

Regional Foreign Policy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Vokhidov Sukhrob Olimjon o'g'li

National University of Uzbekistan

Article Information

Received: November 29, 2022

Accepted: December 30, 2022

Published: January 31, 2023

Keywords: Saudi, relations, Islamic, Organization of the Islamic Conference.

ABSTRACT

Currently, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has an important regional and global importance in the system of international relations. In fact, it is the leader of the Arab world and has grounds to play an important role on the world stage. Like any country, SA has its own foreign policy priorities. For them, relations with the countries of the Persian Gulf, which is a member of the Cooperation Council of the Arab States of the Persian Gulf (GCC), are important. Relations with the Arab countries that are members of the League of Arab States (ADL) are in the next place. In general, a lot of attention is paid to the entire Islamic world. In 1969, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) was established at the initiative of SA in order to realize the unity of Muslim countries, as well as to protect their interests. Saudi Arabia is increasingly consolidating its position as a major actor in world politics as it works to resolve its many pressing international and domestic challenges. It depends on a number of objective factors.

According to the famous Russian scientist G. I. Mirsky, "the factor of religious leadership, it is known that the number of Muslims in the world is growing faster than the number of adherents of other religions (their number is at least 1.3 billion)". Second, SA generates 15 percent of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) GDP (and a quarter of the Arab world's GDP according to the latest IMF data), making it an economic engine and effective partner for the region, the country is the only G20 member in the Arab world. is a state. Third, the Saudi stock market accounts for more than 50 percent of the total capitalization of the Middle East and North Africa stock market, and Saudi companies account for five of the 10 largest companies in the region, led by conglomerates such as Saudi Aramco. Fourth, the Central Bank of the Kingdom ranks third in the world in terms of foreign exchange reserves and has 850 billion US dollars at its disposal[4]. Fifth, the Kingdom's national oil company, Saudi Aramco, is the world's largest oil producer and exporter and has the largest infrastructure in the world, with production of about 12.5 million barrels per day. A member of the royal family, Prince Turki bin Faisal al Saud spoke very well about the position of Saudi Arabia in the modern world: "Along with these impressive numbers, our nation is a peninsula, but not an island. The lack of changes and updates is under my name, looking at our neighbors[4]. Our neighbors are always with us. We must deal with them as they should be dealt with. As for changes, our common goal with other nations is to maintain the stability of our neighbors by any means possible and strengthen our ties with allies in the region and beyond. Saudi Arabia firmly believes that peace in the region should be at the top of its agenda for the next decade. This peace can only be achieved through cooperation built on trust, dialogue and interaction. Therefore, Saudi Arabia plays a leading role in negotiations with conflicting parties and nations. In addition, Western countries firmly believe that development is the most important security issue in the coming decade. There must be economic, political and social progress for the people as well as governments in the Middle East, which means that peace, not conflict, is the key to prosperity[1]".

Thus, Saudi Arabia seeks to maintain its leading position in this region as not only the dominant economic giant in the region, but also the most influential country in the Islamic world. Based on this, it is possible to analyze the main directions of Saudi Arabia's foreign policy activity in the Middle East region in the last decade. SA's relations with neighboring countries have also become the basis for some aspects that cause problems not only for the designated region, but for the entire world community. Saudi Arabia's policy towards Iran is undoubtedly of interest. Since the Iranian revolution, the leadership of this country has shown itself to be a passionate fighter for the "purity of Islam". Iran positions itself as the leader not only of the world's Shiite minority, but of all Muslim revolutionaries interested in opposing the West[5].

And Saudi Arabia does not want to oppose the West, and this is important, unlike the position of Iran, the country is the guardian of the two Holy Mosques and the homeland of Islam. Saudi Arabia also shows a negative attitude towards Iran's nuclear program. He is interested in the Iranian leadership to stop working in this direction. In order to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Middle East, Saudi Arabia invited the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council to carefully consider all options for nuclear deterrence. For this purpose, a regime of economic, political and military sanctions should be introduced against countries that are trying to produce weapons of mass destruction [4].

Another issue for Saudi Arabia to focus on in the next decade is the intervention of the Iranian leadership in countries with Shia majorities (Iraq and Bahrain) as well as countries with minority Shia communities (Kuwait, Lebanon and Yemen).

As for Saudi Arabia's relations with Iraq, we note that this country has a rich history as a key member of the "Arab community". Iraq was an important power in the Arab world. Iraq is one of the founders of the Arab League and OPEC. There are people and groups of people in Iraq who are completely indebted to Iran, which is not only unacceptable, but also has bad implications for the future ethnic and religious diversity of the country. This is the main reason why SA continues to distance itself from all Iraqi factions [3]. Nevertheless, I would like to emphasize that there is still serious doubt in Riyadh about the structure of the current Iraqi government. SA is the only country that does not send an ambassador to Iraq. What is the reason for this? Here is one example. An Iranian general in Baghdad weeks before the formation of Iraq's current government held talks with Shiite and Kurdish groups on behalf of the current prime minister and sought support for the new mandate. Saudi Arabia cannot agree with them, and the royal government is doing everything in its power to put an end to this. In general, Riyadh intends to continue working with the Iraqi people to ensure that their country becomes an independent member of the Arab world [2].

An important area of regional foreign policy for SA is relations with Yemen. For Riyadh, an increasingly unstable Yemen poses a huge security threat due to the possibility of terrorism taking root. With a population of more than 20 million, this southwestern corner of the Arabian Peninsula has been the scene of al-Qaeda activity and where Osama bin Laden set up training camps in the 1990s[3]. This is mainly due to the fact that the power of Yemen's central government in the mountainous regions, outside the capital and other cities is partially nominal. The extremists have reportedly struck a supply and protection deal with local tribal chiefs, establishing a sanctuary unlike any other in Pakistan's tribal areas.

The official position of Saudi Arabia towards Yemen was announced by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia, Prince Faisal: "The Kingdom has a program of economic and financial support to the Yemeni people for decades. Currently, the program is suspended until the situation in the country stabilizes. We have three options[10]. We are strengthening our borders to keep Yemeni refugees and al Qaeda terrorists out of our country, and we are also improving the quality of our counterintelligence to identify and destroy al Qaeda in Yemen. In addition, we continue to work with the world community to eliminate the threat of terrorism."

Egypt occupies a special place in the foreign policy of KSA. It is a close and historically important country for Riyadh. The King of Saudi Arabia has maintained close relations with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak for more than three decades. However, President H. As soon as Mubarak stepped down, King Abdullah not only recognized the new reality, but extended a hand of friendship and financial support to the new president[9]. However, it turned out that the new leadership, which was completely indebted to the Muslim Brotherhood, was incapable of running the country. Once in power, the majority of the Egyptian population refused to support the new leaders and demanded a referendum on the legitimacy of the president.

Millions asked the military to restore legitimacy and dignity, and they did. To save the Egyptian state from disaster, they handed over power to a newly appointed interim civilian government. In order to return to normalcy, the Egyptian government released a four-month plan that includes constitutional, parliamentary and presidential elections. King Abdullah was the first to congratulate the Egyptian leadership[8].

Bahrain is geographically and historically closest to Saudi Arabia. Immediately after the 1979 revolution in Iran, Khomeini began to promote the ideas of revolution in all Muslim countries. This led to an outbreak of violence not only in Muslim countries but also among Shia communities in other states. Those who argue that the recent unrest was not inspired by Iran forget that the movements that created Khomeini still exist in Bahrain. Iranian officials have often made statements that Bahrain is one of Iran's provinces. When Bahrain's King Hamad sent his crown prince to negotiate with protesters demanding social and economic change in the capital Manama, the Kingdom openly supported and continues to support negotiations [7].

Of course, without taking into account the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, a complete analysis of the Kingdom's position towards the region cannot be considered complete, because one of the main directions of KSA's foreign policy at the regional level is the country's participation in the resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict and its component - the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Saudi Arabia's diplomacy sees the Palestinian issue as the "central link" of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Israel's reluctance to end its illegal settlement and continued refusal to give Palestinians a home is the main reason this conflict continues. There are many proposals for resolving this conflict, most of which are completely reasonable, fair and viable.

References:

1. Confidential // Records of Saudi Arabia, 1966-1971. Vol. IV, 1969 / Ed. by A. Burdett. CAE, 2004. International Herald Tribune, 14.11.1973
2. Djuraev Ravshan Xurramovich. The role of livestock products in the foreign trade of Uzbekistan in 1917-1941 years. EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal. Volume: 6 | Issue: 8 | August 2020 || Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor: 7.032 || ISI Value: 1.188. – Pp. 250-252.
3. Bhadrakumar M.K. The Saudi anger has many faces.// URL:<http://www.strategic-culture.org/news/2013/12/24/the-saudi-anger-has-many-faces-i.html> (дата обращения: 22.04.2016)
4. Djuraev Ravshan Xurramovich. Livestock situation and problems in Fergana region. SJIF Impact Factor: 6.260| ISI I.F. Value: 1.241| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2016 . ISSN: 2455-7838(Online). EPRA International Journal of Research and Development (IJRD) Volume: 5 | Issue: 3 | March 2020. – Pp. 194-196. Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36713/epra4072>.
5. British Embassy, Jeddah. Memorandum: Saudi Foreign Policy. April 3,
6. Раджабов О.А. История развития железнодорожного транспорта в Узбекистане // Актуальные вопросы, открытия и достижения: сборник статей XXVIII

- Международной научно-практической конференции. – Пенза: МЦНС «Наука и Просвещение», 2021. – С. 94-97.
7. Landis J. Iran and Arab. *The Economist*, December 19, 2007. URL: http://www.economist.com/displaystory.cfm?story_ID=EI_TDPNRNRY (25.04.2016)
 8. Radjabov Ozodbek. *Railways of Uzbekistan During the Second World War* // *European Journal of Life Safety and Stability (EJLSS)* ISSN 2660-9630. – Volume 11, 2021. – Pp.195-197. (№23. SJIF Impact Factor 2021:5,63).
 9. Liban: URL: http://www.lemonde.fr/procheorient/article/2008/05/07/liban-beyrouth-analysee-par-une-greve-generalesoutenu-par-l-opposition_1041825_3218.html (10.04.2016)
 10. Раджабов О.А. Взгляд на историю железных дорог Узбекской ССР в 1930-1935 гг. // *World science: problems and innovations: сборник статей LIX Международной научно-практической конференции.* – Пенза: МЦНС «Наука и Просвещение». 2021. – С. 99-102.