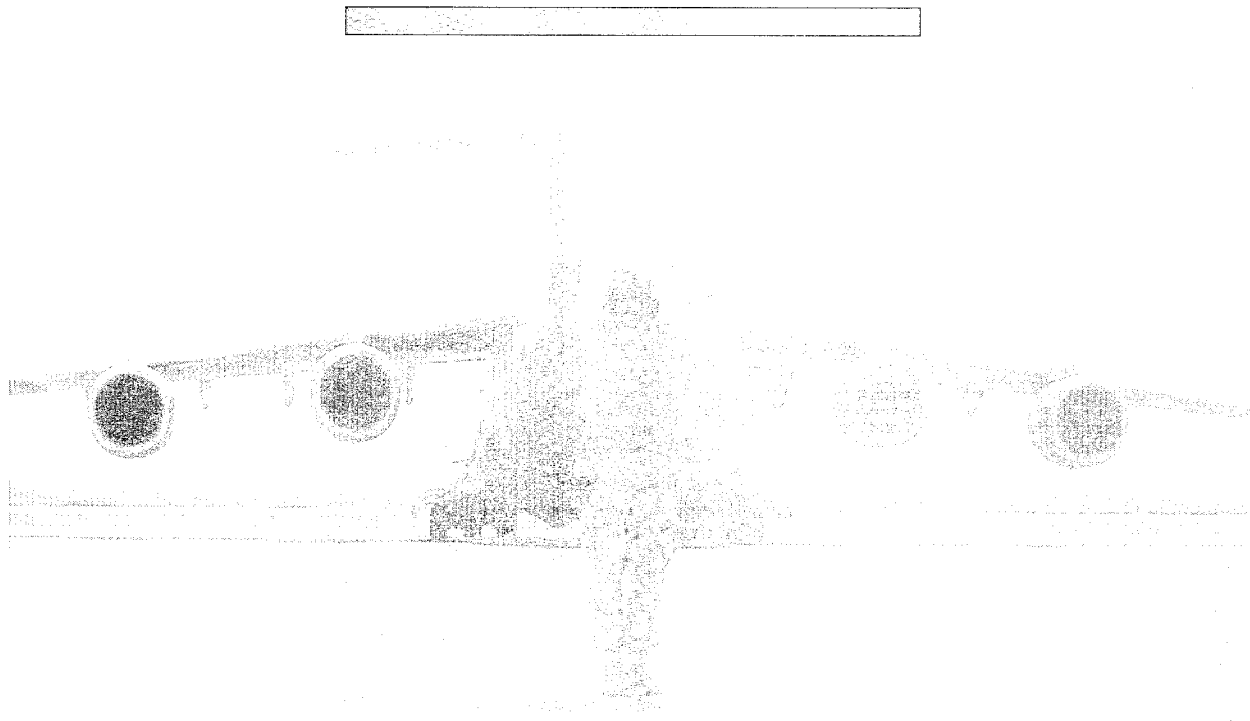
### *Rapid Response*

Peacetime force presence gives us the ability to respond immediately to threats and provocations and is the basis for an effective response to any large scale military challenge. However, despite the fact that these

forces are above the historic norm of U.S. presence in the Middle East, they are not designed by themselves to meet a full-scale attack on our areas of vital interest. While they, working together with local forces, would provide the framework on which such a defense would be built, a major regional conflict, such as another Iraqi invasion of Kuwait or Saudi Arabia, would require the dispatch of substantial U.S. and coalition forces from outside the Gulf. For that, we depend on a combination of equipment prepositioned in various Middle Eastern countries and afloat, improvements in strategic lift capabilities, continuing exercises to enhance interoperability with local forces, and access agreements with various partners in the region.

The remarkable logistical achievements of DESERT STORM, in which more than 500,000 troops, thousands of tanks, armored vehicles, missile launchers, and planes, and millions of tons of related equipment were deployed halfway around the world, illustrated the capabilities of U.S. forces to respond quickly and effectively in response to a crisis. These capabilities were enhanced by the mature U.S. logistics network in Europe and the Mediterranean and by the excellent infrastructure of seaports and air bases constructed by the Gulf countries (often with DoD assistance) over the past twenty years.

However, our next opponent is unlikely to allow us five months to reinforce and prepare for war, as Saddam Hussein did in 1990-91. Therefore, the Department of Defense, in cooperation with the United States' partners in the Middle East, is pursuing a number of enhancements to make us better able to meet this challenge. We are improving our command and control capabilities in the region and upgrading the antiarmor capability of rapidly transportable



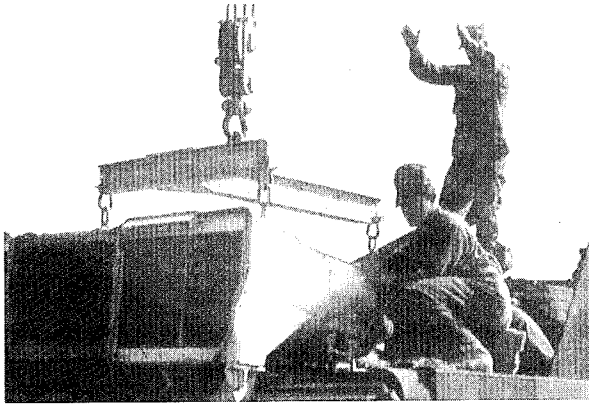
Joint Combat Camera, A1C Conrad M. Evans II

*A C-17 Globemaster III from Charleston AFB's 437th Airlift Wing is directed to a parking spot at King Abdul Aziz Air Base, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, during the VIGILANT WARRIOR deployment. The need to improve U.S. capabilities to deploy to the Persian Gulf was a fundamental element in the 1981 decision to develop the CX airlifter, now the C-17.*

units through a number of steps, including procurement of improved precision ground-attack weapons for delivery by land-based and carrier-based aircraft. We will also be making substantial improvements in our strategic mobility through increased prepositioning of stocks and equipment, both ashore and afloat, procurement of the C-17, increases in the capacity of our surge sealift fleet, and improvements in the readiness and responsiveness of the Ready Reserve Force (RRF) of cargo ships.

One of the most significant steps we have taken to shorten the time necessary to field a credible force in a crisis is to preposition heavy and bulky equipment so that units can fly in quickly, fall in on equipment already in place, and be ready to fight in days instead of weeks. The Marine Corps has had equipment for a Marine Expeditionary Brigade stored aboard an afloat maritime prepositioning squadron in the

Indian Ocean since well before DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. Since the war, the U.S. Army has prepositioned a complete armored brigade set of equipment in Kuwait and another brigade set afloat within seven days' sailing of the Gulf. Another seven ships are loaded with additional support for Army and Air Force units. The significance of the measures already taken was demonstrated by the rapidity with which U.S. forces deployed to the Gulf in response to Iraq's provocative troop movements in October 1994. Our efforts are not yet complete, however, with prepositioning due to grow substantially over the next several years. Arrangements are well under way to preposition another set of equipment for a heavy brigade, in addition to that in Kuwait, ashore in the Gulf region. A third set may be stored ashore, depending on further negotiations with possible host countries, or afloat if necessary.



DoD, PFC Tracey L. Leahy

*Equipment for a full U.S. heavy brigade is prepositioned in Kuwait to reduce crisis response time. Here a soldier from the 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized) directs a crane operator in lowering an engine into an M1A1 Abrams tank in the motor pool at Camp Doha, Kuwait, during Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR.*

## Sharing the Burden: Coalition Contributions to Regional Security

Although the United States has no formal allies in the Middle East, we do cooperate closely with a wide range of partners from inside and outside the region who share the responsibilities of cooperative security. As noted above, Egypt, Syria, and Morocco, as well as the member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council themselves, all contributed forces to the defense of Saudi Arabia and the liberation of Kuwait in 1990-91. Furthermore, both Bahrain and the UAE dispatched forces to Kuwait in October 1994 in response to the heightened Iraqi threat. We work closely with the GCC countries on our programs of prepositioning and multilateral exercises; not only do they participate fully in these combined efforts, but several of them make major contributions toward offsetting the costs of U.S. operations, either by providing support in kind or by funding part of the expense of housing and maintaining prepositioned materiel.

It is important, when evaluating the contributions made by regional countries, to keep in mind the relatively small economic base from which these contributions are financed. Even the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, generally perceived as fabulously wealthy, have a combined economic output roughly equal to that of the six New England states. Furthermore, the U.S. security partners facing the most serious threats—Israel and the moderate Gulf states—have much smaller populations from which to fill the ranks of their armed forces than do their potential adversaries.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the United States' principal security partners in the Middle East carry a substantial proportion of the defense load. Defense expenditures as a percentage of gross domestic product range from four percent in the case of Morocco and Tunisia (more than most NATO members) to highs of over 10 percent in the cases of Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Israel. The same picture appears with respect to manpower. Eight of our 11 major security partners in the Middle East have a higher proportion of their population in military service than the typical member of NATO. Despite the heavy burden that defense expenditures place on regional economies, however, these countries are scarcely over-armed by regional standards. For example, the six GCC members *combined* field enough ground troops to make up the equivalent of less than eight divisions. Iran and Iraq, by contrast, *each* possess ground forces more than twice that size.

It is because of the disparity between these friendly forces and those possessed by the principal threats to the Gulf that the United States has urged the Gulf countries to work closely with other moderate Arab states to enhance their common ability to defend the region. At the end of the war to liberate

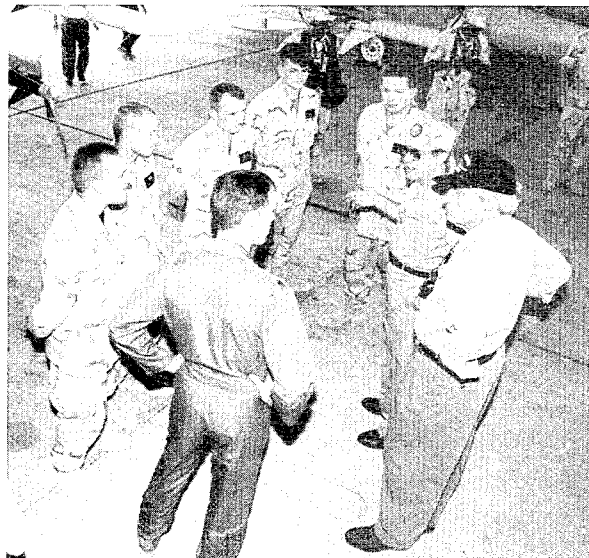
Kuwait, the six GCC members plus Egypt and Syria pledged in the "Damascus Declaration" to work in that direction. If fully put into effect, this arrangement (referred to as GCC+2) would allow Egyptian and Syrian forces to contribute more effectively to the defense of the Gulf. Considerable work remains to be done, however, if this mechanism is to realize its ambitious aims. The United States encourages its partners to find ways to take advantage of Egyptian and Syrian capabilities. We would also welcome steps to involve the smaller but highly professional forces of other moderate Arab states, some of which, such as Morocco and Jordan, have been constructively involved in Gulf security in the past. Broader participation in combined exercises is a positive development in this regard.

Beyond providing combat forces, the United States' partners in the Middle East also contribute to regional security by providing U.S. forces the use of facilities, transit rights, and other forms of access. Within the Persian Gulf, Bahrain has provided port facilities for U.S. naval forces since 1948. It also hosts the headquarters for U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, furnishes facilities for prepositioning equipment, and has granted rapid access for U.S. military aircraft when necessary. Oman has permitted the United States to preposition equipment and to have emergency access to Omani bases since 1980, an arrangement whose value has been proven repeatedly over the years. Both countries stood by these commitments during periods when cooperation with the United States carried serious political risks, a fact that attests to the courage of Bahraini and Omani leaders and to the strength of the relationships.

Under a Defense Cooperation Agreement signed in 1991, Kuwait not only allows the

United States to preposition equipment for a heavy brigade, but also pays for storage facilities, maintenance of the equipment, and operating costs of the U.S. units dispatched to Kuwait to exercise with Kuwaiti and other friendly forces. Defense cooperation agreements have also been signed to permit access and prepositioning in Bahrain, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. Finally, the Saudi record of allowing U.S. forces full use of the Kingdom's state-of-the-art military and commercial infrastructure when Washington and Riyadh have seen threats to their shared interests, and of providing substantial contributions in-kind and in-cash to offset the costs of U.S. military operations in Southwest Asia, is well known.

Elsewhere in the Middle East, other U.S. security partners also contribute to regional defense in ways beyond those measurable in terms of military forces. Many of them permit prepositioning of U.S. military equipment on their soil and access to



DoD, Helene C. Srikkel

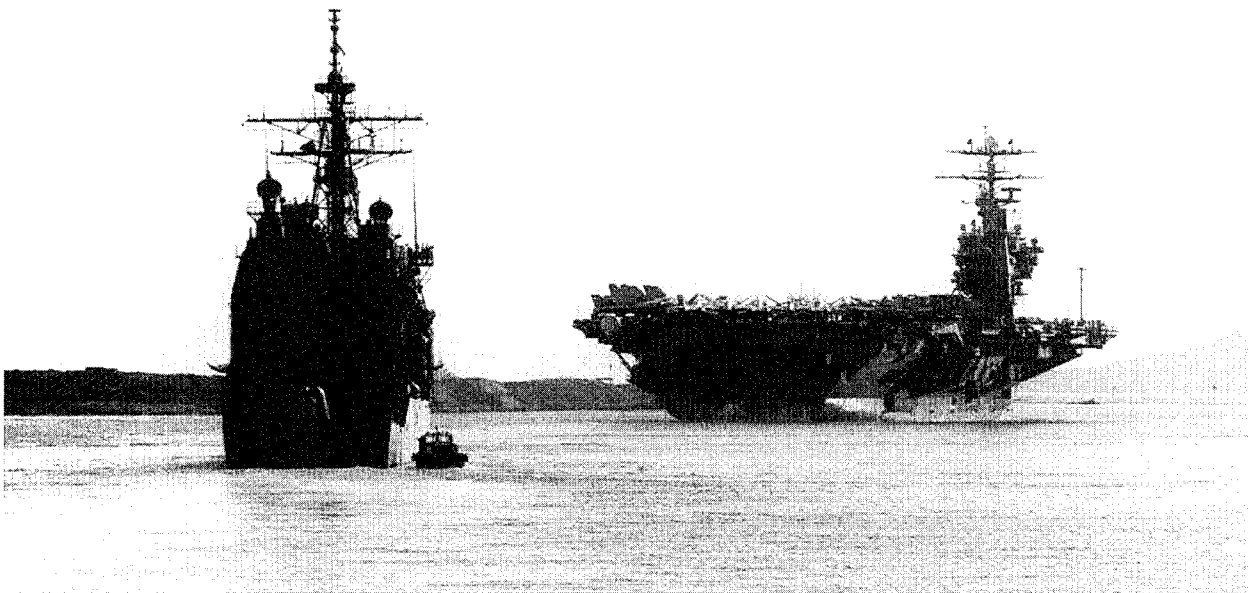
*Secretary Perry, accompanied by Senator John W. Warner (R-Va.), visits with F-16 pilots and ground crews deployed to King Abdul Aziz Air Base in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, in October 1994.*

their bases in times of crisis. Egypt plays a particularly important role in this regard. It has been through facilitating and expediting emergency transits of the Suez Canal that Egypt has made some of its most important contributions to regional security. In addition, several of our partners permit extensive use of their training facilities by U.S. forces, a benefit of special value in a time when use of such facilities in Europe is increasingly constrained by public resistance. These arrangements, especially those involving prepositioning, were instrumental in facilitating the rapid reinforcement of the Persian Gulf in October 1994.

Finally, in assessing the scope of Middle Eastern countries' contributions to international security, it is important not to omit discussion of their involvement in peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations.

Egypt, for example, has provided more than 2,000 troops for UN peacekeeping operations ranging from Mozambique to the former Soviet Union, including the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslavia, the recently concluded UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II), and others. Tunisia has been involved in UNOSOM II and the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), and sent over a thousand soldiers to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). Morocco also sent a force to UNOSOM II, while Jordan provides over 3,000 troops to UNPROFOR.

The record of non-Middle Eastern countries in protecting the security of this globally important region has been mixed by comparison. The United Kingdom and France have been actively involved in regional



Joint Combat Camera

*USS George Washington, accompanied by USS San Jacinto, passes through the Suez Canal en route to the Red Sea after President Clinton ordered the buildup of U.S. forces to counter threatening Iraqi troop movements in October 1994.*



security for a number of years and continue to play valuable roles today. In addition to their participation in Operations SOUTHERN WATCH and PROVIDE COMFORT, Britain and France both maintain peacetime naval forces in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean. Ships of the Royal Navy are active participants alongside their American counterparts in the Multinational Interception Force in the Gulf. Britain deployed a battalion-sized Royal Marine unit to Kuwait in October 1994, in response to the heightened crisis, while France keeps two infantry battalions in nearby Djibouti on a continuing basis.

After DESERT STORM, however, most of the other coalition countries that had sent forces to the Gulf gradually withdrew them. The United States, the United Kingdom, and France are currently the only extraregional members of the coalition with forces in the Gulf. Moreover, the end of the Gulf War was followed by the lapse of the arrangements by which states around the world contributed financially to the security of the region. As a result, since 1991 the burden of defending—and financing the defense of—the Persian Gulf has fallen disproportionately on relatively few countries despite the fact that the entire world has a vital interest in the stability of the region.

While we have looked to the Gulf countries to meet a substantial share of the costs of U.S. force deployments, including the incremental costs of 1994's VIGILANT WARRIOR, their resources simply do not permit this approach to be continued indefinitely, especially in the present environment of depressed oil prices, without potentially dangerous domestic fiscal and political consequences. One of the principal challenges confronting U.S. policy in the Middle East, therefore, is finding a way to share the burden of regional defense more equitably among the beneficiaries of a secure and stable Persian Gulf. As one step in this direction, the U.S. Government is working with a number of its allies to provide warships to the Persian Gulf MIF. At least five navies, in addition to those of the United States and United Kingdom, are seriously considering participation in the force beginning later this year.

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## America's Security and the Future of the Middle East

The Middle East has been a region wracked by turmoil since the decline of the Ottoman Empire and especially since the end of World War II. While there are many signs of a more hopeful future, the challenges facing the region are daunting in their complexity. Not only will the Middle East continue to face enormous difficulties even if the peace process succeeds, but the United States will still have the same national security interests in the region with or without a peace accord.

Barring a stunning technological breakthrough in harnessing alternative energy sources, the world will be even more dependent on Persian Gulf oil in the early 21st century than it is today. As long as the United States is a maritime and trading nation with global interests, we will have a stake in protecting freedom of navigation and access to regional markets. We will always seek to protect our citizens abroad, promote the values that are the core of our national identity, and support the fundamental human rights on which those values are based. Finally, we will have an interest in the security of those states in the Middle East with whom we share important interests.


Friends and foes alike can depend on the willingness of the United States to defend these interests, if necessary with military force. We have demonstrated that willingness repeatedly in the last decade.

Moreover, our ability to defend the region, already considerable, as shown in EARNEST WILL, DESERT STORM, and VIGILANT WARRIOR, grows year by year. We will continue to use a variety of means and institutions to promote regional security and stability in concert with our friends and allies around the world—the United Nations, multilateral and bilateral diplomacy, and *ad hoc* coalitions. And we will continue pressing those whose national well-being depends on the security of the Gulf to make a more realistic contribution to its security. But, at the end of the day, we will remain prepared, as we have been in the past, to defend vital U.S. interests in the Middle East unilaterally if necessary. No would-be aggressor should doubt our determination on that score.

The Middle East, like the rest of the world, is changing—sometimes almost imperceptibly, sometimes unnervingly quickly, often in ways we do not expect. However difficult we may expect the immediate future to be, the region's history of conflict and instability need not be an unalterable pattern. One thing, however, is certain: it will be much more difficult for the people of the Middle East to break the cycle of violence without the economic, political, and military engagement of the United States. This was true when the world faced up to Saddam Hussein, it has been true in the peace process, and we can be sure it will be true in the years to come.

## U.S. Military Operations in the Middle East, 1980-1995

- 1980** U.S. special operations forces attempt to rescue hostages held in Iran.
- 1980** U.S. Air Force AWACS aircraft deploy in response to a Saudi request growing out of the Iranian revolution and the Iran-Iraq war. Operations continue until 1989.
- 1981** U.S. Navy F-14s shoot down two Libyan Su-22s after the Libyans attempted to interfere with Sixth Fleet operations in the Gulf of Sidra.
- 1982** 800 U.S. Marines deployed to Lebanon as part of a Multinational Force (MNF) covering evacuation of PLO forces. Force withdraws after evacuation is completed.
- 1982** After renewed fighting erupts in Lebanon, a new, larger MNF, including 1,400 Marines, is deployed in late September. U.S. Navy warships and attack aircraft strike Shia and Druze positions in September 1983. MNF withdraws from Lebanon in early 1984.
- 1984** U.S. Navy clears mines dropped by a Libyan merchant vessel in the Red Sea.
- 1985** U.S. Navy fighters intercept and divert an airliner carrying the *Achille Lauro* hijackers.
- 1986** After Libyan forces fire on U.S. Navy units operating in the Gulf of Sidra, the Navy sinks two Libyan patrol boats and attacks a SAM site at Sirte.
- 1986** U.S. Air Force and Navy aircraft bomb targets in Tripoli and Benghazi in retaliation for a Libyan terrorist attack on a Berlin disco frequented by American service members.
- 1987** U.S. Navy begins escorting U.S.-flagged merchant vessels in the Persian Gulf. U.S. forces engage in a series of encounters with Iranian forces, including strikes on oil platforms being used as bases. Operation concludes in early 1989.
- 1989** Two U.S. Navy fighters down two Libyan warplanes conducting threatening maneuvers.
- 1990** After Iraq invades Kuwait, the United States deploys 240,000 troops to the Persian Gulf as part of a U.S.-led coalition force to defend Saudi Arabia. The U.S. force is later increased to over 500,000. Offensive operations begin January 17, 1991, and conclude six weeks later with Kuwait liberated and the Iraqi armed forces badly defeated.

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- 1991** After a failed Kurdish uprising, U.S. and coalition forces deploy to northern Iraq to reverse the flow of refugees. Coalition aircraft begin enforcing no-fly zone over northern Iraq. U.S. fighters strike Iraqi SAM sites several times. Operations continuing 1995.
- 1992** U.S. and coalition aircraft begin enforcing no-fly zone over southern Iraq. U.S. aircraft shoot down an Iraqi fighter violating the zone and strike Iraqi SAM sites on several occasions. Operations continuing 1995.
- 1993** U.S. Navy Tomahawk missiles strike an Iraqi weapons production facility after Iraq attempts to restrict activities of UN weapons inspectors.
- 1993** U.S. Navy Tomahawk missiles strike the headquarters of the Iraqi Intelligence Service in retaliation for an Iraqi-sponsored assassination plot against former President Bush.
- 1994** After Iraqis mass two Republican Guard divisions on Kuwaiti border, U.S. deploys a Marine expeditionary unit, elements of a heavy Army division, a carrier task force, and additional land-based aircraft to reinforce Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.