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322 Fourth Street NE * Washington, D.C. 20002 * (202) 546-0795

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As Substitute for Diplomacy, \$20 Billion U.S. Arms Deal Falls Short

By Travis Sharp and Katie Mounts*

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In July 2007, the United States announced the sale of \$20 billion in advanced weaponry to Saudi Arabia and its neighbors of the Gulf Cooperation Council. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are slated to receive advanced satellite-guided bomb technology known as Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAMs). Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates will receive, *inter alia*, Patriot Advanced Capability-3 and -2 (PAC-3 and PAC-2) missiles.

Bush administration officials have indicated that the \$20 billion arms deal is primarily aimed at containing Iran. Supplementary rationales for the deal include the fortification of American influence vis-à-vis peer competitors in the Middle East, future business for the United States providing spare parts, and reassurance of Gulf allies in advance of the withdrawal of U.S. combat forces from Iraq.

From 1999 to 2006, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia ranked in the top five in the Middle East for the total value of their arms transfer agreements with the United States (Egypt and Israel ranked 1st and 2nd, respectively). The United Arab Emirates received \$7 billion in arms transfer agreements (\$892 million annual average), Saudi Arabia received \$6.5 billion (\$815 million annual average), and Kuwait received \$3 billion (\$334 million annual average) during this period in inflation-adjusted Fiscal Year 2006 dollars.

The United States has consistently used deadly technologies as the currency of friendship with foreign nations. From 1999 to 2006, the value of all U.S. arms transfer agreements worldwide was slightly less than the next five highest suppliers combined (Russia, France, United Kingdom, Germany, China). The United States supplied 56% of all arms transfer agreements with the Middle East during the same period. That is five times greater than Russia's proportion, the second highest supplier, and almost twenty times greater than China's proportion.

Previous experiences with Iran and Iraq illustrate that selling arms to strategic allies can backfire if the regime or relationship changes. The United States supplied Iraq with cluster bombs and chemical weapons in the 1980s, only to fight the Iraqi military in 1991 and again in 2003 and watch helplessly in the 1980s as Saddam Hussein brutally murdered thousands of Kurds. Iran made one-third of its defense purchases from the United States during the 1970s, but the two countries are now approaching their third decade of always chilly and sometimes hostile relations.

Instead of working with countries to improve political freedom, the \$20 billion sale rewards an oppressive Saudi monarchy whose human rights record has not met expectations of improvement following the accession to the throne of King Abdullah in August 2005. Moderate Muslims throughout the world resent American involvement in the perpetuation of oppressive regimes through the sale of advanced weaponry.

* Travis Sharp is the Military Policy Analyst at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation in Washington, DC, where Katie Mounts is a Policy Associate.

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CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON THE ARMS DEAL

In July 2007, the United States announced that it planned to sell \$20 billion in advanced weaponry to Saudi Arabia and its neighbors of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC): the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman. To the chagrin of many defense experts, Saudi Arabia was expected to receive advanced satellite-guided bombs known as Joint Direct Attack Munitions (JDAMs). The United States also pledged to increase military aid to Israel by 25% (to \$30 billion) over ten years and renew aid to Egypt at an unchanged rate of \$13 billion over ten years.¹

The sale immediately ran into opposition on Capitol Hill as lawmakers on both sides of the aisle questioned the wisdom of transferring more powerful weaponry to the volatile Middle East region. Though it has managed to place restrictions on a few, Congress has not blocked an arms sale to any GCC country since the 1991 Gulf War.

An August 2 bipartisan House letter to President Bush with 114 signatories, organized by Representatives Anthony Weiner (D-NY) and Robert Wexler (D-FL), expressed deep-seated opposition to the deal. The signatories cited Saudi interference in U.S. counterterrorism efforts, such as the exportation of “fighters and suicide bombers to the war in Iraq” and “funding for terrorist activities throughout the world,” as evidence that Saudi Arabia “has not behaved like an ally of the United States.”² Reps. Weiner and Wexler also circulated a “Dear Colleague” letter in October 2007 announcing that 35 House members intended to introduce a bill blocking the JDAM sale to Saudi Arabia “the minute Congress is officially notified.”³

A November 15 bipartisan House letter to President Bush with 180 signatories, spearheaded by Representatives Mark Kirk (R-IL) and Christopher Carney (D-PA), asserted that bombs equipped with JDAM technology could potentially be used against U.S. troops. The letter further highlighted that Saudi Arabia remains in a formal state of war with Israel. Reps. Kirk and Carney’s letter argued that “Any sale of JDAM technology to Saudi Arabia must come with guarantees backed by strict conditions...regular reporting, tight Congressional oversight and intense consultations with our ally Israel.”⁴ Rep. Kirk also threatened congressional action against the deal.⁵

Since a total of 253 House members signed on to one of these two letters, the Bush administration was forced to go back to the drawing board. A State Department official told *Defense News* in early November 2007 that the administration planned to divide the larger \$20 billion package into smaller nation-by-nation packages that would be easier for Congress to digest.⁶

¹ Carah Ong and Travis Sharp, “Backgrounder on Proposed U.S. Arms Sale to the Middle East,” *Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation* (August 9, 2007), <http://www.armscontrolcenter.org/policy/iran/articles/backgrounder_us_arms_sale/index.html>.

² Representative Anthony Weiner (D-NY), “Broad Bipartisan Coalition of 114 Congressional Members Release Letter to President Bush Opposing Arms Sale to Saudi Arabia, Say Will Vote to Stop Sale,” Press Release (August 2, 2007), <http://www.house.gov/list/press/ny09_weiner/08022007saudis.html>.

³ Jim Wolf, “Saudi Arms Sale May Spark Bush-Congress Battle,” *Reuters* (December 27, 2007), <<http://www.reuters.com/article/topNews/idUSN2636464820071227>>.

⁴ Letter to President George W. Bush (November 15, 2007), <http://www.aipac.org/Publications/SourceMaterialsCongressionalAction/JDAM_Letter_to_POTUS.pdf>.

⁵ Wolf, “Saudi Arms Sale May Spark Bush-Congress Battle.”

⁶ William Matthews, “White House Tries To Assuage Lawmakers on \$20B Arms Sale,” *Defense News* (November 5, 2007).

The Arms Export Control Act stipulates that Congress must receive 30-day advance written notification of the intended sale of weapons, equipment, and services if the total value of the sale is over \$50 million. Congress may enact a joint resolution to stop an arms deal, but both houses must compile a two-thirds majority in order to override a presidential veto. If no action is taken by Congress in 30 days, the deal is almost certain to go through.⁷

The week of December 3, 2007 the U.S. agency responsible for foreign military sales, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), began to put its smaller nation-by-nation strategy into effect. It notified Congress of \$11.42 billion in planned weapons sales to Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia. The packages included Patriot Advanced Capability-3 and -2 (PAC-3 and PAC-2) missiles that provide greater defensive effectiveness against tactical ballistic and cruise missiles, as well as upgrades to E-2C Hawkeye radar aircraft and Airborne Early Warning (AEW) equipment. The proposed deals are the first time the PAC-3, the most advanced version of the Patriot anti-aircraft/missile system, has been offered to the Gulf States. The sale of advanced JDAM technology to Saudi Arabia was conspicuously omitted, however, virtually ensuring that the \$11.42 billion deal would go through. The deal's passage was further ensured because the 30-day notification period elapsed while Congress was home for the holidays.⁸

Senator Joseph Biden (D-DE), chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, pledged to closely examine the JDAM sale, telling reporters "Thus far, the justification for the sale has not been made to me."⁹ The remaining portions of the \$20 billion deal are expected to be announced in 2008.

BUSH ADMINISTRATION RATIONALE

Bush administration officials have clearly demonstrated that the \$20 billion arms deal is primarily aimed at containing Iran. Aggressive rhetoric (including President Bush's now-infamous "World War III" remark), \$60 million for democracy promotion during Fiscal Year 2008 in Iran (which has been categorically rejected by its intended Iranian recipients),¹⁰ financial sanctions (including the push for tougher U.N. sanctions), and the designations of the Revolutionary Guards Corps as a proliferator of weapons of mass destruction and its elite Quds force as a terrorist organization are all telltale signs that high-level U.S. policymakers are pushing back against what they see as Iranian over-encroachment.

⁷ See DSCA, "Foreign Military Sales Major Arms Sales Notification Process (Sec. 36(b), AECA)," Briefing (May 17, 2005), <www.fas.org/asmp/resources/govern/109th/FMS36bbriefing.ppt>, and Richard Grimmett, "Arms Sales: Congressional Review Process," *Congressional Research Service* (updated September 12, 2007), <<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/weapons/RL31675.pdf>>.

⁸ Defense Security Cooperation Agency, "United Arab Emirates – PATRIOT Advanced Capability-3 Missile System," Press Release (December 4, 2007), <http://www.dsca.mil/PressReleases/36-b/2007/UAE_08-17.pdf>, "United Arab Emirates – Upgrades/Refurbishments of E-2C Aircraft," Press Release (December 4, 2007), <http://www.dsca.mil/PressReleases/36-b/2007/UAE_08-25.pdf>, "Kuwait – PAC-3 Missiles, PAC-2 Missiles to GEM-T and PATRIOT System Upgrades," Press Release (December 4, 2007), <http://www.dsca.mil/PressReleases/36-b/2007/Kuwait_08-23.pdf>, "Saudi Arabia – Mission Equipment for AWACS Aircraft," Press Release (December 7, 2007), <http://www.dsca.mil/PressReleases/36-b/2007/Saudi_08-28.pdf>, "Saudi Arabia – AN/AAQ SNIPER Targeting Pods," Press Release (December 7, 2007), <http://www.dsca.mil/PressReleases/36-b/2007/Saudi_08-29.pdf>.

⁹ Wolf, "Saudi Arms Sale May Spark Bush-Congress Battle."

¹⁰ Carah Ong, "Congress and Iran: 2007 Review and 2008 Outlook," *Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation* (January 4, 2008), <http://www.armscontrolcenter.org/policy/iran/articles/iran_2007_review_2008_outlook/>.

A senior official involved in negotiations for the deal told the *Washington Post* on July 28, 2007 that it was “Part of a larger regional strategy... We're paying attention to the needs of our allies and what everyone in the region believes is a flexing of muscles by a more aggressive Iran. One way to deal with that is to make our allies and friends strong.”¹¹ Undersecretary of State Nicholas Burns stated on July 30, 2007 that a primary objective of the sale is to “Enable these countries to strengthen their defenses and therefore, to provide a deterrence against Iranian expansionism and Iranian aggression in the future.”¹² A few days later, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said the Gulf arms package would “Help bolster forces of moderation and support a broader strategy to counter the negative influences of al-Qaeda, Hezbollah, Syria and Iran.”¹³

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates told representatives at a conference in Bahrain in December 2007 that Gulf security cooperation should include “shared early warning, cooperative air and missile defense, and maritime security awareness.” He spoke of regional air and missile defense systems that would provide a “regional protective defense umbrella,” which one can safely assume is aimed at protecting against an attack from Iran.¹⁴

While it is central to American motivations, containing Iran is not the only objective of the \$20 billion arms sale. Arms exports to the Gulf States are seen by the United States as a way to fortify American influence vis-à-vis peer competitors in the region. According to this logic, U.S. arms sales dissuade the Gulf States from opting to purchase Russian or Chinese weapons, which would result in an increase in Russia and China's regional influence and a relative decrease in American influence. Spare parts and technology upgrades also ensure future business for the United States.

The United States may also be seeking to show commitment to Gulf allies in advance of a possible withdrawal of U.S. combat forces from Iraq. A senior defense official said July 27, 2007 that the \$20 billion arms sale was designed to assure Middle Eastern allies that “Regardless of what happens in the near-term in Iraq that our commitment in the region remains firm, remains steadfast and that, in fact, we are looking to enhance and develop it.”¹⁵ The deal aims to allay fears among allies that a U.S. troop withdrawal or reduction in Iraq will herald broader American disengagement from the international scene in general and the Middle East in particular.

It is not surprising that Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia were selected as the initial beneficiaries of the smaller packages announced by the United States in December 2007. From 1999 to 2006, these three countries ranked in the top five in the Middle East for the total value of their arms transfer agreements with the United States (Egypt and Israel ranked 1st and 2nd, respectively). The United Arab Emirates received \$7 billion in arms transfer agreements (\$892 million annual average), Saudi Arabia received \$6.5 billion (\$815 million annual average), and Kuwait got \$3 billion (\$334 million annual average) during this period in inflation-adjusted FY2006 dollars.¹⁶ Year after

¹¹ Robin Wright, “U.S. Plans New Arms Sales to Gulf Allies,” *Washington Post* (July 28, 2007), <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/07/27/AR2007072702454.html>>.

¹² R. Nicholas Burns, Press Briefing Conference Call (July 30, 2007), <<http://www.state.gov/p/us/rm/2007/89807.htm>>.

¹³ Ellen Knickmeyer, “Gulf States Buy Arms With Wary Eye On Iran,” *Washington Post* (August 4, 2007), <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/08/03/AR2007080301987.html>>.

¹⁴ Robert Gates, Remarks at the Manama Dialogue in Bahrain (December 8, 2007), <<http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1201>>.

¹⁵ David Cloud, “U.S. Set to Offer Huge Arms Deal to Saudi Arabia,” *New York Times* (July 28, 2007), <<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/28/washington/28weapons.html>>.

¹⁶ Figures include Foreign Military Construction Sales Agreements and a \$5.47 billion (FY2006 constant) licensed commercial agreement with the UAE in 2000 for 80 F-16s. Adjustments for inflation made using DOD budget deflator. See DSCA, “Historical Facts Book: As of September 30, 2006,” <<http://www.dsca.mil/programs/biz-ops/factsbook/FactsBook06.pdf>>, pps. 1-13.

year, the United States has demonstrated a willingness to funnel billions of dollars of arms into these allied countries.

**U.S. Arms Transfer Agreements with Selected Middle East Countries,
Fiscal Years 1999-2006 (in millions of constant FY 2006 U.S. dollars)**

	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02	FY 03	FY 04	FY 05	FY 06	Total FY 99-06	Average per year
Egypt	1804.21	1319.07	1437.36	929.78	853.33	2008.04	1128.96	372.72	9853.47	1231.68
Israel	1887.27	778.81	2471.65	610.6	425.16	660.94	573.94	1079.73	8488.1	1061.01
UAE	37.19	5683.37	135.4	219.66	129.69	138.16	26.05	769.13	7138.65	892.33
Saudi Arabia	686.73	596.96	593.01	763.44	616.47	1736.45	731.25	796.12	6520.43	815.05
Kuwait	74.2	158.47	248.27	901.46	294.94	104.5	99.54	791.4	2672.78	334.1
Jordan	11.19	91.46	87.63	98.3	151.11	466.93	120.72	213.65	1240.99	155.12
Oman	3.54	3.27	3.16	734.16	8.68	105.78	46.01	18	922.6	115.33
Iraq	0	0	0	0	0	0	221.89	454.4	676.29	84.54
Bahrain	42.9	144.58	104.94	88.3	95.05	68.68	25.98	93.61	664.04	83.005
Morocco	2.65	5.22	4.36	18.13	4.07	8.71	15.66	11.83	70.63	8.82875

Notes: Figures include Foreign Military Construction Sales Agreements and a \$5.47 billion licensed commercial agreement with the UAE in 2000 for 80 F-16s. Adjustments for inflation made using DOD budget deflator. See DSCA, "Historical Facts Book: As of September 30, 2006," <<http://www.dsca.mil/programs/biz-ops/factsbook/FactsBook06.pdf>>, pps. 1-13.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE DEAL

It is important to recognize the bureaucratic logic behind the aggressive U.S. containment of Iran. Many senior members of the American defense intelligentsia cut their teeth developing ways to contain the Soviet Union’s expansionist ambitions. You can’t teach an old dog new tricks, as they say, and there is a real risk that U.S. policymakers are regurgitating old, comfortable theories to try to explain away new problems.

As was regrettably the case during the Cold War, many of the Arab regimes that the U.S. continues to prop up with massive arms sales commit gross human rights violations while stifling internal democratization. America should be working with countries like Saudi Arabia to improve political freedom and women's rights; instead, the impending sale rewards an oppressive monarchy whose human rights record has not met expectations of improvement following the accession to the throne of King Abdullah in August 2005.¹⁷

Countries in the Middle East need more diplomacy and democracy, not more missiles and bombs. Although Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice previously disavowed the policy of achieving regional stability by propping up undemocratic regimes, the \$20 billion dollar arms sale exhibits a disconnect between theory and practice. Moderate Muslims throughout the world resent American involvement in the perpetuation of these oppressive regimes through the sale of advanced weaponry.

¹⁷ *Washington Post*, "Arms for 'Stability,'" Editorial (August 1, 2007), <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/07/31/AR2007073101763.html>>, and Human Rights Watch, "Saudi Arabia: Events of 2006," *World Report 2007* (released January 11, 2007), <<http://hrw.org/englishhrw2k7/docs/2007/01/11/saudia14717.htm>>.

Aggressively seeking to contain Shiite-majority Iran today could lead the United States to unintentionally promote the same type of Sunni extremism that gave rise to Al Qaeda. For example, many of the exact same Sunni extremists threatening the United States today, including Osama bin Laden, were funded and armed in Afghanistan by the United States to fight against invading Soviet forces the 1980s. Vali Nasr and Ray Takeyh, two of the foremost Iran experts in the United States, make this exact argument in the January/February 2008 issue of *Foreign Affairs*:

The last time the United States rallied the Arab world to contain Iran, in the 1980s, Americans ended up with a radicalized Sunni political culture that eventually yielded al Qaeda. The results may be as bad this time around: a containment policy will only help erect Sunni extremism as an ideological barrier to Shiite Iran, much as Saudi Arabia's rivalry with Iran in the 1980s played out in South Asia and much as radical Salafis mobilized to offset Hezbollah's soaring popularity after the Israeli-Lebanese war in 2006...Containing Iran today would mean promoting Sunni extremism - a self-defeating proposition for Washington.¹⁸

Previous experiences with Iran and Iraq illustrate that selling arms to strategic allies can backfire if the regime or relationship changes. The United States engaged in large-scale intelligence sharing with Iraq and supplied the country with cluster bombs and chemical weapons in the 1980s, only to fight the Iraqi military in 1991 and again in 2003 and watch helplessly in the 1980s as Saddam Hussein brutally murdered thousands of Kurds.¹⁹ Iran made one-third of its defense purchases from the United States during the 1970s, including F-14 fighters still in use today, but the two countries are now approaching their third decade of always chilly and sometimes hostile relations.

As for the proposition that the United States must continue to sell arms to fortify American influence vis-à-vis peer competitors like Russia and China, the data shows that the United States is in no danger of losing its arms sales dominance anytime soon. From 1999 to 2006, the value of all U.S. arms transfer agreements worldwide was slightly less than the next five highest suppliers combined (Russia, France, United Kingdom, Germany, China).²⁰ In 2003, the year of the Iraq invasion, the United States was single-handedly responsible for over half of all worldwide transfer agreements, more than three times the second highest supplier's proportion (Russia).²¹ In the Middle East, the United States' arms sale dominance is even more salient. The United States completed 56% of all arms transfer agreements with the Middle East from 1999 to 2006. That is five times greater than Russia's proportion, the second highest supplier, and almost twenty times greater than China's proportion, a country whose encroachment in supplying Middle East arms is cited as a justification for aggressive U.S. supply policies²²

¹⁸ Vali Nasr and Ray Takeyh, "The Costs of Containing Iran," *Foreign Affairs* (January/February 2008), <<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20080101faessay87106/vali-nasr-ray-takeyh/the-costs-of-containing-iran.html>>, pp. 91.

¹⁹ Michael Dobbs, "U.S. Had Key Role in Iraq Buildup," *Washington Post* (December 30, 2002).

²⁰ Richard Grimmett, "Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Nations, 1999-2006," *Congressional Research Service* (updated September 26, 2007), <<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/weapons/RL34187.pdf>>, pp. 81.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 82.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 50.

U.S.-KUWAIT RELATIONS

U.S.-Kuwait relations improved markedly during the peak years (1987-88) of the Iran-Iraq war, when the United States provided tanker reflagging and naval escort for Kuwaiti and international ships to protect them from Iranian naval attacks. The 1991 Persian Gulf War, which expelled Saddam Hussein's invading Iraqi forces from Kuwait, cemented the U.S.-Kuwait friendship. During the 1990s, Kuwait hosted approximately 1,000 U.S. Air Force personnel as part of the enforcement of the no fly zone over southern Iraq, and at least 4,000 U.S. military personnel were in Kuwait at all times during the 1990s.²³

The two countries signed a ten-year defense agreement on September 19, 1991, which was renewed for another ten years in September 2001. The text of this agreement is classified, as are most bilateral U.S. security agreements, but it reportedly provides for joint military exercises, U.S. training of Kuwaiti forces, U.S. arms sales, pre-positioning enough equipment in Kuwait to outfit one U.S. brigade, and U.S. access to Kuwaiti facilities.

After September 11, 2001, Kuwait blocked the accounts of suspected Al Qaeda operatives in Kuwait and hosted 5,000 American service personnel during the invasion of Afghanistan. Kuwait privately supported the U.S. overthrow of Saddam Hussein, although publicly it stood with its Arab allies in opposing the invasion. Kuwait provided logistical and monetary assistance, expanded basing permissions, and even closed off the northern third of its territory to host the initial U.S. Iraq invasion force of 250,000 personnel and thousands of pieces of equipment. Kuwait now hosts as many as 90,000 U.S. personnel rotating through the 140,000 member non-“surged” force in Iraq, although only roughly 10,000 Department of Defense military and civilian personnel are permanently based in Kuwait. Major Kuwaiti in-country support for the United States includes:

- (1) 90,000, mostly Army, U.S. personnel in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)
- (2) Ali Al Salem air base, hosting the U.S. 386th Air Expeditionary Group in support of OIF
- (3) Camp Arifjan, the main facility for U.S. forces in support of OIF
- (4) Camp Buehring, the firing range for U.S. training prior to OIF deployment
- (5) Camp Doha, the former main facility for U.S. forces abandoned in December 2005

The Bush administration designated Kuwait as a major non-NATO ally (MNNA) on April 1, 2004 to express appreciation for support in the war on terrorism. “Today, we must be prepared to do all that is necessary to secure a lasting peace. . . as we turn to face the future, we will stand together as we always have,” then Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said at the ceremony. “From this day forward, we will stand as allies.”²⁴ This designation as a major non-NATO ally was cited as a justification by the Defense Security Cooperation Agency for the new arms sale announced December 4, 2007. Other major non-NATO allies in the region include Bahrain, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and Pakistan.

Unlike other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Kuwait has an effective and long-serving parliament with relatively strong powers. The parliament is also relevant in national defense decisions. “The Kuwaiti parliament has made things quite hard for the armed forces in the country,” Mousa Qallab, a defense analyst at the Gulf Research Center, remarked in November 2007. “Every

²³ See Kenneth Katzman, “Kuwait: Post-Saddam Issues and U.S. Policy,” *Congressional Research Service* (updated June 29, 2005), <<http://vienna.usembassy.gov/en/download/pdf/kuwait.pdf>>, and “The Persian Gulf States: Issues for U.S. Policy,” *Congressional Research Service* (updated August 21, 2006), <<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/71857.pdf>>, pps. 8-9.

²⁴ Richard Armitage, Remarks at Ceremony Awarding Major Non-NATO Ally Status to Kuwait (delivered April 1, 2004), <<http://www.state.gov/s/d/former/armitage/remarks/31045.htm>>.

deal has to be subjected to close scrutiny by parliament, which has shelved many contracts in the past few years.”²⁵

When it comes to buying weapons, Kuwait is considered a cash customer and has encountered little resistance in the U.S. Congress. Since 1991, major U.S. foreign military sales (FMS) to Kuwait have included:

- (1) 5 Patriot anti-missile fire units, including 25 launchers and 210 Patriot missiles in 1992, worth \$800 million (delivery completed in 1998);
- (2) 40 F/A-18 Hornet combat aircraft in 1992 worth \$1.6 billion (delivery completed in 1999);
- (3) 218 M1A2 Abrams tanks in 1993 worth \$1.9 billion (delivery completed in 1998);
- (4) 16 AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopters in 2002 worth \$940 million (delivery completed in 2006).²⁶

Kuwait has not yet attempted to upgrade or increase the number of its remaining 39 F/A-18s, though it was rumored to be considering purchasing an additional 10 aircraft at one time and is still considering options to replace its 14 Mirage F-1 jets that have been in depot for the past decade.²⁷

U.S.-UNITED ARAB EMIRATES RELATIONS

The United States and United Arab Emirates did not have a close defense relationship prior to the 1991 Persian Gulf War. The UAE decided in the wake of that conflict to improve security cooperation with the United States, in large part to deter Iranian naval power. On July 25, 1994, a U.S.-UAE defense pact was signed that obligated the UAE to permit the U.S. to preposition equipment and dock ships at Jebel Ali port.

Since September 11, 2001, the UAE has assisted the United States with military operations in the Middle East despite the fact that two of the 9/11 hijackers were UAE nationals. In 2002, the UAE helped capture Abd Al Rahim Al Nashiri, a senior Al Qaeda operative. The State Department has credited UAE with denouncing regional terrorism, inspecting financial transactions, and strengthening its bureaucracy and legal framework to combat terrorism.

Strains do remain, however, in U.S.-UAE relations. The UAE’s leadership has criticized the U.S. for empowering Shiite Islamists to seize power in Iraq. Dubai was also named as a key transfer point for Pakistani nuclear scientist A.Q. Khan’s illicit smuggling ring, which sent nuclear components to Libya, Iran, and North Korea.

Major UAE in-country support for the U.S. military includes:

- (1) About 1,800, mostly Air Force, U.S. personnel in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan
- (2) Al Dhafra air base, in support of the 380th Air Expeditionary Group, KC-10, KC-135 refueling aircraft, and surveillance craft
- (3) Jebel Ali, port facilities for U.S. ships resupplying Al Dhafra air base²⁸

²⁵ Riad Kahwaji, “GCC Nations Steadily Build Air Capabilities,” *Defense News* (November 5, 2007), <<http://www.dnmgconferences.com/dubaiconf/3173454.html>>.

²⁶ Katzman, “Kuwait: Post-Saddam Issues and U.S. Policy.”

²⁷ Kahwaji, “GCC Nations Steadily Build Air Capabilities.”

²⁸ Katzman, “The Persian Gulf States: Issues for U.S. Policy,” pp. 10.

Historically a customer of France, in recent years the UAE has gone to the United States to purchase weapons systems out of a belief that doing so fortifies American commitment to UAE security. The UAE is eligible to buy or lease U.S. excess defense articles (EDA), which are U.S. military items declared to be surplus or out of service for American purposes but are considered usable as-is or with some modest refurbishments. Bahrain and Oman are eligible to receive excess defense articles on a grant-by-grant by basis, and the significantly wealthier UAE is eligible to buy or lease them.²⁹

Since 2000, major U.S. foreign military sales (FMS) to UAE include:

- (1) 80 F-16 Block 60 Desert Falcon aircraft, equipped with Advanced Medium Range Air to Air Missiles (AMRAAM) and High Speed Anti-Radiation Missiles (HARM), in 2000 worth \$8 billion (delivery completed in 2006);
- (2) 100 JAVELIN anti-tank missile launchers, with 1,000 JAVELIN missile rounds, in 2004 worth \$135 million;
- (3) 26 UH-60M Blackhawk helicopters in 2006 worth \$808 million;
- (4) Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems in 2006 worth \$750 million;
- (5) Evolved Seasparrow Ship to Air Missile in 2006 worth \$106 million³⁰

The UAE is in the middle of a large push to upgrade and procure advanced defense capabilities. Retired UAE Major General Khaled Al Bu Ainain, former Air Force commander, said in late 2007 that by 2010, the UAE Air Force would be equipped with 63 Mirage 2000-9 jets, 80 F-16 Block 60 jets, at least 36 light attack aircraft and trainers, tankers, early warning airborne platforms, unmanned aerial vehicles, a significant number of transport aircraft, and utility, medium, and heavy helicopters.³¹

U.S.-SAUDI ARABIA RELATIONS

Saudi Arabia was a key member of the allied force that expelled Saddam Hussein from Kuwait in 1991. From 1992-2003, U.S. combat aircraft based in Saudi Arabia enforced the no fly zone over Iraq, although the Saudis stipulated that the United States could not initiate strikes against Iraq's air defense and instead only could retaliate against Iraqi-initiated attacks. Due to opposition to a permanent U.S. presence in the country, however, Saudi Arabia never signed a formal defense pact with the United States. After the fall of Saddam in September 2003, most of the 6,000 U.S. personnel and all of the U.S. combat aircraft were removed from the country.³²

Since September 11, 2001 Saudi Arabia has provided some limited assistance in U.S. military operations. While not permitting the United States to fly missions out of its territory, the Saudis did offer use of the Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) at Prince Sultan Air Base, south of Riyadh, to coordinate U.S. air operations over Afghanistan. Saudi Arabia officially opposed the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, but it did permit certain support operations by U.S. and British military forces, in addition to making some facilities available to them.³³ While some commentators continue to fault Saudi Arabia for not more quickly cleaning up a domestic environment from which most of the 9/11

²⁹ Ibid., pps. 12, 14.

³⁰ See Grimmett, "Conventional Arms Transfers to Developing Nations, 1999-2006," pp. 8.

³¹ Kahwaji, "GCC Nations Steadily Build Air Capabilities."

³² Katzman, "The Persian Gulf States: Issues for U.S. Policy," pp. 8.

³³ Ibid., and Alfred Prados, "Saudi Arabia: Current Issues and U.S. Relations," *Congressional Research Service* (updated May 8, 2006), <<http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/67138.pdf>>.

hijackers came, U.S. officials generally give the country credit for increased intelligence sharing, law enforcement activities, and tracking of terrorist financing.

Since the United States withdrew most of its forces from Saudi Arabia in 2003, only about 400 U.S. military personnel remain in the country today to train the Saudi military.

The United States has long held the dubious distinction of being the top arms supplier to Saudi Arabia. The U.S. sent \$14 billion in arms to Saudi Arabia during the Gulf War, and in the immediate aftermath the Saudis made several more large purchases. Saudi arms procurement has declined since the mid-1990s as Saudi Arabia completed many of its post-Gulf War purchases and the country faced more restricted finances.³⁴

Major announced U.S. foreign military sales to Saudi Arabia include:

- (1) 72 F-15S fighter aircraft in 1993 worth \$9 billion;
- (2) 315 M1A2 Abrams tanks in 1992 worth \$2.9 billion;
- (3) 18 Patriot firing units worth \$4.1 billion;
- (4) 24 UH-60L Black Hawk helicopters, 58 M1A2S Abrams tanks, 724 light-armored vehicles, 1,700 night vision goggles, thousands of radio systems, and upgrades for 315 M1A2 tanks and 12 AH-64A Apache attack helicopters already in the Saudi arsenal, in 2006 worth \$9.7 billion.³⁵

Saudi Arabia also agreed in September 2007 to purchase 72 Eurofighter Typhoon aircraft worth \$9 billion produced by UK contractor BAE Systems. The Royal Saudi Air Force will receive its first Typhoon in mid-2009.³⁶

³⁴ Prados, "Saudi Arabia: Current Issues and U.S. Relations," pp. 8.

³⁵ See Katzman, "The Persian Gulf States: Issues for U.S. Policy," pp. 15, and Wade Boese, "Pakistan, Saudi Arabia Cleared for U.S. Arms Buys," *Arms Control Association* (September 2006), <http://www.armscontrol.org/act/2006_09/armsbuys.asp>.

³⁶ Craig Hoyle, "Saudi Arabia's Eurofighter Typhoon Deal Gets Final Confirmation," *Flight Online* (December 6, 2007), <<http://www.flightglobal.com/articles/2007/12/06/220135/saudi-arabias-eurofighter-typhoon-deal-gets-final-confirmation.html>>.