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USCENTCOM Regional & Population Dynamics Project
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Futures Study
with an
Assessment of Syrian Refugee Camp Radicalization Dynamics

FINAL REPORT



Prepared by:

TRADOC G-2
Modeling and Simulation Directorate
Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027

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Analysis Team:

Study Lead: Mr. Howard E. Lee, Senior Research Analyst, DoD Contactor, TRADOC G-2
Dr. Jumanne Donahue, Senior Athena Analyst / Modeler, DoD Contactor, TRADOC G-2
Mr. Nathan 'Luke' Roth, Athena Analyst / Modeler, DoD Contactor, TRADOC G-2
Dr. David Hunter-Chester, Senior Research Analyst, DoD Contactor, TRADOC G-2

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Executive Summary

At the request of the United States Central Command (USCENTCOM), the Joint Staff J-39 Strategic Multilayer Assessment (SMA) conducted a study to understand the strategic implications of destabilizing population dynamics within the Central Region. The SMA considered drivers of instability in the region to include long-term internally displaced persons and refugees, spread of radical ideologies and extremism, great power competition, disruptive non-state actors, and the potential for “black swan” scenarios.

In support of USCENTCOM and the SMA, the TRADOC G-2 Modeling and Simulations Directorate (MSD) employed the Athena Simulation to address a series of research questions posed by USCENTCOM to better understand the strategic implications of destabilizing population dynamics within the Central Region. USCENTCOM provided 24 questions for assessment, of those, two were selected for Athena-based analysis:

Question A7 - What happens if there is a revolt in the House of Saud? What happens if there is a collapse of the House of Saud? Will Wahhabi clerics seize or attempt to seize control? Do Saudi forces (especially SANG) stay loyal?

Question B5 – How do you protect an at-risk population from extremism in an IDP/refugee camp? How do you build community resilience to help prevent radicalization? How do you triage and segregate persons in IDP/refugee camps that have varying degrees of radicalization?

This Final Report compiles the insights derived by the Athena team from research, Subject Matter Expert (SME) engagements, Athena Simulation runs, and the collaborative analysis conducted with other members of the SMA community of interest.

The Athena Simulation is a sociocultural modeling capability that provides decision makers an improved understanding of the intended and unintended consequences, the second and third order effects, of their engagement options (police/military force activities, economic engagements, information operations, etc.) upon noncombatant populations when viewed across the entirety of the Operational Environment.

Two separate instantiations of the Athena Simulation were used to model potential regional futures. In the first, an assessment of possible regime change dynamics in the House of Saud was conducted. In the second assessment, various radicalization disengagement intervention strategies were modeled and evaluated using a simulated population from the Al-Hawl Refugee Camp in Hasakah, Syria.

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To inform the study objectives and provide an improved understanding of the underlying political, economic and sociocultural dynamics at work in each of these studies, multiple scenario use cases were employed to provide a range of possible futures. These use cases defined conditions leading to modeling outcomes that enabled a comparative analysis of Athena results to be conducted.

Use Cases (Saudi Arabia Regime Change Database):

- Use Case #1 (Progressive) establishes a set of conditions in Saudi Arabia reflecting the implementation of a progressive agenda by of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman upon his assumption of the throne.
- Use Case #2 (Traditional) reflects conditions in Saudi Arabia during a period in which the leadership of the country reestablishes a more traditional set of Islamic standards of conduct under the leadership of Mohammed bin Nayef.
- Use Case #3 (Coup) introduces a set of conditions in Saudi Arabia reflecting a period of significant turmoil following the death of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud in which hardline traditionalists launch a coup to seize control of the regime.

Use Cases (Syria Refugee Camp Radicalization Database)

- Use Case #1 (Status Quo) reflects conditions of the Al-Hawl Refugee Camp¹ with 400 SDF² guard personnel and approximately 70,000 ISIL³ affiliated detainees, no official economic activity or legitimate jobs, and insufficient social services.
- Use Case #2 (Diversion through Work) represents a disengagement intervention that establishes an official economy in Al-Hawl along with jobs and consumables. All other factors (guard force, ISIL affiliates, etc.) in the camp remain unchanged. There are insufficient SDF personnel to properly secure the detainees and they are not given sufficient food and health services.
- Use Case #3 (Holistic Disengagement) portrays a disengagement intervention that combines increasing the size of the SDF guard force and reflecting that they are more culturally sensitive and compassionate towards detainees. Additionally, detainees are provided sufficient health and food services, while an official economy is simultaneously being established.

¹ The al-Hawl refugee camp is located on the southern outskirts of the town of al-Hawl in northern Syria. It holds individuals displaced from Islamic State group-occupied territory. It is controlled by the US-backed SDF.

² SDF - Syrian Democratic Forces. The SDF is an alliance in the Syrian Civil War composed primarily of Kurdish, Arab, and Assyrian/Syriac militias. The SDF is militarily led by the People's Protection Units (YPG), a mostly Kurdish militia.

³ ISIL - Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. ISIL is also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), is a terrorist militant group that follows a fundamentalist, Salafi jihadist doctrine of Sunni Islam.

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A combination of research, SME engagements, and Athena Simulation modeling and analysis produced the following insights:

Saudi Arabia Regime Change Insights:

Insight #1. The Progressive Agenda (Vision 2030) being implemented by Saudi leadership could be at risk if implemented too aggressively.

Insight #2. The civilian population has greater overall satisfaction with the conditions in Saudi Arabia established under the Progressive Agenda than they do under the more hardline traditionalist future.

Insight #3. The Saudi youth population is a key societal demographic that can sway Saudi Arabia towards the progressive agenda goals or toward more traditional hardline values depending on how it is engaged and/or influenced.

Insight #4. A coup in Saudi Arabia is unlikely to succeed unless a significant portion of the Saudi Arabian National Guard supports the rebellion.

Insight #5. The Progressive Agenda (Vision 2030) being implemented by Mohammed bin Salman leads to economically better conditions across all population groups despite how particular groups feel about the Progressive Agenda.

Insight #6. The Wahhabi clerics will not have sufficient long-term popular support to effectively seize control of the government.

Insight #7. Population satisfaction declines across all civilian groups if US forces remain deployed indefinitely in control of the oil producing region and resources of Saudi Arabia.

Radicalization Insights:

Insight #1. To mitigate radicalization, increases in social services and economic support need to be paired with the introduction of a robust, competent and ideologically compatible security force.

Insight #2. Establishing a conditional process for managing the distribution of social services and economic incentives is an effective strategy for disengaging at-risk populations from potential radicalization.

Conclusions.

The Athena Simulation was utilized to computationally model potential futures in order to assess the implications of regime change in Saudi Arabia, as well as for gaining an improved understanding of how Syrian refugee populations might be radicalized. Results of this Athena modeling provided insights that informed the development of conclusions which have been aligned the two primary CENTCOM research questions.

Question A7 - What happens if there is a revolt in the House of Saud? What happens if there is a collapse of the House of Saud? Will Wahhabi clerics seize or attempt to seize control? Do Saudi forces (especially SANG) stay loyal?

- 1) If there is a revolt in the House of Saud leading it to shift away from the emerging progressive agenda, it appears unlikely that the House of Saud would collapse and enable another external actor to take control.
- 2) If there is a transition in the House of Saud from its progressive agenda towards a more hardline future state, the existing regime/royal family line would be expected to continue to exert control over the kingdom.
- 3) The Wahhabi clerics will continue to exert significant influence over the leadership and agenda of the Saudi royal family; however, they do not appear to have the popular support necessary to shift the KSA into becoming a theocracy (like Iran).
- 4) Portions of the SANG might be expected to align with many of the hardline religious beliefs espoused by the royal hardliners and Wahhabi clerics; however, there does not appear to be sufficient support across the SANG to generate the strength necessary to create a regime change.

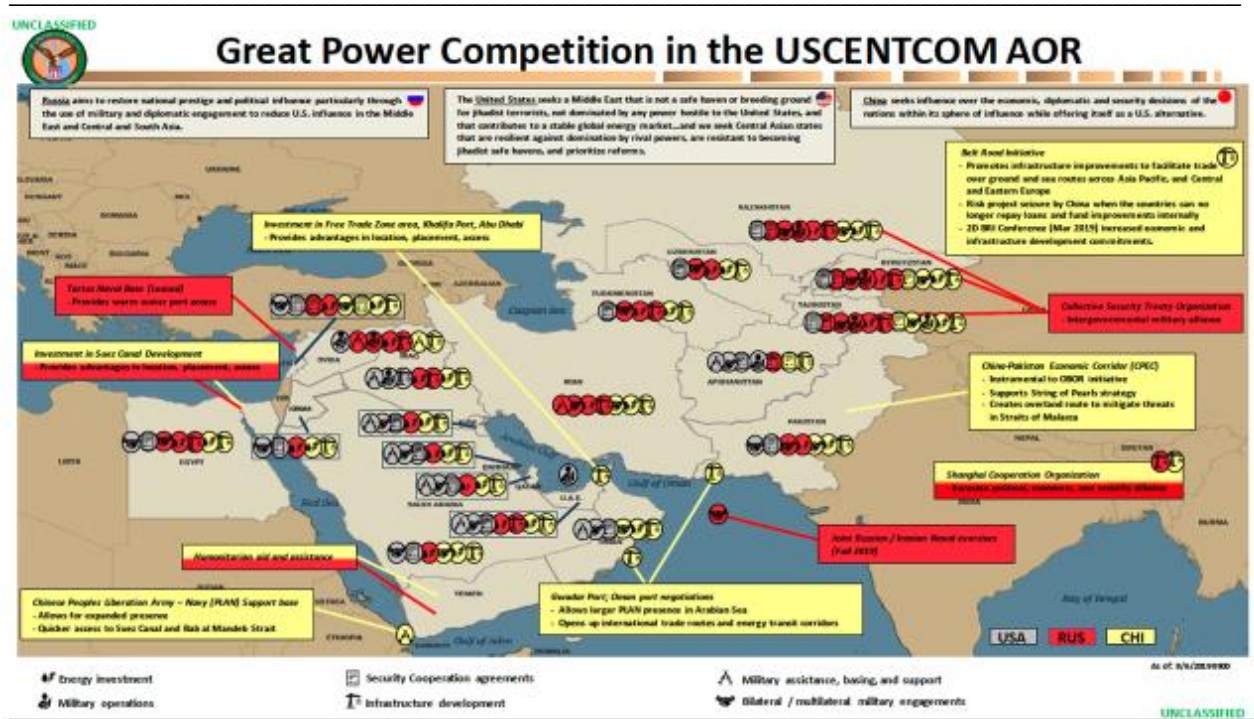
Question B5 – How do you protect an at-risk population from extremism in an IDP/refugee camp? How do you build community resilience to help prevent radicalization? How do you triage and segregate persons in IDP/refugee camps that have varying degrees of radicalization?

- 1) Employing a process that distributes economic resources and social services on a conditional basis can be an effective means for mitigating the amount of influence exerted by an extremist organization over a refugee population.
- 2) Refugee populations are less at-risk of becoming radicalized if the distribution of social services and economic assistance is paired with a robust, competent and ideologically compatible security force.

Chapter 1: Project Overview and Study Approach

Introduction. The Joint Staff J-39 Strategic Multilayer Assessment provides regional insight and planning support to commands with complex operational requirements requiring multi-agency, multi-disciplinary solutions that are not within core Service/Agency competency. Solutions and participants are sought from across the US Government and beyond. The SMA is accepted and synchronized by the Joint Staff J-39 Deputy Director of Global Operations (DDGO).

At the request of USCENTCOM, the SMA is initiating a study to understand the strategic implications of destabilizing population dynamics within the Central Region. SMA will consider drivers of instability in the region to include long-term internally displaced persons and refugees, spread of radical ideologies and extremism, great power competition, disruptive non-state actors, and the potential for “black swan” scenarios.



Great Power Competition in the USCENTCOM Area of Responsibility

Task Statement. In support of USCENTCOM and the SMA, the TRADOC G-2 Modeling and Simulations Directorate will employ the Athena Simulation to address a series of research questions posed by CENTCOM that will explore the strategic implications of destabilizing population dynamics within the Central Region.

CENTCOM Research Question. What are the strategic implications of destabilizing political, economic, and population dynamics in the Central Region? Which of these

dynamics might produce conditions that upset regional stability, exacerbate great power competition in ways that challenge US interests, or produce opportunities for great power cooperation?

Research Question Assessment. The Athena team assessed the list of 24 CENTCOM questions and identified two that Athena-based modeling informed. They are:

Question A7 - What happens if there is a revolt in the House of Saud? What happens if there is a collapse of the House of Saud? Will Wahhabi clerics seize or attempt to seize control? Do Saudi forces (especially SANG) stay loyal?

Question B5 – How do you protect an at-risk population from extremism in an IDP/refugee camp? How do you build community resilience to help prevent radicalization? How do you triage and segregate persons in IDP/refugee camps that have varying degrees of radicalization?

Study Design. Two separate instantiations of the Athena Simulation were used to model potential regional futures.

Saudi Arabia Regime Change Database. In the first, an assessment of possible regime change dynamics in the House of Saud was conducted. The design proposed three regime change options, the first reflecting the implementation of a progressive, liberalization agenda, the second calling for an evaluation of a reasserting of traditional hardline Islamic standards of conduct, and in the third, the implications of a place revolt (coup) were explored.

Syria Refugee Camp Radicalization Database. In the second, the study tested various disengagement intervention strategies on a simulated population from the Al-Hawl Refugee Camp in Hasakah, Syria. The interventions were intended to provide plausible minimum disengagement avenues—separating ISIL detainees from their radical ideology⁴. The more complex phenomena of ‘de-radicalization’ was not modeled. The interventions were constructed of three factors: 1) providing security to the detainees, 2) dispensing social services, and 3) increasing the economic infrastructure.

Questions Architecture. Based on the overarching SMA research question and the two CENTCOM questions identified for an Athena-based study, two specific lines of analysis were identified. The first focused on regime change in Saudi Arabia and the second on

⁴ Dr. Noémie Bouhana of University College London Department of Security and Crime Science and radicalization scholar asserted on a SMA call that in Al-Hawl, detainees adopt extreme beliefs for material and social advantages. Further, if you want to counter radicalization, then you need to separate people from the advantages of it.

radicalization of refugee populations in Syria. From these lines of effort two distinct Athena Study Questions were developed and decomposed into a questions architecture which informs the design of this Athena modeling effort. See Annex A for the full questions architecture.

Athena Study Question: What are the political, economic and sociocultural implications of destabilizing states and local noncombatant populations within the Central Region?

Objective 1.0 – Describe the in-country and regional impacts of regime change in Saudi Arabia.

Objective 2.0 – Explore the process of radicalization of at-risk populations located in Refugee camps as a consequence of violence and regime instability in Syria.

The Athena Simulation. The primary computational modeling tool employed in support of this study was the Athena Simulation. Athena is a sociocultural modeling capability which supports a decision maker by providing both a framework to better understand complex multivariate problems and a simulation for anticipating the long-term consequences of engagement choices across the totality of the operational environment, as described by the acronym PMESII-PT⁵.

Athena Simulation Description. Athena is a scalable, single user, laptop-based, course of action development and analysis capability used to anticipate the consequences of various DIME-FIL⁶ engagement activities upon noncombatant populations. Athena enables the analysis of second and third order effects upon local civilian groups and those group's possible responses in order to discern potential outcomes from political, military, economic and social interventions. Athena allows leaders and analysts to understand the intended and unintended effects of their proposed actions through a simulation process that incorporates social science 'universals' into course of action analysis and campaign planning. It enables the examination of interdependent political, economic, security/military, and information dynamics; anticipation of emergent actors, factions, and powerbases; and compares and contrasts multiple courses of action.

The Athena simulation is designed to be culturally agnostic, i.e., to generate results which will allow the system to be applicable anywhere in the world. To accomplish this, the social science universals are mapped into Athena group satisfaction vis-à-vis four common concerns. The four concerns are: 1) autonomy with respect to governance, i.e., the group's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with extant governance and/or a group's ability

⁵ PMESII-PT -- Political, Military, Economic, Social, Infrastructure, Information, Physical Environment, and Time

⁶ DIME-FIL -- Diplomatic, Information, Military, Economic, Financial, Intelligence and Law Enforcement

to influence governance; 2) quality of life, i.e., whether the actor or group is satisfied or dissatisfied with their life conditions which include things like employment, healthcare, infrastructure, education, availability of food and water, etc.; 3) culture, i.e., whether one's sacred sites, artifacts, traditions and taboos are respected or denigrated; and 4) safety, i.e., whether the individual or group feels secure in their environment and to what extent. Each of the four concerns is assigned a relevant saliency differentiating between one group and another, what is the most important concern and weighting that appropriately. The four concerns together translate into a group mood weighted by the group's saliency for each concern. The concerns are a representation of how much a group desires change based on impact on those concerns. See Annex B for an expanded description of the Athena Simulation.

Constraints – Limitations – Assumptions.

Constraints.

- Availability of time to fully execute the study, make all necessary modeling runs, analyze the results, and compile those into a comprehensive report.
- Availability of quantitative data to fully inform the study objectives.
- Availability of funding to support travel to the Pentagon and/or CENTCOM Headquarters to meet with SMEs and members of the CENTCOM staff.
- Accessibility of CENTCOM staff to address study design questions.
- Availability of SMEs to provide regional information, provide data sources, and/or assess collected data.
- The level of classification. The intent was to keep this study at the unclassified level which limits access to various types of data as well as bounding potential scenario designs.

Limitations.

- The study is limited by the ability of the Athena Simulation to fully model all aspects of the question architecture.
- The Athena post-processor can only calculate a finite number of regional actors so the size of the primary database is limited.

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- The study is limited by the information available and the accuracy of that information based upon known misrepresentations and skewed reporting by the primary governments involved (Saudi Arabia, Iran, China and Russia).
- Availability of SMEs to review and approve the Athena data interpretations and/or to support the assessment of analytic insights.

Scenario Planning Assumptions.

- There will be no global economic downturn during the study timeframe.
- External actors (e.g., China, Russia, etc.) will remain committed to current policies.
- Muhammad bin Nayef (MbN) was the Crown Prince, which is the historic position for the individual who will be elevated to King in KSA. He was however, sidelined by King Salman and Mohammed bin Salman (MbS) was promoted to Crown Prince in 2017⁷. MbN therefore, has a legitimate claim to the throne which he, in coordination with royal hardliners and members of the clergy, may exploit.
- To preclude a worldwide economic crisis, the US government would move military forces into Abqaiq to ensure security of the Saudi oil fields and refining capabilities. The US would position forces to expedite their employment if required but will only take action if the SANG rebel forces threatened the oil infrastructure.
- In an effort to destabilize Saudi Arabia, Iran will support rebel forces during a coup. This is however, an alliance of convenience because the major underlying fault line that exists between Sunni and Shia relations remains intact. Those basic, visceral Islamic beliefs are never fully able to be set aside, so shortly after a coup succeeds (or fails), the tension between Saudi Arabia and Iran is expected to reassert itself.

Use Cases. Use cases are scenario vignettes that provide a series of potential futures that establish unique modeling conditions which generate results that can be compared and contrasted to assess stability conditions and determine how those futures will resonate with various civilian groups and key actors. These use cases are supplemented by excursions that allow some specific analytic element to be further investigated or tested. The primary use cases and excursions are outlined below.

⁷ The ousting of Muhammad bin Nayef and his replacement by Mohammad bin Salman in late June 2017 was not "seamless", but involved Muhammad bin Nayef being "held against his will and pressured for hours to give up his claim to the throne". He was still being confined to his palace as of 19 July 2017.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/28/world/middleeast/deposed-saudi-prince-mohammed-bin-nayef.html>

Saudi Arabia Regime Change Database.

- Use Case 1 (Progressive). Use Case #1 establishes a set of conditions in Saudi Arabia reflecting the implementation of a progressive liberalization agenda ushered in by a change in the ruling leadership following the death of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and the installation of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman as the King. The transition is generally orderly; however, this will be the first instance of a Saudi King coming from the 3rd generation.
- Use Case 2 (Traditional). Use Case #2 reflects conditions in Saudi Arabia during a period in which the leadership of the country reestablishes more traditional standards of Islamic conduct. This regime change is depicted in two phases, the first of which is ushered in by a change in the ruling leadership following the death of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman assuming the throne. The second phase then introduces resistance by royal/government hardliners and the 'Council of Senior Scholars' to the liberalization agenda leading to Mohammad bin Salman being deposed and Mohammed bin Nayef being installed as King. This two-phase regime change occurs peacefully under controlled, managed circumstances ending in the formation of a new ruling government that will reinstitute many of the traditional standards of Islamic conduct and economic conservancy.
- Use Case 3 (Coup). Use Case #3 introduces a set of conditions in Saudi Arabia reflecting a time of significant turmoil following the death of King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and the assumption of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to the throne in which hardline traditionalists launch a coup led by an obscure, hardline Saudi Prince with formal ties to the Saudi Monarchy in order to seize control of the ruling regime. Fighting occurs principally in Abqaiq (petroleum producing region) and Riyadh.

Regime Change Excursions. Two regime change excursions were conducted that assessed alternative conditions during the coup.

- Robust SANG Support (3a). In this excursion, the size of the Saudi Arabian National Guard supporting the rebel prince is doubled to determine if there is a tipping point associated with force structure & support that might enable the coup to succeed.
- Extended US Force Presence (3b). This excursion is initially modeled as is shown in Use Case #3 (Coup), in which the US introduces military Abqaiq with a mission of protecting the nation's oil producing capabilities; however, in this modeling run, US forces are left in place rather than being removed after the Rebel Prince's forces are pulled out of Abqaiq.

Syria Refugee Camp Radicalization Database.

- Use Case #1 (Status Quo). Use Case #1 reflects conditions of the Al-Hawl Refugee Camp with 400 SDF guard personnel and approximately 70,000 ISIL affiliated detainees, no official economic activity or legitimate jobs, and insufficient social services.
- Use Case #2 (Diversion Through Work). Use Case #2 represents a disengagement intervention that establishes an official economy in Al-Hawl along with jobs and consumables. All other factors (guard force, ISIL affiliates, etc.) in the camp remain unchanged. There are insufficient SDF personnel to properly secure the detainees and they are not given sufficient food and health services.
- Use Case #3 (Holistic Disengagement). Use Case #3 portrays a disengagement intervention that combines increasing the size of the SDF guard force and reflecting that they are more culturally sensitive and compassionate towards detainees. Additionally, detainees are provided sufficient health and food services, while an official economy is simultaneously being established.

Radicalization Excursions. Two separate excursions on radicalization were run to assess alternative approaches for disengaging the ISIL ideology from the at-risk refugee population.

- Phased Holistic Disengagement (3a). In this excursion, the refugee camp economy is expanded and there is an increase the amount of essential non-infrastructure services (food, water, healthcare) being provided to the refugee population at 16 week intervals with the final infusion occurring at Week 48. This phased approach is intended to increase disengagement over time by providing increased social service assistance.
- Conditional Phased Holistic Disengagement (3b). This excursion conditionally expands the refugee camp economy and increases the amount of essential non-infrastructure services (food, water, healthcare) at 16 week intervals with the final phase starting at Week 48. If the popularity of the ISIL ideology increases to near-dominance, all economic and social interventions are stopped until ISIL popularity declines. This reflects a 'carrot-and-stick' approach.

Civilian Groups. A key element for understanding regional stability dynamics is the defining of the civilian groups that comprise the local noncombat populations. Civilian groups have belief systems and relationships with key actors which can be influenced by actors as they apply resources, generally forces, economics and/or messaging in a region. Understanding how a population's mood and satisfaction with its circumstances are influenced over time is a primary Athena output.

Saudi Arabia Regime Change Database. There are four key civil groups modeled in Athena for this study which span a continuum of possible social, societal and governmental responses to the conditions set in each of the use cases. These key groups include: Progressives, Hardliners, Disgruntled Youth, and Governing Elites. Short descriptions of these civilian groups are provided below. Additionally, Hijazi Elites and the Shia populations in the region are modeled in this Athena database. A complete list of the civilian groups can be found in Annex C.

- Governing Elites. This segment includes members of the Saudi royal family and senior Ulama⁸. Many of the senior members of the royal family fill appointments to key government posts. The royal family has shared power with the religious authorities, creating a symbiotic relationship defined by cooperation and mutual consent. The king appoints members of the Ulama, who serve as judges, lawyers, and imams, to high-ranking posts such as the Council of Religious Scholars.
- Sunni Religious Hardliners. A mix of hardline clergy, Islamist intellectuals, and a small jihadist fringe comprise this segment of the population. Sunni Religious Hardliners believe that the Kingdom ought to be governed in accordance with a strict interpretation of sharia law. Of note, women comprise a vocal part of this audience segment. These women seek to uphold certain conservative social policies, which they claim bolster Islamic family values. This group is in direct opposition to Progressive Reformers' efforts to end the male guardianship policy.
- Progressive Reformers. Progressive Reformers include businesspeople, intellectuals, and moderate religious leaders. Many Progressive Reformers are highly educated, often having studied at universities in the West. Members of this segment seek change in government policies and practices. For example, they fully supported the recent Saudi policy of allowing women the right to drive. They do not however, desire to overthrow the government or radically destabilize Saudi politics or society.
- Disgruntled Youth. Members of this segment are young and primarily Wahhabis who live in Riyadh and the rural areas of central Saudi Arabia. Few have received formal educations past high school and the majority either work in government jobs or receive varying levels of financial support from the state. This segment is economically diverse, including middle class, members of the working class, and the unemployed.

⁸ Ulama (also Ulema), the body of religious scholars who are versed theoretically and practically in the Muslim sciences - theologians, canon lawyers (muftis), judges (qadis), professors-and high state religious officials. In a narrower sense ulama may refer to a council of learned men holding government appointments in a Muslim state. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/ulama>

Syria Refugee Camp Radicalization Database. There are three civilian groups modeled in Athena based on assumptions, prior research in Syria, and current research on Al-Hawl and the topic of radicalization. A more complete description of these three civilian groups can be found in Annex C.

- Passive Salafist. These are individuals who continued to flee Coalition forces to remain under ISIL governance as their territorial state was collapsing. The Passive Salafists include an estimated 30,000 children (assumed to be under the age of 18) not born in the Caliphate. The children are assumed to be old enough to have accepted a minimal ISIL ideological education.
- Sunni Neutral. These are individuals who do not care about a political cause and are living under the ISIL Caliphate with the goal of surviving. They have no affinity for its ideology. These children (assumed to be no older than four years old) are too young to have fully absorbed the ISIL ideology.
- Violent Salafist. The smallest demographic is composed of Violent Salafists. These are the most enthusiastic supporters of the ISIL Caliphate. These are individuals who feel a personal moral obligation to take up violence in defense of the cause.

Key Actors. Actors can be individuals, organizations, political parties, or separate nations who are seeking to influence conditions within the region. Actors have resources, generally forces, economics and/or messaging that they apply leading to them gaining or losing influence and potentially shifting control in the region.

Saudi Arabia Regime Change Database. There are 16 Actors modeled in Athena for this study. Short descriptions of the key actors are provided below. A complete list of Actors modeled in Athena for this study is located in Annex D.

- King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud is not represented as an actor. He dies the week before the model run begins thereby initiating the various regime change use case options presented.
- Saudi Government (Mohammad bin Salman): Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is the heir apparent to King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. He is the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia now and is in the process of implementing his Vision 2030 agenda.
- Saudi Government (Mohammad bin Nayef): Prince Mohammed bin Nayef is the deposed Saudi crown prince who has been confined to his palace (under house arrest) in the Red Sea city of Jeddah since 2017.

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- Rebel Prince: A minor prince in the House of Saud, and as such, he has a relationship with the monarchy that his supporters feel legitimizes his attempt to seize the throne.
- Saudi Arabia National Guard (Loyal to Saudi Government): The SANG is the primary military force in Saudi Arabia and is represented as both an actor (i.e., the commander) and as a force group loyal to that actor. This actor can then ‘support’ whoever is the leader of the government depending on the use case.
- Saudi Arabia National Guard (Rebel Faction): This portion of the SANG is a force group in rebellion to the Saudi Government. Again, they are depicted as both an actor (i.e., the rebel SANG commander) and as a force group loyal to that actor. This actor can then provide ‘support’ to the Rebel Prince.
- Sunni Wahhabi: The Religious Authority in KSA is referred to as the ‘Council for Religious Scholars’⁹. They are responsible for ruling on Religious issues in KSA.

Syria Refugee Camp Radicalization Database. Two key actors are included in this database.

- Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF): The SDF is an alliance in the Syrian Civil War composed primarily of Kurdish, Arab, and Assyrian/Syriac militias. The SDF is militarily led by the People's Protection Units (YPG), a mostly Kurdish militia.
- Islamic State and the Levant (ISIL): ISIL is also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), is a terrorist militant group that follows a fundamentalist, Salafi jihadist doctrine of Sunni Islam.

Belief Systems. A key element of Athena modeling involves defining the primary belief systems in a region. These define both beliefs and significant fault lines that potentially can divide people groups.

Saudi Arabia Regime Change Database. Listed below are short descriptions of the primary Saudi Arabian Belief Topics. Belief Topics 1-11 are associated with Iran and do not have significant impact on the Saudi Arabia modeling runs. A complete list of the beliefs used in this study can be found in Annex E.

- **Topic 12: Custodians of Islam**: With the Prophet’s guidance, Muslims in the Arabian Peninsula emerged as the stewards of Mecca and Medina and leaders of

⁹ Also referred to as the ‘Council for Senior Scholars’ or the ‘Council of Senior Ulama’.

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the ummah¹⁰. Saudi Muslims must fulfill their role as keepers of the hajj and leaders of the ummah by protecting Islam from deviant influences.

- **Topic 13: Shiite Heretics:** Al-Wahhab purged the Arabian Peninsula of the bid'ah (heretical innovations) polluting Islam. Yet even his purification could not liberate Saudis of the idolatrous Shiites. By remaining vigilant against these infidel Persian loyalists, Saudis can defend themselves against the nefarious Shiite fifth column.
- **Topic 14: Centuries of Injustice:** The Wahhabi onslaught has prohibited Shiites from living a life of abundance, faith, and dignity. Shiites must demand freedom of worship, access to jobs and political positions, and equal treatment to claim the respect and prosperity they deserve.
- **Topic 15: Cosmopolitan Hijazis:** For centuries, Hijazis were the cosmopolitan face of the Peninsula. Then the backwards Najdis seized the Hijaz. By defending their heritage and asserting their rightful role as a bridge to the global ummah, Hijazis will ensure that Saudi Arabia reclaims its ancient values.
- **Topic 16: God's Abundance:** For millennia the tribesmen of the Arabian Peninsula were simple and devout nomads.
- **Topic 17: Moral Purity:** Saudis follow traditions modeled on the life of the Prophet.
- **Topic 18: Voices of Change:** Saudi Arabia was a backwater until petrodollars flooded in, giving Saudis hopes for a modern nation guided by faith.
- **Topic 19: Unifiers of the Peninsula:** Before 1932 the Arabian Peninsula was an ungovernable desert mired in tribal war.

Syria Refugee Camp Radicalization Database. Listed below are short descriptions of the primary Belief Topics supporting this Syrian refugee radicalization database. A complete list of the beliefs used in this study can be found in Annex E.

- **Topic 2: Agents of the West:** Islam's earliest leaders were distinguished by their passion for Sharia, rejection of excess, and love for jihad. Today, hypocrite rulers betray the legacy of these model leaders, following Western masters, ignoring Sharia, stealing their peoples' wealth, and spreading idleness. The umma must awaken from its slumber and free itself from corruption and oppression.

¹⁰ The Ummah is a community of believers from diverse backgrounds, ancestry, locations and nationalities bound together with a common purpose, to worship God and advance the cause of Islam.

<https://www.islamreligion.com/articles/11312/concept-of-ummah-in-islam/>

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- **Topic 6:** [Government] Stability First: Religious extremists and regional chaos threaten to plunge the Middle East into turmoil. Muslims must unite around shared values of moderation and tolerance, and look to their governments to keep their countries safe. Only through supporting their governments can Muslims in the Arab World ensure that their nations remain peaceful and stable.
- **Topic 7:** Kurdish Independence/"Restoring the Kurdish Homeland": Kurds have always lived on the land in southeastern Turkey (including Syria, Iraq, Azerbaijan, and Iran). Today, Turks illegally occupy this historical homeland and trample upon the Kurdish community's identity. Kurds should reject assimilation in order to defend Kurdish cultural and linguistic heritage from extinction.
- **Topic 9:** Restoring the Caliphate Immediately: The creation of an Islamic Caliphate turned lost desert tribes into leaders and scholars of monotheism. After centuries, however, Western scheming and attacks divided the umma into a multitude of torn pieces, and traitorous Muslim rulers allowed the Caliphate to be destroyed. With their blood and arms, Muslims can rebuild the Caliphate, putting an end to injustice and suffering, and restoring the umma to its magnificent glory.
- **Topic 10:** Violent [Sunni] Jihad: While Muslims have always sought peace, the Prophet and his companions never shirked their duty to fight. In the face of oppression, however, the umma and its ulema (scholarly leaders) have put money and stability before God and religious obligation. Muslims are faced with a choice: let the house of Islam burn to the ground or rise up to defend it.
- **Topic 11:** Shiite Heretics: Shiites spread bid'ah (heretical innovations) among the Muslim Ummah, polluting Islam. Idolatrous Shiites tarnished the Prophet's teachings, and pay fealty to Iran. They are a nefarious fifth column in Muslim society and more loyal to Iranian interests than to their own leaders and sovereign nations.

Chapter 2: Analytic Results and Insights

Saudi Arabia Regime Change Insights:

Insight #1. The Progressive Agenda (Vision 2030) being implemented by Saudi leadership could be at risk if implemented too aggressively.

Insight #2. The civilian population has greater overall satisfaction with the conditions in Saudi Arabia established under the Progressive Agenda than they do under the more hardline traditionalist future.

Insight #3. The Saudi youth population is a key societal demographic that can sway Saudi Arabia towards the progressive agenda goals or toward more traditional hardline values depending on how it is engaged and/or influenced.

Insight #4. A coup in Saudi Arabia is unlikely to succeed unless a significant portion of the Saudi Arabian National Guard supports the rebellion.

Insight #5. The Progressive Agenda (Vision 2030) being implemented by Mohammed bin Salman leads to economically better conditions across all population groups despite how particular groups feel about the Progressive Agenda.

Insight #6. The Wahhabi clerics will not have sufficient long-term popular support to effectively seize control of the government.

Insight #7. Population satisfaction declines across all civilian groups if US forces remain deployed indefinitely in control of the oil producing region and resources of Saudi Arabia.

Radicalization Insights:

Insight #1. To mitigate radicalization, increases in social services and economic support need to be paired with the presence of a robust, competent and ideologically compatible security force.

Insight #2. Establishing a conditional process for managing the distribution of social services and economic incentives is an effective strategy for disengaging at-risk populations from potential radicalization.

Analytic Description and Detail - Saudi Arabia Regime Change.

Insight #1. The Progressive Agenda (Vision 2030) being implemented by Saudi leadership could be at risk if implemented too aggressively.

Description. Saudi leadership under Mohammad bin Salman – MbS, should be cautious about pushing the Progressive Agenda forward too quickly. If MbS chooses to move too aggressively he may risk being deposed from power. The population needs the opportunity to assimilate new ideas more slowly to keep the conditions in Saudi Arabia from potentially devolving into factional fighting, a civil war or a coup.

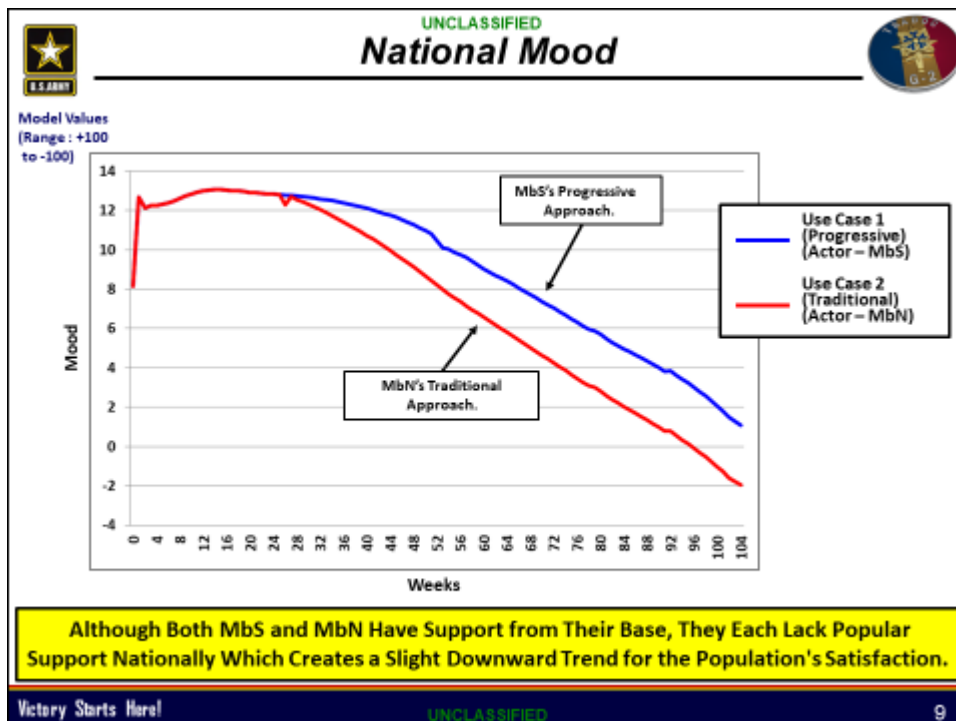
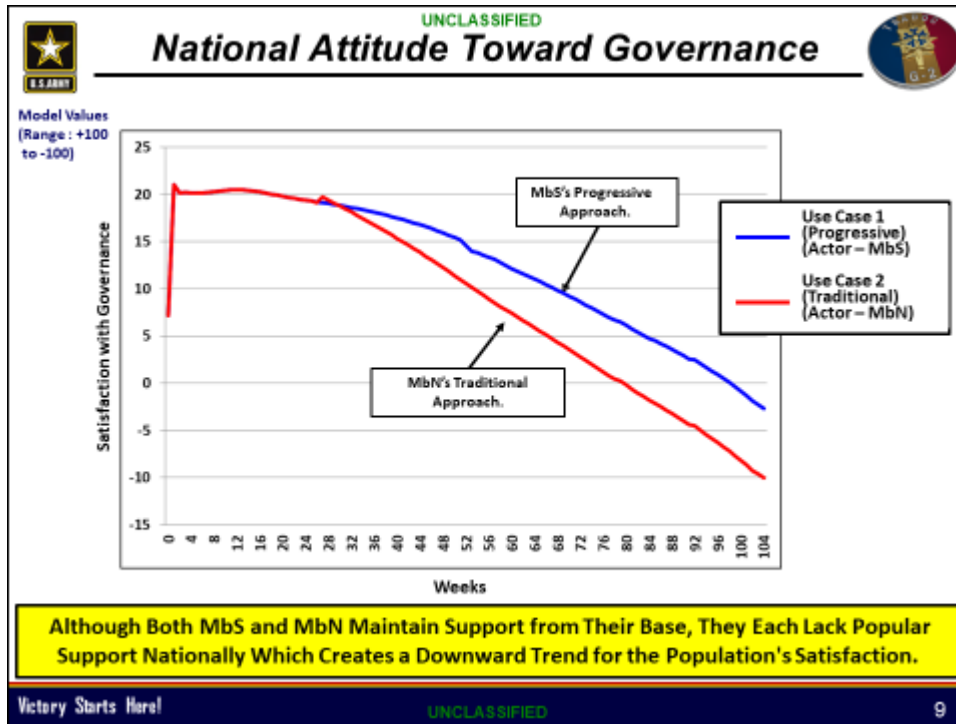
Discussion. US interests generally align with the Progressive Agenda objectives proposed by MbS in his Vision 2030. However, if those political, economic and/or sociocultural changes are pushed onto the local populations too quickly, without providing them sufficient time to assimilate the changes (since many of those changes directly impact fundamental beliefs), then traditionalist elements in society may be empowered to resist the liberalization agenda and begin organizing against the progressive movement by encouraging local civilians to resist major changes that directly conflict with long-held beliefs.

Hardliners in the government (the ‘old guard’ royalty and Wahhabis religious authorities) already prefer MbN to MbS. Many aspects of the Progressive Agenda (Vision 2030) being implemented by MbS are in conflict with the belief systems of several key actors and civilian groups. If the pressure to make changes continues at a pace that does not allow local civilians to assimilate the changes, then stability may reach a tipping point causing an abandonment of MbS and his Vision 2030 objectives.

In Athena, satisfaction (mood) is composed of four factors, autonomy (governance), quality of life, safety and culture. The similarity in the two charts, and the levels of satisfaction shown, indicate that the feelings the population has about governance are the main determinants in the long-term downward slide and explain the main difference between the MbS (Progressive) and MbN (Traditionalist) courses of action. Population perceptions regarding autonomy (governance), rather than quality of life, safety and culture are the main drivers behind differences in mood in the two alternative use cases.

In addition, the charts below provide an indication of the population’s satisfaction with the two governing options, which reflect the two ruling extremes, represented by the actor responsible for those two respective positions: MbS (Progressive) and MbN (Traditionalist). The downward trend lines seen for both governance and mood reflect the population’s discomfort with embracing either of the options. Change is difficult, particularly when it involves potentially moving away from long held core beliefs. In both

cases, governance and national mood, the progressive agenda has greater traction with the general population. They will however, need some additional time to assimilate the changes before those trend lines can be expected to begin trending upwards. If those trend lines continue to decline, the potential exists for the nation to fracture along sociocultural fault lines possibly leading to factional fighting or a civil war.



Insight #2. The civilian population has greater overall satisfaction with the conditions in Saudi Arabia established under the Progressive Agenda than they do under the more hardline traditionalist future.

Description. Over the long-term, the civilian populations across Saudi Arabia are more generally satisfied with the conditions set under the Progressive Agenda being implemented by Mohammad bin Salman than that of the more traditionalist agenda espoused under Mohammed bin Nayef. The progressive agenda however, does take additional time to gain traction with the majority of the civilian population, so over the first two years there is a downward trend that can be expected to stabilize as the population becomes more comfortable with the freedoms found under the progressive agenda.

Discussion. As would be expected, there is a sizable difference in the attitude of the progressives and hardliners to the two potential futures outlined. What is shown though, indicates that the Progressive Agenda is more universally satisfactory than the traditionalist agenda. This most likely reflects that even though a more traditionalist audience (Hardliners, Disgruntled Youth, etc.) prefers living under those hardline values, they will still welcome the increased prosperity and opportunity for a 'good life' that comes under a progressive agenda, generally more than will be experienced under the more repressive conditions found under the traditionalist agenda.

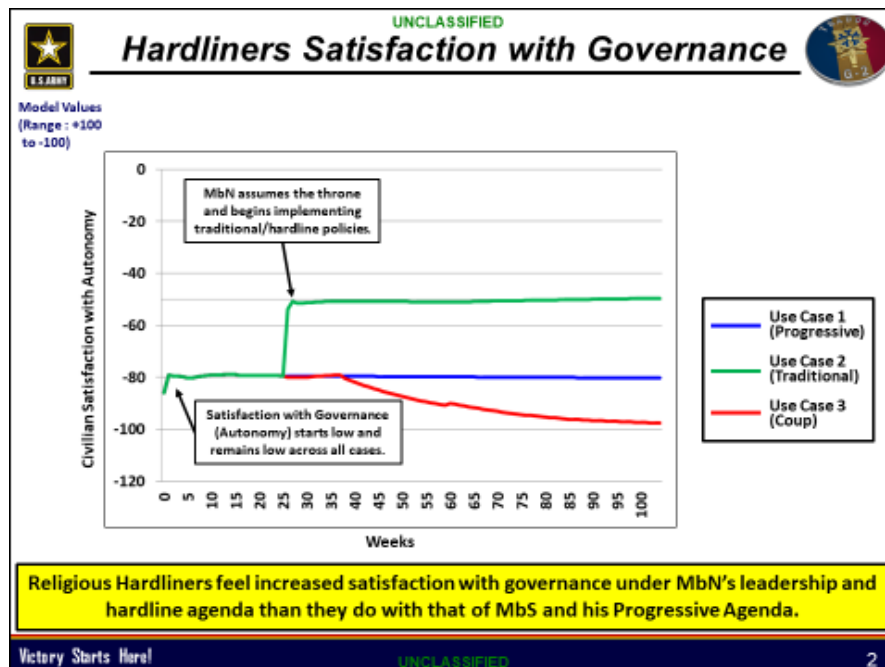
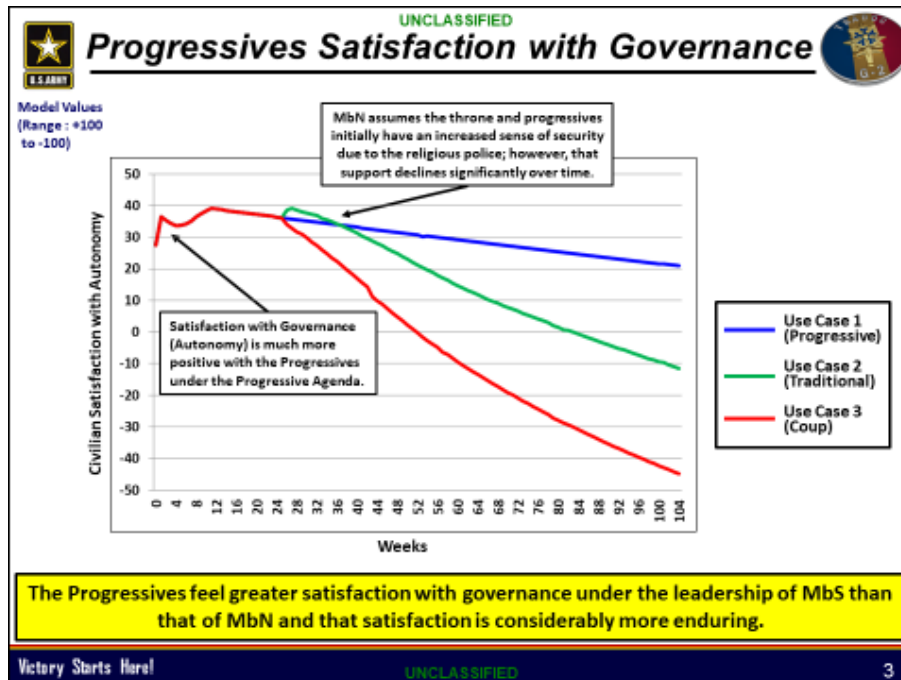
Under MbN, there is less opportunity for those outside the 'inner circle' of royalist hardliners and bureaucrats since they are being funded by the government. Broader economic growth is stalled as the nation continues to rely purely on oil revenues rather than beginning to take steps (Vision 2030 under MbS) to begin establishing an economy built on more than just oil.

Feelings of security initially increased as a result of the empowerment of the religious police; however, over time that perception of increased safety declines as a result of the increased oppression by the religious police over groups that supported the progressive agenda, including Progressives and Foreign Workers, and to some extent, the Disgruntled Youth who are looking for the opportunity for a 'good life' despite having strong support for traditional values. These groups increasingly feel the pressure from that oppression while also feeling shortchanged on opportunities to succeed in their life pursuits.

MbS, under Vision 2030, was moving to modernize Saudi Arabia. To accomplish that objective, he cut the level of direct government spending/subsidies to the population (essential non-infrastructure Investment – ENI). MbN however, stopped the Vision 2030 agenda and increased ENI spending which led to an increase in dependence on the government and reaffirming the patronage system in Saudi Arabia. This cutting of all

'Vision 2030' long-term investments, creates a downward pull on the future state of the economy impacting perceived opportunity for the broader local civilian population.

The charts below reflect the satisfaction (mood) of the two extremes – Progressives and Religions Hardliners – with Governance (Autonomy). Governance reflects a civilian group's satisfaction with the leadership of the respective key actors MbS (Progressive) and MbN (Traditionalist).

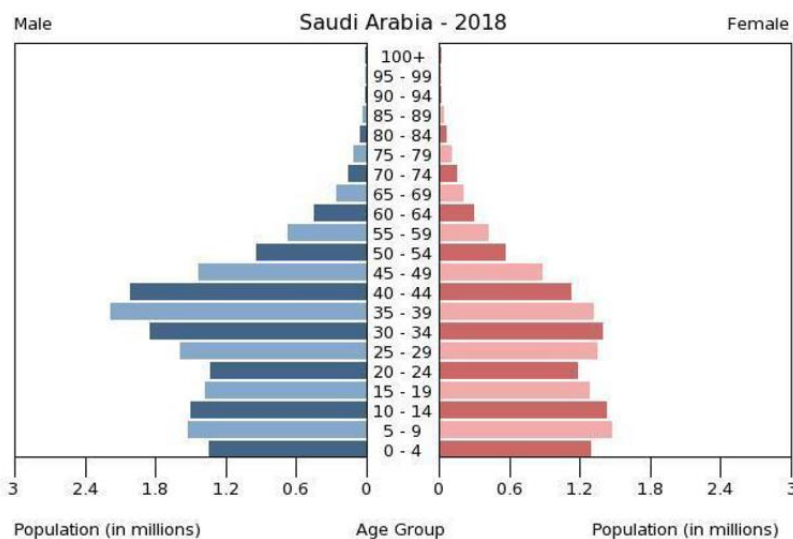


Insight #3. The Saudi youth population is a key societal demographic that can sway Saudi Arabia towards the progressive agenda goals or toward more traditional hardline values depending on how it is engaged and/or influenced.

Description. The Saudi youth demographic is a large, growing and socially significant population within Saudi Arabia. They are modeled as ‘disgruntled youth’ due to their dissatisfaction with their current situation and options. Their support for a progressive agenda will potentially help Mohammad bin Salman to achieve his Vision 2030 goals. On the other hand, resistance from this demographic can undermine achievement of those goals and lead instead toward an empowerment of a movement back toward more traditional hardline values.

Discussion. The US generally desires that Saudi Arabia move toward a more open, progressive social and governing agenda. This is consistent with US support for Mohammad bin Salman as the next leader of Saudi Arabia. Helping MbS to achieve his Vision 2030 goals remains a diplomatic and economic priority. A key demographic for helping to shape that support is the Saudi youth populations throughout Saudi Arabia.

Some mitigation of this resistance can be accomplished if social services funding continues for an extended period of time, perhaps a little as 2-3 years, and if the government takes specific action to provide opportunity for the Saudi youth (education and/or job opportunities). The youth population is a key demographic in this study and by balancing the provision of (non-governmental) jobs and social opportunity with the gradual shift away from more typical religion-based traditions then the Saudi youth demographic can potentially become a force for effective change in the country.



Source: CIA World Fact Book

Insight #4. A coup in Saudi Arabia is unlikely to succeed unless a significant portion of the Saudi Arabian National Guard supports the rebellion.

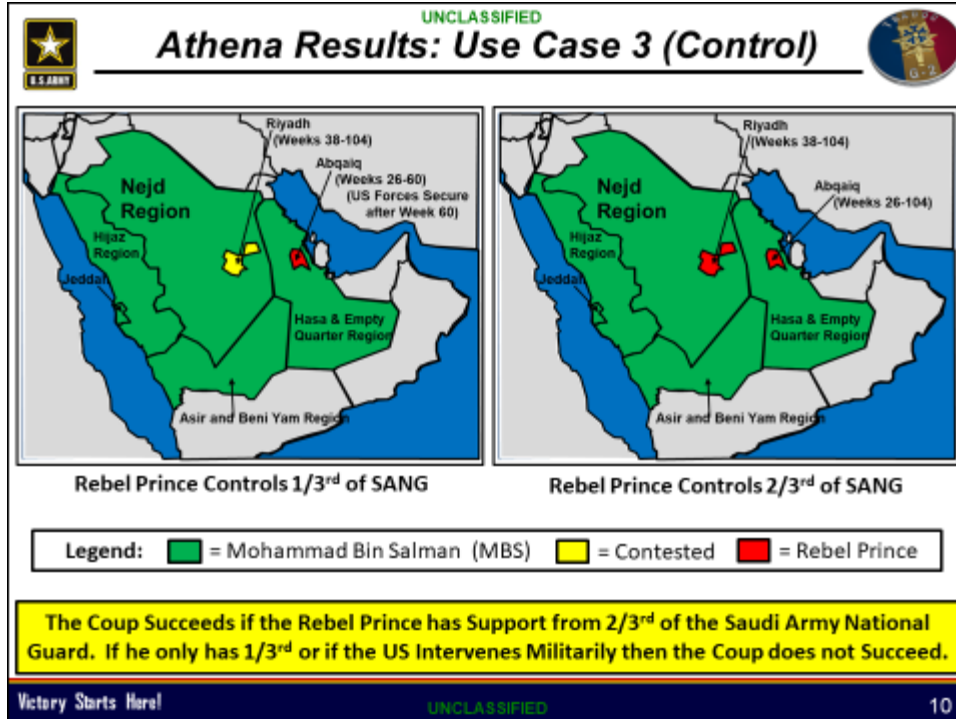
Description. In use Case #3 (Coup), one-third of the SANG is modeled as supporting the 'Rebel Prince' in his efforts with the hardline Wahhabi clerics to displace the ruling government under Mohammad bin Salman. The coup is only partially successful in shifting control toward the hardline forces. The instability generated by the coup continues across the country for several months but ultimately the rebellion fails to gain sufficient support from the broader population and the remainder of the SANG leading to its failure. Additionally, it was found that if the US takes a more aggressive stance against the rebel forces, it further shortens the life of the coup.

Discussion. Athena modeling demonstrated that the size of the forces committed to supporting the coup was the primary factor in determining whether or not the coup succeeded. The Saudi Arabian National Guard was modeled as the primary military force in the country, one that is answerable and responsive to the King. Other Saudi military forces were not directly modeled but were assumed during the rebellion to have portions of their force choosing to support the coup while other portions would not. From a modeling perspective, the success or failure of the coup would lie with the SANG.

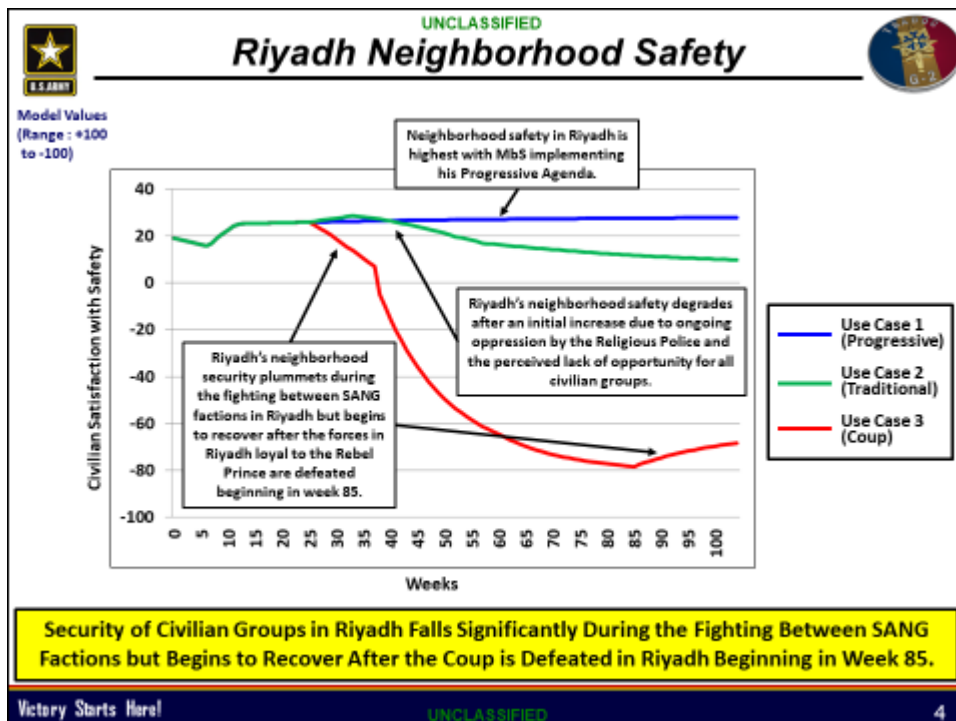
It was found that if one third of the SANG supported the coup then after some initial success in Riyadh (becomes a contested region) and their securing of Abqaiq (oil producing region) the rebels are unable to fully secure control over the government. As a result, over the course of the next six to nine months, the rebel forces were gradually contained and ultimately defeated. The US is modeled as moving forces into Abqaiq (at Week 60) to ensure that the Saudi oil fields and refineries are secured thereby helping to ensure worldwide economic stability.

If the US takes a more aggressive stance against the rebel forces, by either occupying and securing the Saudi oilfields or using forces to help loyalist forces of the SANG secure the oilfields and capital region, then the life of the coup is further shortened.

A sensitivity analysis was executed by running an Athena modeling excursion in which two-thirds of the SANG joined the rebellion. Under those circumstances, and assuming that the US does not introduce forces into the region, then the length of the rebellion is extended to a little over a year and ultimately succeeds in securing Riyadh and Abqaiq, leading to the 'Rebel Prince' gaining control of the government of Saudi Arabia. It would then be expected that this would lead to the imposition of a much more hardline traditional/fundamentalist rule over the land with a potential worldwide economic impact.



Feelings of safety and security by local civilian populations in Riyadh are impacted by the factional fighting occurring in the capital as a result of the coup. Safety and security do begin to recover quite quickly following the cessation of hostilities between the SANG factions. Across all use cases it can be noted that the implementation of the Progressive Agenda has the greatest stabilizing factor for feelings of safety by the population.



Insight #5. The Progressive Agenda (Vision 2030) being implemented by Mohammed bin Salman leads to economically better conditions across all population groups despite how particular groups feel about the Progressive Agenda.

Description. The implementation of alternative futures in Saudi Arabia (progressive verses traditional) has a significant impact on the direction and stability of the Saudi economy, as measured by the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and the national unemployment rate. Those two measures are influenced by the underlying agendas promulgated by MbS and MbN and support of the civilian populations. Both measures show a clear indication that the Progressive Agenda has better long-term implications for Saudi Arabia.

Discussion. As a function of its control over oil resources and reserves, Saudi Arabia represents a powerful economic force internationally. Stability of the internal Saudi economy can therefore have related impacts to the global economy. From the US perspective, it is desirable during periods of regime change in Saudi Arabia that the conditions are set for a smooth transition of power politically, socially and economically.

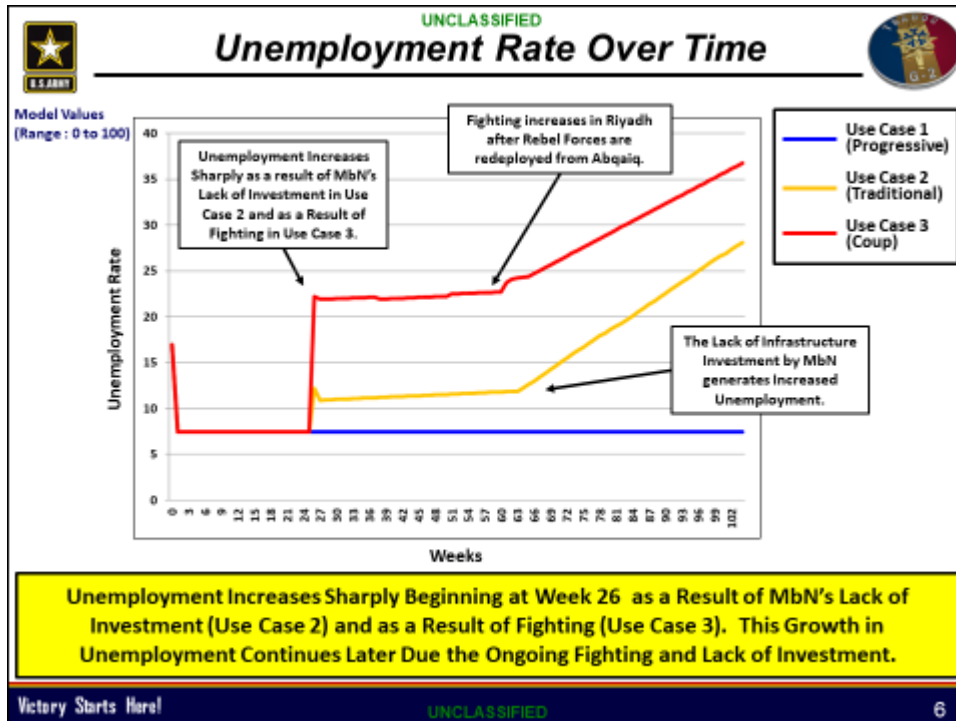
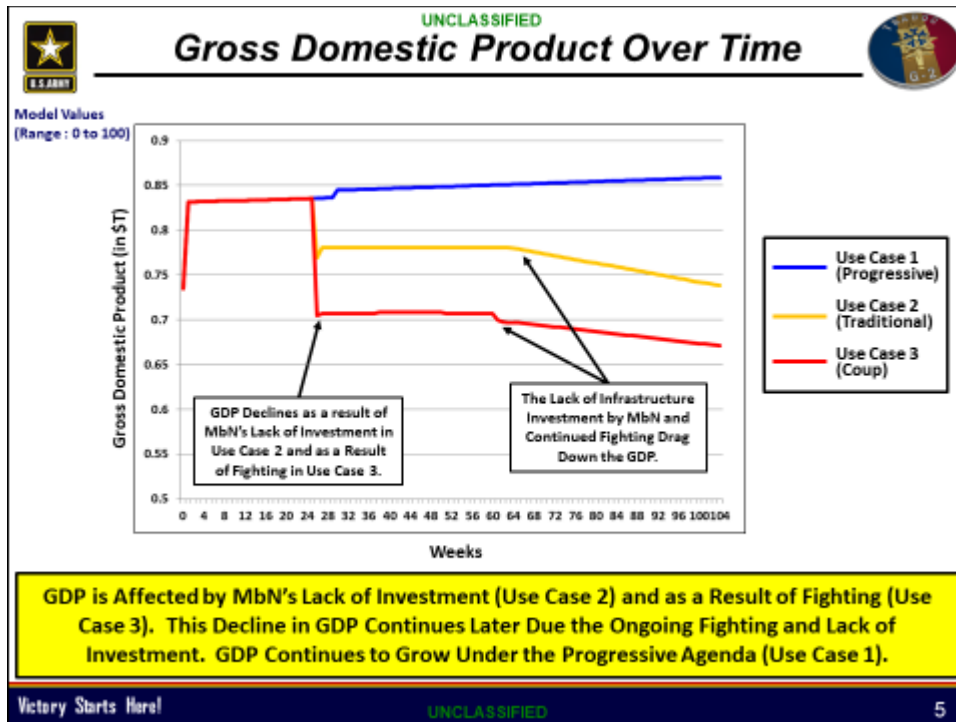
In Athena, several factors will influence the social and economic stability of the local population and the economy. One of the key elements impacting the local economy is Essential Non-Infrastructure Investment (ENI) which accounts for direct government spending/subsidies to the population. These payments have a correlation with the generation of jobs across the economy and thus reinforce a population's satisfaction (mood) as they are better able to impact their quality of life (one of the four factors, autonomy (governance), quality of life, safety and culture calculated in Athena).

The increased traditionalist pressures introduced by the hardline government and by the actions of the religious police, particularly against groups that most supported the Progressive Agenda, leads to a decline in the population's mood. These downward trends are also influenced by the youth demographic. Although they generally support the more hard core, traditionalist agenda they still want opportunity for a "good life".

The Progressive's satisfaction with governance (autonomy) initially increased under MbN's leadership. This likely occurred because MbN deploys not only more security (Religious Police) but also increases social spending across the board (albeit different levels depending on who he approves of); however, he cuts all 'Vision 2030' long-term investments, which creates a downward pull on the future state of the economy.

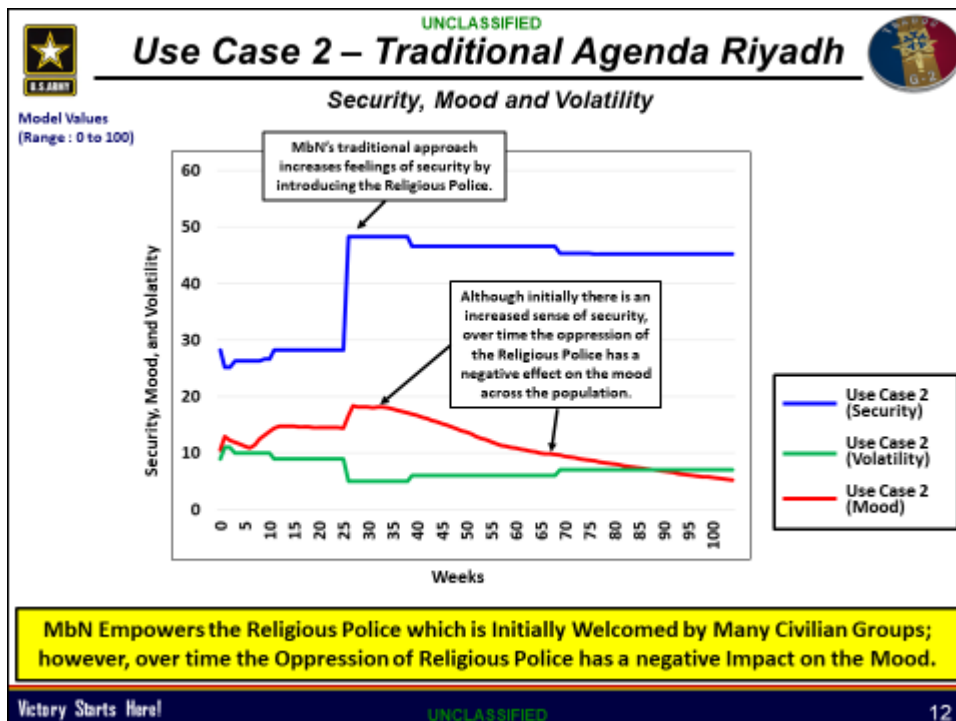
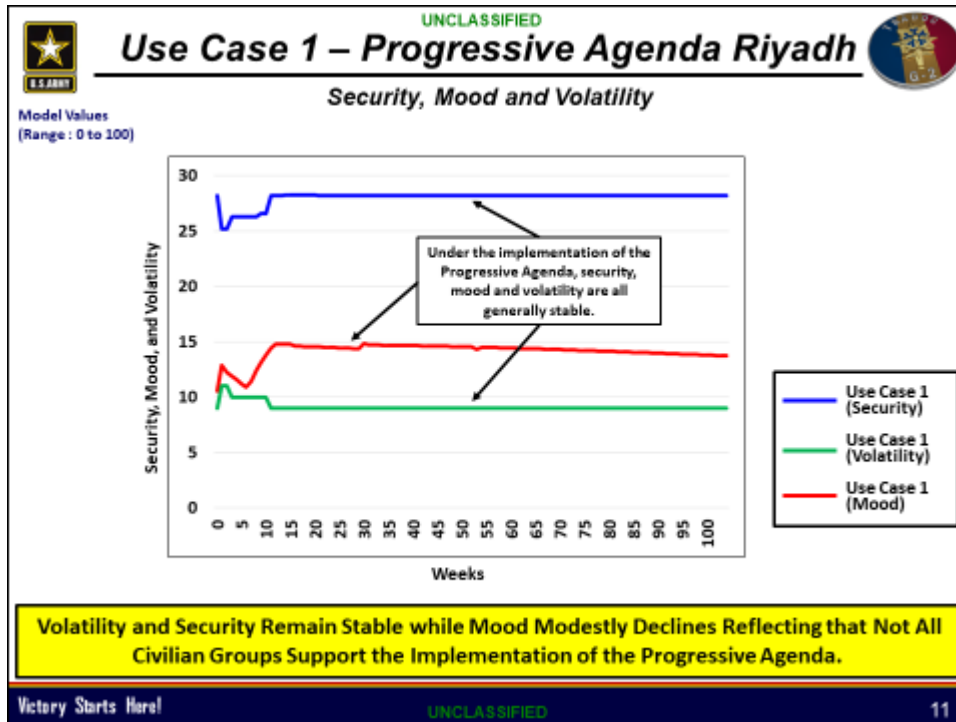
Athena modeling indicates that there is a significant difference between the potential future economic conditions, represented by GDP and unemployment, when comparing

the effects of introducing either a Progressive or Traditional Agenda. The introduction of the Progressive Agenda indicates clearly superior long-term economic stability.



Athena calculates population mood as well as their feelings of security. In addition, it calculates volatility, which measures the probability of a random act of violence occurring

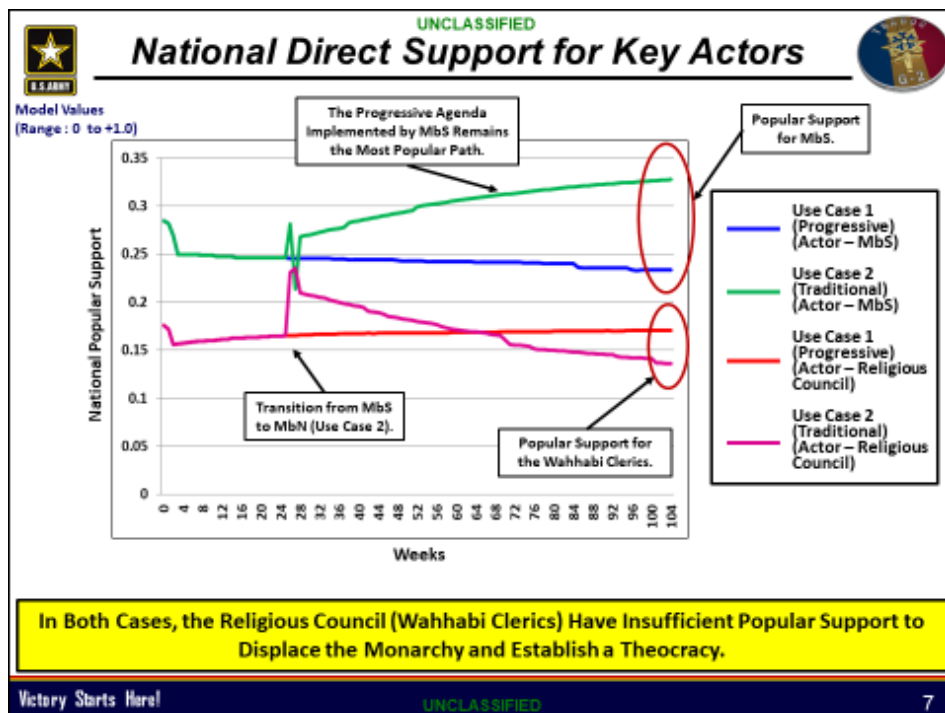
against a member of the public in a specific neighborhood. These three measure provide insight into the stability of a region. In this example, both Use Case 1 and 2 reflect a generally stable environment, with mood declining slightly in both cases indicating that there is dissatisfaction from those who oppose the progressive or traditional agenda being implemented.



Insight #6. The Wahhabi clerics will not have sufficient long-term popular support to effectively seize control of the government.

Description. The Wahhabi clerics exert considerable influence over the trajectory and speed of the progressive agenda. However, if they seek to seize control of the current government by deposing MbS and placing MbN in power, as modeled in Use Case 2, then the overall trajectory of popular support and attitude across the country declines. These actions will potentially lead to an increasingly chaotic future state and may also be susceptible to radical actors, such as the Rebel Prince (modeled in Use Case 3).

Discussion. The 'Sunni Wahhabi' actor (the 'Council for Religious Scholars') does not have enough support from the various civilian populations across the country or sufficient influence over key civilian groups and/or actors to effectively seize control of the government. Moreover, they must work with the Saudi Royal family to reach any binding consensus on matters of social consequence.



The Wahhabi clerics' influence, as shown in the slide above, indicates the proportion of the civilian population that support them relative to the progressive actor MbS. The Wahhabi clerics cannot increase their share of support without either decreasing the influence of MbS or pulling it away from other actors. In Athena, support from the population impacts influence and ultimately control. This ongoing struggle for support is seen in the slide but their relative positions with respect to influence remain fairly

constant for both actors. This indicates a continuing gridlock over time, despite the long-term decline in civilian satisfaction including quality of life, autonomy, and safety.

If the Royal family fractures and one faction of the family grabs enough support away from the current king, then they might be able to influence the Council for Religious Scholars (Wahhabi Clerics) to support a new King. However, that sort of 'palace coup' would also need significant support from the Saudi Arabian National Guard to succeed (see Insight #4).

Historical Example.

An example of when this occurred in 1964 may provide a useful historical precedent. King Saud bin Abdulaziz Al Saud was deposed in favor of King Faisal bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. A nasty power struggle ensued soon after their father died. The battle between the two brothers was fought over the role to be assigned to the Council of Ministers. Saud abolished the office of Prime Minister by royal decree, thus enforcing his position as King and de facto prime minister. Saud thought of himself as both King and prime minister whereas Faisal envisioned more powers being in his own hand as Crown Prince and deputy prime minister.

The struggle with King Saud continued in the background during this time. Taking advantage of the king's absence from the country for medical reasons in early 1963, Faisal began amassing more power for himself. He removed many of Saud's loyalists from their posts and appointed like-minded princes in key military and security positions, such as his brother Prince Abdullah, to whom he gave command of the National Guard in 1962. Upon King Saud's return, Prince Faisal demanded that he be made regent and that King Saud be reduced to a purely ceremonial role. In this, he had the crucial backing of the 'Senior Religious Scholars' (Ulema), including a fatwa issued by the grand mufti of Saudi Arabia, a relative of Prince Faisal on his mother's side, calling on King Saud to accede to his brother's demands.

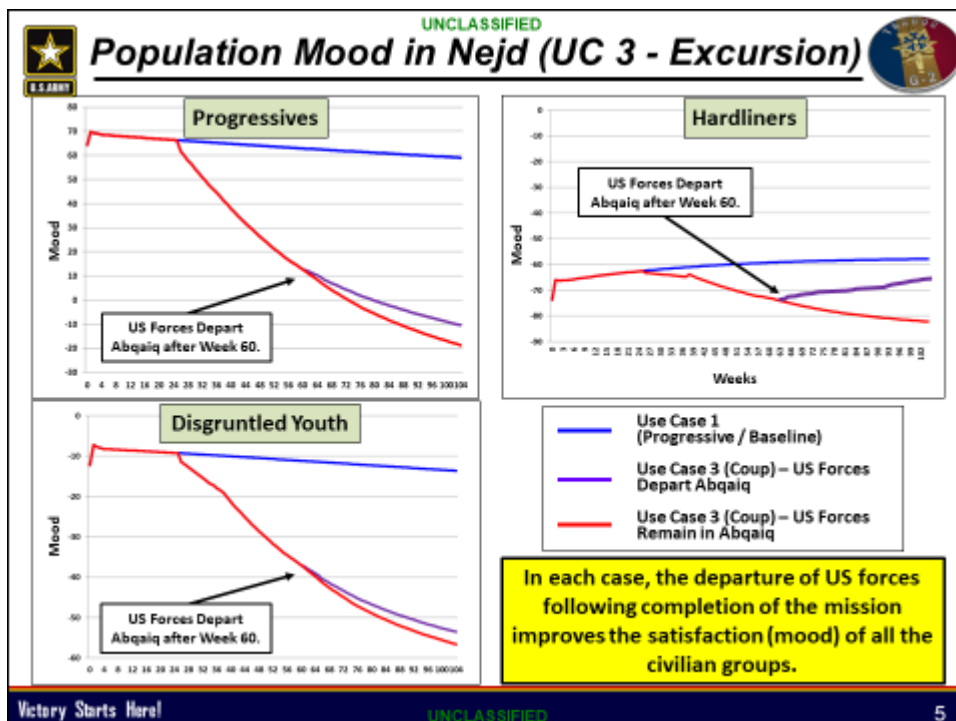
King Saud refused, however, and made a last-ditch attempt to retake executive powers, leading Prince Faisal to order the National Guard to surround King Saud's palace. His loyalists outnumbered and outgunned, King Saud relented, and on 4 March 1964, Prince Faisal was appointed regent. A meeting of the elders of the royal family and the ulema was convened later that year, and a second fatwa was decreed by the grand mufti, calling on King Saud to abdicate the throne in favor of his brother. The royal family supported the fatwa and immediately informed King Saud of their decision. King Saud, now shorn of all his powers, agreed, and Prince Faisal was proclaimed king on November 2, 1964.

Insight #7. Population satisfaction declines across all civilian groups if US forces remain deployed indefinitely in control of the oil producing region and resources of Saudi Arabia.

Description. The fundamental values (beliefs) of the various civilian groups do not encourage the presence of western military forces on their sovereign territory. The introduction of US forces is accepted for a short period reflecting the civilian population’s understanding that the US actions in securing the oil fields are necessary; however, if those forces remain in place for an extended period, the population’s dissatisfaction with this situation will continue to decline, creating a strong negative attitude toward the US.

Discussion. To preclude a worldwide economic crisis during the coup depicted in Use Case #3, the US government moves military forces into Abqaiq to ensure security of the Saudi oil fields and refining capabilities. If the US removes those forces shortly after the oil fields are secured, and loyal Saudi Army forces replace them, then there is negligible impact on the satisfaction (mood) of the population. However, if the US forces remain in place for an extended period of time, the mood across all civilian groups declines, which has a negative impact on the overall stability of the country.

An Athena modeling excursion was run to assess how the local noncombatant Saudi populations might respond when a foreign force had controlling access over their most valuable natural resource. The population of Nejd was selected since they reflect the core of support for the Saudi Government. In all cases, Athena measured faster rates of mood degradation when US forces occupied Abqaiq throughout the duration of the run.



Analytic Description and Detail - Syria Refugee Camp Radicalization.

Insight #1. To mitigate radicalization, increases in social services and economic support need to be paired with the presence of a robust, competent and ideologically compatible security force.

Description. Providing social services and economic incentives alone is insufficient to preclude extremist forces from establishing conditions in the refugee camps that will facilitate the radicalization of at-risk populations. In addition to humanitarian and resources, a security force is required that is sufficiently capable in terms of size and training, and holds ideologically compatible underlying beliefs with the refugee population, if conditions are to be set to mitigate the resonance of an extremist ideology.

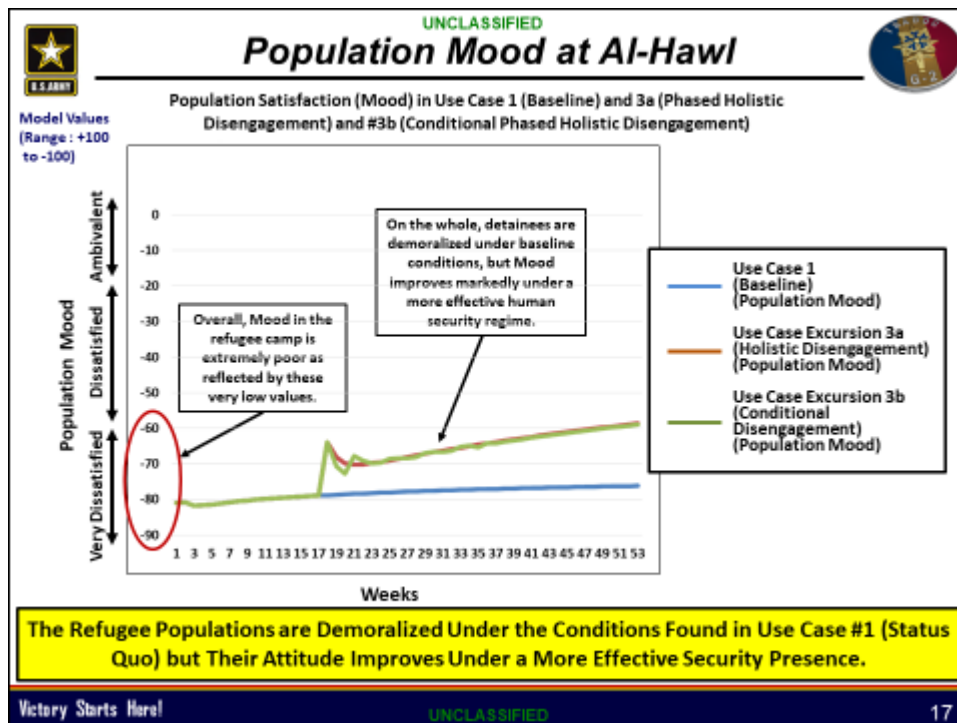
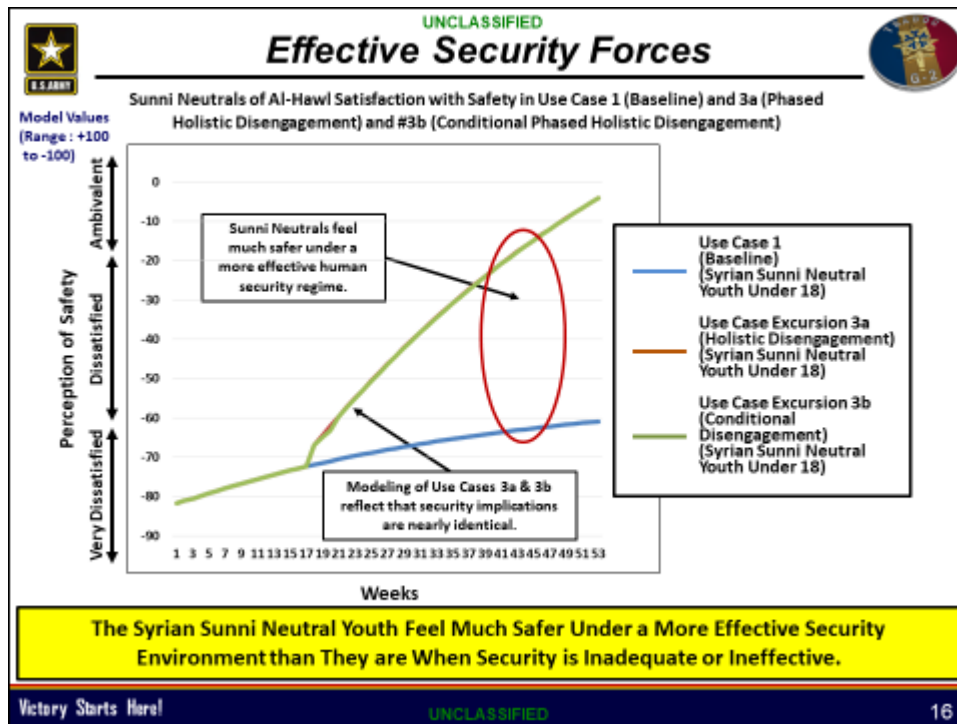
Discussion. Athena modeling shows that increases in social services and economic support without providing more robust security, leaves ISIL uncontested as the dominant controlling force in the refugee camp. Disengagement strategies being considered and/or implemented by world powers and international agencies that focus solely on the provision of humanitarian aid actually facilitate radicalization by leaving the refugee camp populations susceptible to extremist ideologies, primarily because there is a lack of local security that the extremists can use to isolate and influence at-risk populations.

The lack of sufficient security to create a safe environment for the refugees to live, provides the opportunity for ISIL to gain local control over the camp and to continue to effectively introduce their radicalization agenda to the refugees, particularly, the youth. Without an adequate security force the ISIL ideology will resonate within the camps.

In Use Case #1 (Status Quo), which serves as a comparative baseline, and in Use Case #2 (Diversion Through Work), no actor has control over Al-Hawl because the detainees are not sufficiently secured by a security force. The first formulation of Holistic Disengagement in Use Case #3 (Holistic Disengagement) gives ISIL the most popular support in the camp immediately following the implementation of the disengagement strategy. Ultimately, none of the standard use cases are successful at disengaging the at-risk populations from ISIL control or influence from their extremist ideology.

In excursions derived from Use Case #3, the increased SDF security force was simulated to provide broad Human security, as defined by the United Nations Development Program's 1994 Human Development Report. This enhanced force directly provides these aspects of Human security: Personal security (protection from physical violence), Community security (protection of traditional relationships), and Political security (honoring basic human rights). Political security required suppressing the hardcore Violent Salafist detainees, while securing a greater number of the more pliable Passive

Salafist detainees and all of the Sunni Neutral detainees, who are the least affiliated with the ISIL ideology. Improved security, coupled with the provisioning of greater humanitarian services, better set conditions for minimizing the resonance of the extremist ideology within the refugee camps.



Insight #2. Establishing a conditional process for managing the distribution of social services and economic incentives is an effective strategy for disengaging at-risk populations from potential radicalization.

Description. Utilizing a conditional or transitional process to manage the distribution of economic resources and social services is shown in Athena modeling to be a more effective means for mitigating the amount of influence exerted by an extremist organization over a refugee population. This decrease in the level of influence from extremist ideologies should mitigate the opportunity for radicalization in the camps.

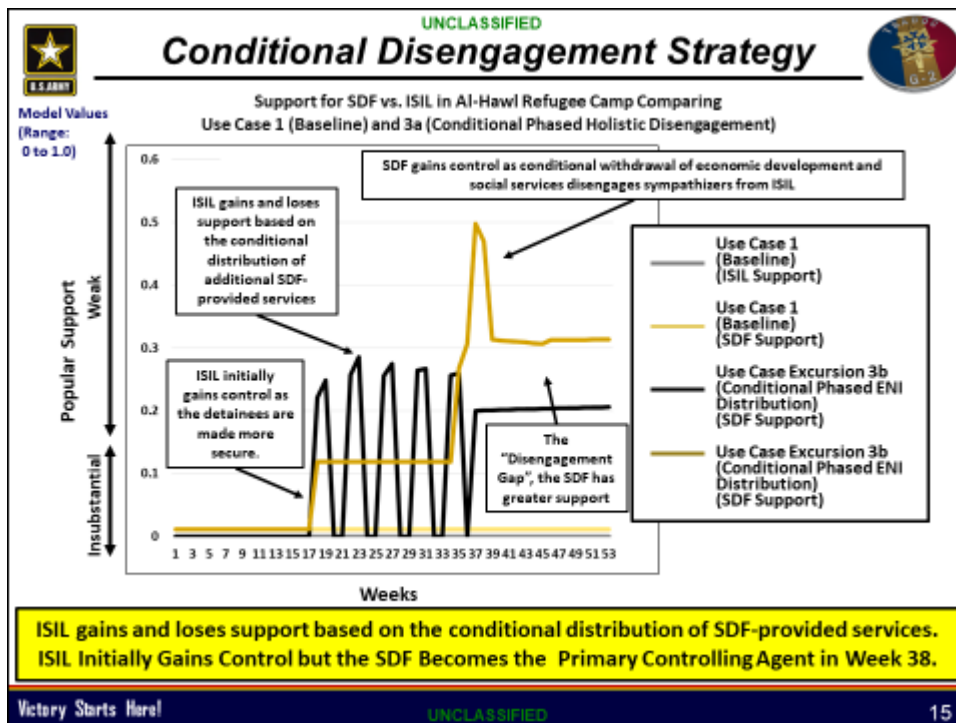
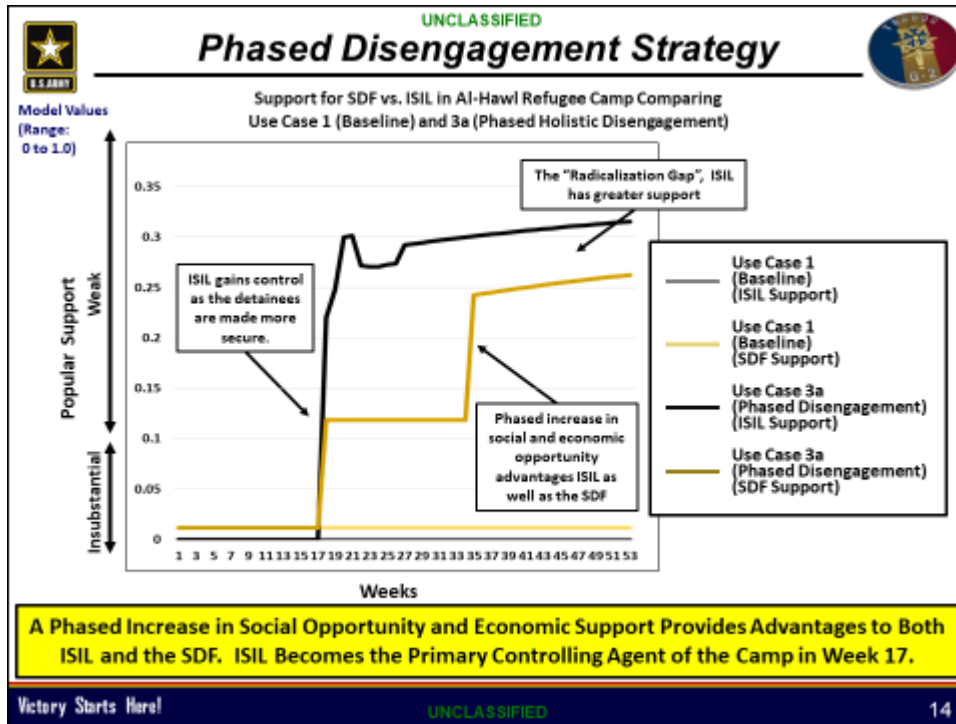
Discussion. Establishing conditional or transactional restrictions on the phased introduction of social services and various economic engagements, including jobs, provides both needed support to refugees in the camp and sets conditions for enabling a shift of control from ISIL to the SDF. The underlying ISIL ideology however, continues to endure and remains a persistent threat to stability in the camp, particularly with the youth.

Athena modeling shows that if the allocation of social services and economic incentives is phased over time (chart one below) then both ISIL and the SDF are empowered and support for both increases; however, the resonance of the ISIL message and the potential effectiveness of its efforts to radicalize at-risk populations will continue to exceed that of the SDF (the 'radicalization gap' shown on chart one) and other alternative actors and/or agendas.

The conditional distribution of services where disengagement from ISIL support is facilitated by the implementation of an official economy, allocation of jobs, and robust social services eventually wins the SDF control from ISIL in Week 34 through Week 52. The narrow 'disengagement gap', shown on chart two (below), indicates that although the SDF has established a position of authority (support) with the local refugee populations, ISIL continues to retain strong support across the camp.

Athena modeling shows that initially no actor is in control of the camp. By Week 17 control is established in both excursions by detainees loyal to ISIL. Under the conditions present in Excursion One (Phased Holistic Disengagement) ISIL remains in control and in a position to influence radicalization in the camp. In Excursion Two (Conditional Phased Disengagement) ISIL's ability to exert influence and control ebbs and flows and eventually leads to the SDF establishing control over the camps. This indicates that by establishing conditional or transactional restrictions on the allocation of social services and economic incentives, including jobs, then ISIL is less likely or effective at retaining long-term control over the camp and its authority and power to radicalize is diminished.

The combination of improved physical security (noted in Insight #1) and higher levels of economic, food, and health security, when made conditional upon detainee cooperation, proved effective at disengaging some at-risk populations from the ISIL ideology.



Chapter 3: Conclusions.

The Athena Simulation was utilized to computationally model potential futures in order to assess the implications of regime change in Saudi Arabia, as well as for gaining an improved understanding of how Syrian refugee populations might be radicalized. Results of this Athena modeling provided insights that informed the development of conclusions which have been aligned the two primary CENTCOM research questions.

Question A7 - What happens if there is a revolt in the House of Saud? What happens if there is a collapse of the House of Saud? Will Wahhabi clerics seize or attempt to seize control? Do Saudi forces (especially SANG) stay loyal?

- 1) If there is a revolt in the House of Saud leading it to shift away from the emerging progressive agenda, it appears unlikely that the House of Saud would collapse and enable another external actor to take control.
- 2) If there is a transition in the House of Saud from its progressive agenda towards a more hardline future state, the existing regime/royal family line would be expected to continue to exert control over the kingdom.
- 3) The Wahhabi clerics will continue to exert significant influence over the leadership and agenda of the Saudi royal family; however, they do not appear to have the popular support necessary to shift the KSA into becoming a theocracy (like Iran).
- 4) Portions of the SANG might be expected to align with many of the hardline religious beliefs espoused by the royal hardliners and Wahhabi clerics; however, there does not appear to be sufficient support across the SANG to generate the strength necessary to create a regime change.

Question B5 – How do you protect an at-risk population from extremism in an IDP/refugee camp? How do you build community resilience to help prevent radicalization? How do you triage and segregate persons in IDP/refugee camps that have varying degrees of radicalization?

- 1) Employing a process that distributes economic resources and social services on a conditional basis can be an effective means for mitigating the amount of influence exerted by an extremist organization over a refugee population.
- 2) Refugee populations are less at-risk of becoming radicalized if the distribution of social services and economic assistance is paired with a robust, competent and ideologically compatible security force.

Annex A. Questions Architecture

Athena Study Question: What are the political, economic and sociocultural implications of destabilizing states and local noncombatant populations within the Central Region?

Objective 1.0 – Describe the in-country and regional impacts of regime change in Saudi Arabia.

Issue 1.1 – What is the in-country and regional impact if there is a revolt or a collapse of the House of Saud?

EEA 1.1.1 – Which key actors would be expected to gain influence if there is a revolt or collapse of the House of Saud?

EEA 1.1.2 – How does actor influence over local Saudi Arabia populations change if there is a revolt or collapse of the House of Saud?

EEA 1.1.3 – What populations in Saudi Arabia are most susceptible to being manipulated if there is a there is a revolt or collapse of the House of Saud?

EEA 1.1.4 – What is will happen to the regional worker populations located in Saudi Arabia if there is a revolt or collapse of the House of Saud?

Issue 1.2 – What is the probable response of the Wahhabi clerics if there is a revolt or collapse of the House of Saud?

EEA 1.2.1 – Under what circumstances will the Wahhabi clerics remain loyal if there is a revolt or collapse of the House of Saud?

EEA 1.2.2 – If there is a revolt or collapse of the House of Saud, will local populations remain aligned with Wahhabi beliefs or will there be a fracturing of religious support across the country?

EEA 1.2.3 – If there is a revolt or collapse of the House of Saud, will this enable an external actor to influence religious change in Saudi Arabia?

Issue 1.3 – What is the probable response of the Saudi Arabian National Guard forces if there is a revolt or collapse of the House of Saud?

EEA 1.3.1 – Under what circumstances will the SANG remain loyal if there is a regime change in Saudi Arabia?

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EEA 1.3.2 – Given a regime change in Saudi Arabia, does the SANG fracture, and if so, how do the fractures align?

Issue 1.4 – How are economies impacted by a regime change in Saudi Arabia?

EEA 1.4.1 – If there is a revolt or a collapse of the House of Saud, what is the probable impact on the petroleum industry?

EEA 1.4.2 – How might US sanctions against a new governing regime in Saudi Arabia affect local populations and the national economy?

EEA 1.4.3 – How might US sanctions against a new governing regime in Saudi Arabia affect the regional and international economies?

Objective 2.0 – Explore the process of radicalization of at-risk populations located in Refugee camps as a consequence of violence and regime instability in Syria.

Issue 3.1 – How is an at-risk population in an IDP/refugee camp influenced by extremism?

EEA 3.1.1 – What factors most influence civilian populations located in IDP/refugee camps (e.g., economic, information, quality of life, safety, etc.)?

EEA 3.1.2 – How does the establishment and longevity of IDP/refugee camps affect population stability dynamics over time?

EEA 3.1.3 – In what ways can IDP/refugee camp's populations be isolated from undesirable external influences?

Issue 3.2 – What factors can build community resilience for an at-risk population in an IDP/refugee camp to help prevent radicalization?

EEA 3.2.1 – What factors most influence the building of community identity and resilience by populations located in IDP/refugee camps (e.g., economic, information, culture, quality of life, safety, etc.)?

EEA 3.2.2 – How does the strengthening of community resilience, identity and beliefs mitigate the effectiveness of radicalization of at-risk populations located in IDP/refugee camps over time?

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Issue 3.3 – How can an at-risk population in an IDP/refugee camp be triaged and/or segregated to mitigate radicalization?

EEA 3.3.1 – What factors can be used to differentiate sub-populations located in IDP/refugee camps to identify their susceptibility to radicalization (e.g., economic, culture, quality of life, safety, etc.)?

EEA 3.3.2 – What steps can be taken to isolate portions of a population in an IDP/refugee camp to mitigate their potential influence on the general civilian population of the camp?

EEA 3.3.3 – What processes can be employed to mitigate the effects of isolating and segregating sub-populations within an IDP/refugee camp?

Annex B. Athena Simulation Description

The Athena Simulation. Athena is a sociocultural modeling capability which supports a decision maker by providing both a framework to better understand complex PMESII based problems and a simulation for assessing the long-term consequences of engagement choices across the totality of the operational environment.

Athena Simulation Description. Athena is a scalable, single user, laptop-based, course of action development and analysis capability used to anticipate the consequences of force activities on noncombatant groups. Athena enables the analysis of second and third order effects upon civilian groups and those group's possible responses in order to discern potential outcomes from political, military, economic and social interventions. Athena allows leaders and analysts to understand the intended and unintended consequences of their proposed actions through a simulation process that incorporates social science 'universals' into course of action analysis and campaign planning. It enables the examination of interdependent political, economic, security/military, and information dynamics; anticipation of emergent actors, factions, and powerbases; and compares and contrasts multiple courses of action.

Principles Underpinning Athena. Fundamental human behavior universals recognized by social science form the foundation of the Athena design. These include: 1) cultural narrative, i.e., a person or group's belief in their origin, purpose and destiny, of which there are hybrids or blends, and from which social institutions, organizations and governments evolve; 2) relationships, the concept that human behavior is shaped in part by the relationships we form, e.g., kinship, trade-craft, bureaucratic, patronage and so on; and 3) utility theory, the concept that all people conduct internal cost/benefit analyses to assess the potential impact of proposed actions and decisions. These social science universals are then used by Athena to define the satisfaction or mood of the various population groups within the system.

The Athena simulation is designed to be culturally agnostic, i.e., to generate results which will allow the system to be applicable anywhere in the world. To accomplish this, the social science universals are mapped into Athena group satisfaction vis-à-vis four common concerns. The four concerns are: 1) autonomy with respect to governance, i.e., the group's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with extant governance and/or a group's ability to influence governance; 2) quality of life, i.e., whether the actor or group is satisfied or dissatisfied with their life conditions which include things like employment, healthcare, infrastructure, education, availability of food and water, etc.; 3) culture, i.e., whether one's sacred sites, artifacts, traditions and taboos are respected or denigrated; and 4) safety, i.e., whether the individual or group feels secure in their environment and to what extent. Each of the four concerns is assigned a relevant saliency differentiating between one

group and another, what is the most important concern and weighting that appropriately. The four concerns together translate into a group mood weighted by the group's saliency for each concern. The concerns are a representation of how much a group desires change based on impact on those concerns.

Internal Computational Complexity. The true strength of Athena is found in its internal composition and computational linkages. Athena is composed of six primary embedded and interrelated, internal models: Political, Economic, Social, Information, Demographics, and Ground. During each one week time step, the internal models compute change dynamics and then shares those results with other internal models initiating additional computational processes. Once the computational dynamics reach their nominal stopping point, change trends for that time step are logged along with a set of all the rules that fired to generate the result occurring at that moment in time and the trend lines that it generated.

Athena uses force activity effects and the effects of other DIME-FIL interventions to assess change over time across noncombatant populations in terms of relationships; volatility and stability; support, influence, and control; and mood and attitude. The Athena Simulation enables leader assessments of political, economic, and social stability at the sub-national, nation-state, or regional level by considering PMESII-PT trends over multi-year periods.

Synopsis of Key Athena Concepts and Terms. Definitions for several key Athena concepts and terms are provided below.

- Neighborhood. Neighborhoods define geographic regions within the Athena playbox.
- Actors. Actors can be individuals, organizations, political parties, Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs), or separate nations who are seeking to influence conditions within a neighborhood. Actors have resources that they can apply to an area causing them to gain or lose influence, and thereby shifting control within the neighborhood.
- Force Groups. The presence of military or security forces greatly influences the behavior, feelings of safety and security, and the mood of civilian groups. Force groups can span the full spectrum from official militaries and police, to paramilitary forces, to highly informal militias and terrorist cells. The presence of a force group allows an actor to increase the level of control they may have over a neighborhood.

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- **Civilian Groups.** Another key element of the design of Athena is the use of civilian groups for defining the local populations. Civilian groups have belief systems and shift their support for various actors based on that belief system and the application of resources by an actor.
- **Mood.** Mood is the average of the four Athena common concerns (i.e., autonomy, culture, safety, and quality of life described above). Each concern is weighted by a group's saliency for each human factor. Mood is a convenient summary statistic that reflects the changing attitudes of various groups and is an input to a number of other internal Athena modeling areas.
- **Volatility.** Volatility is a measure that describes the level of stability within a neighborhood. The volatility determines how likely it is that a random person in the neighborhood will get caught up in violence unrelated to their presence; as such, it is a major component of a group's security in the neighborhood.
- **Security.** Security is a factor that has several similarities to volatility. It is a major driver for influencing changes to population moods and neighborhood stability. While volatility speaks about the possibility of spontaneous violence impacting an individual, security addresses both where (neighborhood) and who (civilian group) is affected by violence and instability.
- **Support.** Support is a measure of the strength of a population's relationship with an actor. Actors gain or lose influence and thus control of neighborhoods based on the level of support they have from groups. Actors can increase the level of support they receive by expending resources in a neighborhood on a group. The ability of an actor to maintain security by deploying security forces in a neighborhood can significantly increase the support from a group.
- **Influence.** Influence is a measure of an actor's ability to shape the behavior of populations in a neighborhood. It is based on the amount of support the actor has from the residents of the neighborhood relative to other actors.
- **Control.** Control simply defines who 'owns' or is responsible for each neighborhood. When actors are in control of a neighborhood, the residents of the neighborhood hold them accountable for dealing with the neighborhood's problems. The actor in control is blamed when things go poorly and given credit when things go well.
- **Support – Influence – Control.** Actors with sufficient support from the residents of a neighborhood have influence in that neighborhood. Given sufficient influence, they

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may be able to take control of a neighborhood. If another actor has more influence than the previously controlling actor, and the new controlling actor loses influence, then no one is in control of that neighborhood.

For more information on the Athena Simulation please contact these individuals.

- Mr. Mel Cape, Director, Modeling & Simulations Directorate, TRADOC G-2
Phone: 913-684-7909; Melvin.R.Cape.civ@mail.mil
- Mr. Howard Lee, Athena Program Lead, DoD Contactor, MSD, TRADOC G-2
Phone: 913-684-3867; [Howard.E. Lee6.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:Howard.E.Lee6.ctr@mail.mil)

Annex C. Civilian Groups.

Saudi Arabia Regime Change Database.

- Governing Elites: This segment includes members of the Saudi royal family and senior Ulema. Many of the senior members of the royal family fill appointments to key government posts. Since the 1932 unification of the Kingdom, the royal family has shared power with the religious authorities, creating a symbiotic relationship defined by cooperation and mutual consent. The king appoints members of the Ulema, who serve as judges, lawyers, and imams, to high-ranking posts such as the Council of Senior Scholars.
- Sunni Religious Hardliners: A mix of hardline clergy, Islamist intellectuals, and a small jihadist fringe comprise this segment of the population. Sunni Religious Hardliners believe that the Kingdom ought to be governed in accordance with a strict interpretation of sharia law. Of note, women comprise a vocal part of this audience segment. These women seek to uphold certain conservative social policies, which they claim bolster Islamic family values. This group is in direct opposition to Progressive Reformers' efforts to end the male guardianship policy.
- Progressive Reformers: Progressive Reformers include businesspeople, intellectuals, and moderate religious leaders. Many Progressive Reformers are highly educated, often having studied at universities in the West. Members of this segment seek change in government policies and practices. For example, they fully supported the recent Saudi policy of allowing women the right to drive. They do not however, desire to overthrow the government or radically destabilize Saudi politics or society.
- Disgruntled Youth: Members of this segment are young and primarily Wahhabis who live in Riyadh and the rural areas of central Saudi Arabia. Few have received formal educations past high school and the majority either work in government jobs or receive varying levels of financial support from the state. This segment is economically diverse, including middle class, members of the working class, and the unemployed.
- Foreign Laborers: The expatriate community includes primarily poorer laborers from countries such as Pakistan and Bangladesh. These individuals agree to work in Saudi Arabia to enable them to support family back in their country of origin.
- Shia: Saudi Arabia's Shiite population includes Twelvers and Ismailis. The Shia constitute a large portion of the Eastern Province population in the oil rich area of Hasa Region and the southern region in Asir.

- Hijazi Elites: Members of the Hijazi Elite represent the voice of the Hijazi tribal community. They perceive their Ottoman heritage as a cultural bridge between the Arab world and the rest of Saudi Arabia. Hijazi Elites are historical leaders of commerce in Saudi Arabia and retain some political influence in the Nejdi dominated government in Riyadh.

Syria Refugee Camp Radicalization Database.

- Passive Salafist Children & Adults. These are individuals who continued to flee Coalition forces to remain under ISIL governance as their territorial state was collapsing. In the Two-Pyramids Model Radicalization by Clark McCauley and Sophia Moskalenko¹¹, these people would be described as belonging to the Sympathizers and Justifiers groups. McCauley and Moskalenko describe such individuals as “Those who believe in the cause but do not justify violence,” and “Those who justify violence in defense of the cause.” Passive Salafists include the estimated 30,000 children (assumed to be under the age of 18) not born in the Caliphate.¹² The children are assumed to be old enough to have accepted a minimal ISIL ideological education. There are a total of 43,500 women and children in the Passive Salafist civilian group.
- Sunni Neutral Children & Adults. In Two-Pyramids parlance, these are “Individuals who do not care about a political cause.” These are people who lived under the ISIL Caliphate with the goal of surviving and felt no affinity for its ideology. In this demographic there are 5,000 women and most of the estimated 20,000 child detainees born in the Caliphate. These 16,320 children (assumed to be no older than four years old) are too young to have fully absorbed the ISIL ideology. The total number of people in the Sunni Neutral civilian group is 21,320.
- Violent Salafist Children & Adults. The smallest demographic is composed of Violent Salafists. These are the most enthusiastic supporters of the ISIL Caliphate. McCauley and Moskalenko might describe such people: “At the apex of the pyramid are those who feel a personal moral obligation to take up violence in defense of the cause.” This group of detainees is composed of 1,500 women and the remaining 3,680 children born in the Caliphate for a total of 5,180.

¹¹ Understanding Political Radicalization: The Two-Pyramids Model by Clark McCauley and Sophia Moskalenko, American Psychologist 2017, Vol. 72, No. 3, 205-216.

¹² Washington Post, “At a sprawling tent camp in Syria, ISIS women impose a brutal rule,” by Louisa Loveluck and Souad Mekhennet, September 3, 2019

Annex D. Key Actors

Saudi Arabia Regime Change Database. There are 16 Actors modeled in Athena for this study.

- King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud is not represented as an actor. He dies the week before the model run begins thereby initiating the various regime change use case options presented.
- Saudi Government (Mohammad bin Salman): Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman is the heir apparent to King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. He is the de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia now and is in the process of implementing his Vision 2030 agenda.
- Saudi Government (Mohammad bin Nayef): Prince Mohammed bin Nayef is the deposed Saudi crown prince who has been confined to his palace (under house arrest) in the Red Sea city of Jeddah¹³ since 2017.
- Rebel Prince: A minor prince in the House of Saud, and as such, he has a relationship with the monarchy that his supporters feel legitimizes his attempt to seize the throne.
- Saudi Arabia National Guard (Loyal to Saudi Government): The SANG is the primary military force in Saudi Arabia and is represented as both an actor (i.e., the commander) and as a force group loyal to that actor. This actor can then 'support' whoever is the leader of the government depending on the use case.
- Saudi Arabia National Guard (Rebel Faction): This portion of the SANG is a force group in rebellion to the Saudi Government. Again, they are depicted as both an actor (i.e., the rebel SANG commander) and as a force group loyal to that actor. This actor can then provide 'support' to the Rebel Prince.
- Sunni Wahhabi: The Religious Authority in KSA is referred to as the 'Council for Religious Scholars. They are responsible for ruling on Religious issues (Fatwas) in KSA. This body was born out of the tradition of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, who was the founder of the Wahhabi movement, a strict puritanical form of Sunni Islam. This alliance, formed in the 18th century, provided the ideological impetus to Saudi expansion and remains the basis of Saudi dynastic rule today.¹⁴

¹³ The ousting of Muhammad bin Nayef and his replacement by Mohammad bin Salman in late June 2017 was not "seamless", but involved Muhammad bin Nayef being "held against his will and pressured for hours to give up his claim to the throne". He was still being confined to his palace as of 19 July 2017.

¹⁴ Bowen, Wayne H. (2007). The History of Saudi Arabia. pp. 69-70. ISBN 978-0-313-34012-3.

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- Shia Leader: Spiritual leader of Shia living in KSA. Saudi Arabia's Shiite population includes Twelvers and Ismailis. Members of this segment constitute a large portion of the Eastern Province population in the oil-rich Al-Hasa and Al-Qatif governorates and the population of the Southern regions of Asir and Najran.
- Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC): The GCC is a political and economic alliance of six countries in the Arabian Peninsula: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. All current member states are monarchies and the charter was created in 1981.
- Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC): OPEC is an intergovernmental organization of 14 nations, which account for an estimated 44 percent of global oil production and 81.5 percent of the world's proven oil reserves, giving OPEC a major influence on global oil prices.
- United States: US Government.
- China: Government of China.
- Israel: Government of Israel.
- Russia: Government of Russia.
- Iran: Government of Iran.
- Syria: Government of Syria.

Syria Refugee Camp Radicalization Database. Two key actors are included in this database.

- Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF): The SDF is an alliance in the Syrian Civil War composed primarily of Kurdish, Arab, and Assyrian/Syriac militias. The SDF is militarily led by the People's Protection Units (YPG), a mostly Kurdish militia.
- Islamic State and the Levant (ISIL): ISIL is also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), is a terrorist militant group that follows a fundamentalist, Salafi jihadist doctrine of Sunni Islam.

Annex E. Belief Topics

Saudi Arabia Regime Change Database. This set of Belief Topics span both Iran and Saudi Arabia. Belief Topics 1-11 are associated with Iran and did not have significant impact on the Saudi Arabia modeling runs.

Topic 1: Enduring Persian Nationalism: Iran should honor its illustrious Persian heritage and reclaim its place as an influential leader in the region and globally.

Topic 2: US Betrayal: The US was once a trusted ally of Iran, but the US-orchestrated 1953 coup revealed America's treacherous intentions to control Iran.

Topic 3: Iran is Defender of the Muslim Middle East: From the time of the Prophet, the Middle East was a region of solid and untainted Muslim power in which Iran was a leader.

Topic 4: The Great and Little Satan: Since the Revolution, the US and Great Britain have conspired to regain control of Iranian society through a soft war designed to lure virtuous Muslim Iranians into sin and debauchery.

Topic 5: Reforming Khomeini's Republic: Hardliners cast aside Khomeini's vision as they conspired to consolidate power after the revolution. Iranians must resurrect Khomeini's vision for social and political freedom.

Topic 6: Challenging the Patriarchy: Iran's Muslim women fought alongside men in the Revolution to establish a just government that would put an end to oppression for all Iranians. Iranian women must come together to demand the rights they deserve as equal members of the Islamic Republic they fought to establish.

Topic 7: Belief in Vali-e-Faqah: Absolute velayat-e faqih is grounded in the belief that as the Twelfth Imam's deputy, the supreme leader should hold absolute and exclusive authority over the state's affairs. The 1989 amendments therefore expanded the scope of the supreme leader's powers to virtually all organs of the state.

Topic 8: Kurdistan: The belief that Kurdistan should be an independent country.

Topic 9: Baluchistan: The belief that Baluchistan should be an independent country.

Topic 10: Iranian Nuclear Program: Iran's development of its nuclear program should not be halted for any reason.

Topic 11: International Engagement: Iran should open their foreign and economic policies to leverage changing world conditions.

Topic 12: Custodians of Islam: With the Prophet's guidance, Muslims in the Arabian Peninsula emerged as the stewards of Mecca and Medina and leaders of the ummah. However, these Muslims strayed from the Prophet's teachings until Muhammad Bin-Abd-al-Wahhab emerged in the 18th century to renew Islam. Saudi Muslims must fulfill their role as keepers of the hajj and leaders of the ummah by protecting Islam from deviant influences, thereby gaining the righteous glory God promised.

Topic 13: Shiite Heretics: In the 1740s, Al-Wahhab justly purged the Arabian Peninsula of the bid'ah (heretical innovations) polluting Islam. Yet even his purification could not liberate Saudis of the idolatrous Shiites who tarnished the Prophet's teachings, and showed their fealty to Iran in the 1979 Shiite Uprising. By remaining vigilant against these infidel Persian loyalists, Saudis can defend themselves against the nefarious Shiite fifth column.

Topic 14: Centuries of Injustice: The centuries-long Wahhabi onslaught has prohibited Shiites from living a life of abundance, faith, and dignity. Now these warlike American-backed Sunnis accuse Shiites of loyalty to Iran. Shiites might look to mullahs abroad for spiritual guidance, but they are still citizens in full. Shiites must demand freedom of worship, access to jobs and political positions, and equal treatment to claim the respect and prosperity they deserve.

Topic 15: Cosmopolitan Hijazis: For centuries, Hijazis were the cosmopolitan face of the Peninsula. Then in 1924 the backwards Najdis seized the Hijaz. Since then Hijazis have had material comforts, but have also faced state-backed attempts to erase Hijazi culture from Saudi Arabia. By defending their heritage and asserting their rightful role as a bridge to the global ummah, Hijazis will ensure that Saudi Arabia reclaims its ancient values of open-mindedness and tolerance.

Topic 16: God's Abundance: For millennia the tribesmen of the Arabian Peninsula were simple and devout nomads.

Topic 17: Moral Purity: Saudis follow traditions modeled on the life of the Prophet.

Topic 18: Voices of Change: Saudi Arabia was a backwater until petrodollars flooded in, giving Saudis hopes for a modern nation guided by faith and the Al Sa'uds.

Topic 19: Unifiers of the Peninsula: Before 1932 the Arabian Peninsula was an ungovernable desert mired in tribal war.

Syria Refugee Camp Radicalization Database. These Belief Topics were derived from research and master narratives information predominantly found in several Country Reports developed by Monitor 360.¹⁵

Topic 1: Zionist Scourge: Syrians have stood guard over the Levant as part of the Arab world for millennia. Today, the greatest threat to the Arab world is hated Zionist Israel, born of Western treachery. Syrians must resist the Zionists - first and foremost by regaining the Golan Heights and ending the occupation of Palestine. This is how to put an end to decades of Arab displacement and dispossession.

Topic 2: Agents of the West: Islam's earliest leaders were distinguished by their passion for Sharia, rejection of excess, and love for jihad. Today, hypocrite rulers betray the legacy of these model leaders, following Western masters, ignoring Sharia, stealing their peoples' wealth, and spreading idleness. The umma must awaken from its slumber and free itself from corruption and oppression.

Topic 3: Secular Rule for Iraq-Syria/"Stabilizing Secularists": When the French evacuated in 1948 they left Syria torn apart by selfish politicians struggling for power. Fortunately, out of this chaos, the Ba'ath rose to lead the nation. The prosperity fostered by the regime is now threatened by Muslim extremists who want to push the country into religious war. Syria must crush these extremists, or the country will disintegrate into sectarian bloodshed.

Topic 4: Alawite Survival: Consigned to Syria's rocky hinterlands, Alawites barely scraped out a living under Sunni rule. But in the mid-twentieth century the Alawites rose to power through the superior achievement of their people in the Troupes Speciales du Levant (Army of the Levant), and have rightfully ruled the nation for half a century since. Now Alawites are once again threatened by fanatical Sunnis that wish to destroy them. If Alawites do not unite and kill these extremists, they are destined for extinction.

Topic 5: Iran Defends the Muslim Middle East: The Middle East has long been a region of Islamic power in which Iran was a leader. However, sinister colonial forces have exploited the Muslim people: the establishment of Zionist Israel and the ongoing western assault on Iraq and Afghanistan are unhealed wounds at the core of the Muslim Middle East. Given its just Islamic government and its power, Iran is the rightful defender of suffering Muslims across the region.

¹⁵ Open Source Center - Monitor 360 Country Report(s): Syria (June 2012); Iran (February 2011); Turkey (October 2010); Al-Qaeda (September 2011); Saudi Arabia (December 2012)

Topic 6: [Government] Stability First: Religious extremists and regional chaos threaten to plunge the Middle East into turmoil. Muslims must unite around shared values of moderation and tolerance, and look to their governments to keep their countries safe. Only through supporting their governments can Muslims in the Arab World ensure that their nations remain peaceful and stable.

Topic 7: Kurdish Independence/"Restoring the Kurdish Homeland": Kurds have always lived on the land in southeastern Turkey (including Syria, Iraq, Azerbaijan, and Iran). Today, Turks illegally occupy this historical homeland and trample upon the Kurdish community's identity. Kurds should reject assimilation in order to defend Kurdish cultural and linguistic heritage from extinction.

Topic 8: Iraqi Nationalism: The "land between the two rivers" has existed since antiquity and is not the creation of 20th century European map makers. The world's great religions incubated in these well-watered plains and interacted to create an urbane, educated society. Iraq has suffered greatly because of outside interference in Iraqi affairs. Now, a multi-confessional, democratic Iraq united by a shared history has the potential to be a leader in the Arab world.

Topic 9: Restoring the Caliphate Immediately: The creation of an Islamic Caliphate turned lost desert tribes into leaders and scholars of monotheism. After centuries, however, Western scheming and attacks divided the umma into a multitude of torn pieces, and traitorous Muslim rulers allowed the Caliphate to be destroyed. With their blood and arms, Muslims can rebuild the Caliphate brick by brick, putting an end to injustice and suffering, and restoring the umma to its magnificent glory.

Topic 10: Violent [Sunni] Jihad: While Muslims have always sought peace, the Prophet and his companions never shirked their duty to fight. In the face of oppression, however, the umma and its ulema (scholarly leaders) have put money and stability before God and religious obligation. Muslims are faced with a choice: let the house of Islam burn to the ground or rise up to defend it.

Topic 11: Shiite Heretics: Shiites spread bid'ah (heretical innovations) among the Muslim Ummah, polluting Islam. Idolatrous Shiites tarnished the Prophet's teachings, and pay fealty to Iran. They are a nefarious fifth column in Muslim society and more loyal to Iranian interests than to their own leaders and sovereign nations.

Annex F. Saudi Arabia - Country Profile

Country Profile

Saudi Arabia

Utilizing a PMESII-Based Descriptive Framework



TRADOC G-2

Modeling & Simulation Directorate
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas 66027

March 2, 2020

Prepared By:

Dr. David Hunter-Chester, IDSI, contractor, TRADOC G-2, M&SD, Senior Research Analyst

The overall classification of this document is UNCLASSIFIED

Saudi Arabia



Map of Saudi Arabia

Organization of This Document

This document utilizes the political, military, economic, social, infrastructure, and information (PMESII) framework to present facts about Saudi Arabia. A PMESII-structured framework describes the foundational human, social, cultural, and behavioral features of a state and can assist not only in determining the state's strengths and weaknesses, but also in assessing the effects that various engagement strategies may have on the state.

Basic Facts about Saudi Arabia

The information immediately below is derived from the CIA World Factbook: Saudi Arabia (as of January 15, 2020).

Population:	33,091,113 (July 2018 est.)
Population Growth Rate:	1.63% (2018 est.)
Total Land Area:	2,149,690 sq km (about one-fifth the size of the United States)
Capital:	Riyadh
Type of Government:	absolute monarchy
Founding date:	23 September 1932 (unification of the kingdom)
Constitution:	1 March 1992 - Basic Law of Government, issued by royal decree, serves as the constitutional framework and is based on the Qur'an and the life and traditions of the Prophet Muhammad amendments: proposed by the king directly or proposed to the king by the Consultative Assembly or by the Council of Ministers; passage by the king through royal decree; Basic Law amended many times, last in 2005 (2016)
Legal System:	Islamic (sharia) legal system with some elements of Egyptian, French, and customary law; note - several secular codes have been introduced; commercial disputes handled by special committees
Chief of state:	King and Prime Minister SALMAN bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud (since 23 January 2015); Crown Prince MUHAMMAD BIN SALMAN bin Abd al-Aziz Al Saud (born 31 August 1985)
Primary Ethnic Groups:	Arab 90%, Afro-Asian 10%
Languages:	Arabic (official)
Religions:	Muslim (official; citizens are 85-90% Sunni and 10-15% Shia), other (includes Eastern Orthodox, Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, and Sikh) (2012 est.)
Literacy:	94.7% male: 97% female: 91.1% (2015)
GDP (Official Ex Rate):	\$686.7 billion (2017 est.)
Unemployment:	6% (2017 est.)
Exports:	petroleum and petroleum products 90% (2012 est.)
Revenues:	181 billion (2017 est.)
Expenditures:	241.8 billion (2017 est.)

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Paved Roads:	47,529 km (includes 3,891 km of expressways) (2006)
Agriculture:	wheat, barley, tomatoes, melons, dates, citrus; mutton, chickens, eggs, milk
Natural Resources:	petroleum, natural gas, iron ore, gold, copper
Climate:	harsh, dry desert with great temperature extremes
Terrain:	mostly sandy desert

Brief Historical Sketch of Saudi Arabia



It is not quite certain whether the actual recipient of these estates was Mani' al Muraidi himself, who had certainly initiated the correspondence with his Jiz'a cousin, or his son Rabi'a. It was the latter in any case who laid the foundations of the colony's prosperity by assiduous development and aggressive expansion at the expense of his neighbours. But to Mani' and his father, Rabi'a, belongs the honour of being the earliest traceable ancestors of the House of Sa'ud, which has so conspicuously dominated the Arabian scene through all the vicissitudes of the last 200 years. Sa'ud the eponymous founder of the dynasty was his great-great-great-great-grandson . . .¹⁶

The Arabian Peninsula has a rich history and pre-history. The first humans may have emigrated through the peninsula on their way into Asia. The horse and other animals may have first been domesticated there. In more recent times it has been a way station for goods that, having flowed through the silk road, were then been transported by sea to a port in what is now Yemen. The goods then traveled up the coast enroute to Europe. Mecca was an important mercantile, and cosmopolitan center. In the Kaaba, the black house tradition holds that Abraham and Ishmael built, many faiths were represented. Muhammad, before he was the prophet, married a rich merchant there. It was as a man of leisure, then, that he was able to retire to his cave, where the angel Gabriel spoke to him, "in a clear Arabic tongue,"¹⁷ instructing the prophet on the word of the one true God, Allah. The prophet's wife was the first adherent of this new faith, Islam, which means submission. Through significant resistance, the number of followers grew. Though Muhammad and his followers had to flee Mecca for a time to Medina, there the number of adherents continued to grow, and within a few years Muhammad was able to return and cleanse

¹⁶ H. St. John Philby, *Saudi Arabia* (London: Ernest Benn, 1955), 8, <http://www.questia.com/read/24971493/saudi-arabia>.

¹⁷ Quoted in Gary Hobin, "Islam 101," unpublished paper, 4.

the Kaaba, dedicating it to Allah, in the year 654. It has remained the center of Islamic worship since and the two cities, as well as the surrounding area, the *Hijaz*, have remained especially significant to the faith, because of the *Hajj*, or pilgrimage to Mecca, the two mosques (of the two cities), and the foundational historical significance to adherents of the second-largest religion. Medina was more than just a spiritual co-capitol, at first, but the actual capitol of a growing Islamic empire under the first four, or Rashidun, Caliphs after Muhammad's death.

The capitals of successive Islamic empires moved, to cities like Damascus and Baghdad. Though the Islamic faith remained strong among Arabs, and the Hijaz remained central to worship, as the center of governing power moved away, the tribes of the peninsula reverted to tribal social relations, with no true centralizing state. This changed in the 18th century, when a tribal leader in central Arabia met a religious leader, and had a key insight, "This preacher, Abbas al-Wahhab, came to the attention of a local dignitary, Muhammad al-Saud. Linking a reformist ideology and an effective warrior ethos established an almost irresistible militant force."¹⁸ As Islamic empires had grown, retreated, and grown again, the culture had come into contact with many other cultures. Islamic faithful – especially the ruling and administrative classes – had begun to accept luxuries, art and practices that would have been deemed too worldly, or would have been just unimaginable in the earliest days of the faith. According to Abbas al-Wahhab, these practices were not just unimaginable, but anathema. His teachings were more spartan. And al-Saud paired these reformist, abstemious practices with young desert warriors who became his fanatical shock troops.

This first Saudi state lasted until the Ottoman Empire took notice, though it took the empire longer to cobble together troops and leadership to take back suzerainty over the Arabian Peninsula. The Ottoman army "seized Dariyya, and razed the town,"¹⁹ Dariyya, the home of the al-Saud family, "was totally destroyed; its palm groves were cut down and burned. It never recovered, and its ruins can still be seen about 20 kilometers north of Riyadh."²⁰ The head of the family was executed, in 1818. The al-Saud family powerful remained powerful, however, and six years later the great uncle of the slain emir reestablished Saudi control over the *Najd*, the central highland of the Arabian Peninsula, though this time Riyadh was made the capital. In time the al-Saud family was ousted again, this time by Arab rivals, the al-Rashid clan, who forced the al-Saud into exile in Kuwait in 1887. The age of four when exiled, Abd al-Aziz ibn Saud returned to the peninsula in 1901 to establish the third Saudi state, expanding it from the *Najd* to encompass almost all of the Arabian Peninsula, the kingdom which has lasted until today.²¹

¹⁸ Ibid, 17.

¹⁹ Ibid, 21.

²⁰ David E. Long and Sebastian Maisel, *The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, 2nd ed. (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2010), 30, <http://www.questia.com/read/127865493/the-kingdom-of-saudi-arabia>.

²¹ Ibid, 25-46.

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Provinces of Saudi Arabia

There are 13 administrative regions (*manāṭiq*), or provinces in the kingdom: “Al Bahah, Al Hudud ash Shamaliyah (Northern Border), Al Jawf, Al Madinah (Medina), Al Qasim, Ar Riyad (Riyadh), Ash Sharqiyah (Eastern), 'Asir, Ha'il, Jizan, Makkah (Mecca), Najran, and Tabuk.”²²

Provinces are further subdivided into districts. Governors are appointed by the king, and often are members of the royal family. Governors are advised by councils, half of whose members are selected by the monarchy and half of whom are voted in.

Monarchy

Saudi Arabia is an absolute monarchy. The king combines the executive, legislative and judicial functions. Sharia law is followed. The king presides over the Council of Ministers, which administers executive functions, like finance, defense and education through various ministries and agencies. In 1992 the king issued the Basic Law of Government, a written guide on how the government should function. Based on this document, the following year the Consultative Council, focused on more technical matters, was established. Members of both councils are appointed by the king. Though the councils can recommend legislation to the king, most matters of policy and law derive from consensus within the royal family, though influential members of the ulema, or religious scholars, also, at times, have an impact.²³

Sharia Law

All three Saudi states have been beholden to Wahhabism, which, “is generally described as an 'offshoot' of Hanbali jurisprudence and 'encourage[s] a return to the orthodox practice of the "fundamentals" of Islam, as embodied in the Quran and in the life of the Prophet Muhammad.”²⁴ In accordance with this interpretation of Sharia, “[f]orming the foundation for the judicial branch of government in Saudi Arabia are three varieties of Sharia courts: the courts of first instance; the courts of appeal; and the Supreme Judicial Council. Within this system, Saudi

²² “Provinces of Saudi Arabia,” Research Maniacs, <https://researchmaniacs.com/Country/Provinces/List-Of-Provinces-In-Saudi-Arabia.html>.

²³ Harry St. John Bridger Philby, Joshua Teitelbaum, William L. Ochsenwald, “Saudi Arabia,” Encyclopedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Saudi-Arabia/Government-and-society>.

²⁴ Tom Throneburg Butler, “The Times: Are They A-Changin’? Saudi Law Finally Addresses Domestic Violence with Its Regulation on Protection from Abuse,” *Iowa Law Review* 100, no. 3 (2015), <http://www.questia.com/read/1P3-3736150071/the-times-are-they-a-changin-saudi-law-finally>.

judges are primarily trained in matters of Islamic law and are not required to possess expertise in 'technical or commercial' areas of the law."²⁵ The king is the final arbiter of justice.

Recently some change has taken place. Notably, women are now allowed to drive in the kingdom. Religious police are no longer allowed to make arrests without regular police present. Perhaps most significantly, in 2013, for the first time, domestic abuse was outlawed. According to the Regulation, with the power of law in the kingdom, domestic abuse "'includ[es] physical, psychological [and] sexual abuse,' as well as 'abuse threats.' In addition to affirmative acts of abuse, the Regulation also aims to capture 'refrain or default in fulfilling . . . duties and commitments to provide the essential basic needs for any other member [of] his family or those legally under his guardianship.'"²⁶

There were hopes of even further reforms with the advent of Mohammed Bin Salman, or MBS as he is often referred to, as Crown Prince. Opening cinemas, granting women more rights, were seen as evidence of reform from the young prince, but his reputation as a reformer vanished when he was implicated in the murder of Jamal Kashoggi. In an interview that was published after Kashoggi's murder, Kashoggi said MBS "[w]ants to enjoy the fruits of first world modernity and Silicon Valley and cinemas and everything, but at the same time he wants also to rule like how his grandfather ruled Saudi Arabia."²⁷ MBS famously high-fived another murderous dictator, Putin, on the world stage. Not many expect reforms from him now.

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Saudi Arabia is the only country that is large enough and strong enough to underpin any regional security structure in the southern Gulf. It is the one southern Gulf country that can provide strategic depth to the other, smaller southern Gulf States which are minutes or

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Rula Jebreal, "Jamal Khashoggi Secret Interview: The Saudi Journalist's Views of Islam, America and the 'Reformist' Prince Implicated in His Murder; Mohammed Bin Salman "Wants to Enjoy the Fruits of First World Modernity and Silicon Valley and Cinemas and Everything, but at the Same Time He Wants Also to Rule like How His Grandfather Ruled Saudi Arabia," Khashoggi Said," *Newsweek*, November 9, 2018, <http://www.questia.com/read/1G1-561653477/jamal-khashoggi-secret-interview-the-saudi-journalist-s>.

*seconds of flight time from Iran, and whose forces are far too small to defend themselves by acting alone.*²⁸

Saudi Arabian Armed Forces (SAAF)

The SAAF has enjoyed a strong relationship with the United States of America since the end of World War II. The U.S. "has completed substantial military infrastructure in the Kingdom that remain critical to both Saudi and U.S. security forces. The United States Military Training Mission in Saudi Arabia (USMTM) has been the principal mechanism for direct U.S. -Saudi military cooperation since its inception in 1953 . . ." The relationship has not always been an easy one, given U.S. concerns about a non-democratic regime and violent extremism, on one hand and Saudi concerns about American "'crusader' troops"²⁹ and support for Israel on the other hand, but pragmatists on both sides have continued to dominate policy decisions; a strong security partnership continues.³⁰



Royal Saudi Land Force (Army)

The Royal Saudi Land Force (RSLF), or Saudi Arabian Army, traces its roots back to the first Saudi state in 1745. There are 75,000 troops, and its order of battle includes three armour brigades, six mechanised infantry brigades, a guards brigade – light infantry – and an airborne brigade, which includes special forces troops. There are eight artillery battalions.

The RSLF, with support from other SAAF services, has been fighting Houthi insurgents in Yemen since 2015. Operation Restore Hope, as it is called began with a "joint amphibious and airborne assault . . ." with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) ". . . to drive back rebel advances upon the southern port city of Aden."³¹ Though much of the fighting has been conducted by the UAE, results have revealed weaknesses of the RSLF when facing unconventional enemies like the Houthi insurgents.

²⁸ Anthony H. Cordesman, *Saudi Arabia: National Security in a Troubled Region* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International, 2009), 1, <http://www.questia.com/read/123910329/saudi-arabia-national-security-in-a-troubled-region>.

²⁹ Robert Lacey, *Inside the Kingdom: Kings, Clerics, Modernists, Terrorists and the Struggle for Saudi Arabia* (New York: Viking, 2009), 151.

³⁰ Cordesmann, 4.

³¹ "Saudi Arabia > Army," Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment - The Gulf States, January 14, 2020, <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/JWARA228-GULF>.



Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF)

The RSAF has a strength of 20,000, “and is considered one of the most robust air components in the Gulf.”³² The RSAF has had a high-tempo of operations since 2014, first against the Islamic State and later in Yemen operations. The force has the third largest contingent of F-15s, behind the United States and Japan. Once criticized as inexperienced and too dependent upon foreigners for sustainment, recent combat operations and reforms are producing an arguably more effective force though whether effective enough in this chaotic and dangerous region, is open to question.³³



Royal Saudi Air Defense Forces (RSADF)

The RSADF has a strength of 16,000 and became an independent branch of service in 1984. It is comprised of six air defense groups, and “weapons . . . include[e] gun systems, self-propelled short-range air defence (SHORAD) systems, and high-to-medium air defence (HIMAD) missile systems.”³⁴ As well, “One of the most significant elements in the Saudi air defence network remains the Peace Shield airspace monitoring and detection system. Completed in 1995, it comprises 17 AN/FPS-117(V)3 long-range 3D radar systems linked to AN/TPS-43 and AN/TPS-72 short- and medium-range radar.”³⁵



Royal Saudi Naval Force (RSNF)

The RSNF has a strength of 15,500 sailors and 3000 marines. Its Western Fleet patrols the Red Sea, while its Eastern Fleet patrols the Gulf. Many of its assets focus on the Arabian peninsula’s littoral areas. The navy has gained much experience in the last several years, participating in anti-piracy patrols, missions in support of Yemen operations, and reacting to Iranian naval

³² “Saudi Arabia – Air Force,” Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment – The Gulf States, February 10, 2020, <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/JWAF233-GULF>.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

developments. The force is in the midst of a significant recapitalization effort. As of now, “By regional standards, the Royal Saudi Navy Force (RSNF) is a relatively well-equipped force with extensive command, control, communications, and intelligence (C3I) capabilities and adequate shore-based facilities for its immediate security requirements.”³⁶



Saudi Arabia National Guard (SANG)

The SANG is an internal security force that reports directly to the king, and provides rear-area security to a deployed RSLF. It grew out of the former *Ikhwan*: “In 1954, a year after the death of Ibn Saud, the Saudi government transformed the Office of the Jihad and Mujahideen, which managed the *Ikhwan* and other tribal forces, into the Saudi Arabian National Guard.”³⁷ Drawn from tribes loyal to the Saud family, exact numbers are hard to come by, but a reliable source puts those numbers at 125,000. It is organized “into four mechanized brigades (three of which have been modernized with light armored vehicles [LAVs]), five light infantry brigades, and one ceremonial cavalry squadron.”³⁸



Ministry of the Interior

Several forces responsible for internal security answer to the Ministry of Interior: the Public Security Directorate, in charge of all police forces in the kingdom; the Special Emergency Force, a paramilitary unit formed “to take on Al Qa’ida on the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and other militants . . . said to have a strength of about 30,000 . . . a mobile force with strong helicopter support for rapid deployments;”³⁹ the General Directorate of Intelligence, including the General Security Services, a domestic intelligence organization; the National Intelligence Center,

³⁶ “Saudi Arabia – Navy,” Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment – The Gulf States, February 10, 2020, <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/JWNA0129-GULF>.

³⁷ “Saudi Arabia: A New National Guard for a New King?” Stratfor, <https://worldview.stratfor.com/article/saudi-arabia-new-national-guard-new-king>.

³⁸ Anthony H. Cordesman, *Saudi Arabia: National Security in a Troubled Region* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International, 2009), 177, <http://www.questia.com/read/123910505/saudi-arabia-national-security-in-a-troubled-region>.

³⁹ Anthony H. Cordesman, *Saudi Arabia: National Security in a Troubled Region* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger Security International, 2009), 125, <http://www.questia.com/read/123910453/saudi-arabia-national-security-in-a-troubled-region>.

maintaining records on Saudi subjects and foreigners alike; and Al Haya, "an independent paramilitary organization based in Riyadh and is under the control of the Assistant Minister of Interior for Security Affairs;"⁴⁰ the Facilities Security Force, protecting oil infrastructure in particular; and the "an independent security force that appears to operate similarly to the country's religious police, the Commission for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice. However, it is more professional and has a force of 5,000 men . . . participating in counterterrorism operations. The organization falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Interior, but is under the direct operational control of the Assistant Minister for Security Affairs."⁴¹

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Economy of KSA

KSA can be described as a prototype, "a classic example of what western social scientists call a rentier state. In contrast to most states, where the government collects tax revenues that technically are to be used to provide public services to the citizens, a major task of government in the kingdom is to distribute state accrued oil revenues in the form of goods, services, social infrastructure, and subsidies to the people in the most equitable way."⁴²

The KSA provides a quarter of all the oil shipped around the world. It remains almost completely dependent on oil for its wealth. The government has attempted to enact a series of five-year plans since 1970, but though those plans have provided for the basic needs of Saudi Arabia's urbanized population, diversification in the economy is still lacking. The factors of tradition, religion, authoritarian rule, lack of transparency and corruption, which have held back positive social change, have also held back the needed economic diversification. Primarily concerned with maintaining their grip on power, Saudi royalty has used their rentier policies towards that end, and not towards diversification.

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As modernization and secularization went hand in hand, creating a development strategy that would accomplish this goal was difficult. It was a mark of his political skills as well as his foresight

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid, 126.

⁴² David E. Long and Sebastian Maisel, *The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, 2nd ed. (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2010), 104, <http://www.questia.com/read/127865567/the-kingdom-of-saudi-arabia>.

that King Faysal succeeded so well, gently pushing his people toward modernization, but no farther or faster than they could tolerate. For example, to meet the criticism of religious leaders that the radio was an instrument of Satan, Faysal ensured that prime broadcast time on newly established Saudi radio was dedicated to reading the Quran and discussing religion.⁴³

Political and Social Stressors

The tension between moving forward as a nation-state in the modern world – enjoying its prerogatives, wielding influence derived from wealth, yet remaining in power – keeping religious leaders both satisfied and pacified, and tribal tensions has always been a tight-rope for the al-Saud family, the “princes have traversed the balance beam, skillfully maintain control of a deeply divided, distrustful, and increasingly dispirited populace.”⁴⁴ The *Ikhwan* (Brethren) warriors, for instance, critical to reestablishing the third and current Saudi kingdom, first chafed and then rebelled when King Abdulaziz Ibn Saud, having used the zealous warriors to conquer most of the peninsula, balked when the *Ikhwan* wanted to conquer the surrounding British protectorate territories of Transjordan, Iraq and Kuwait. The king put down the rebellion and killed its leaders. As Saudi Arabia has modernized, religious, tribal or both, pressures have erupted, at times, and the monarchy’s responses have varied.

The first Gulf War, 1990-1991, was one of those taut times. The monarchy had asked for and officially welcomed the American military into Saudi Arabia to face Saddam Hussein’s threat from Kuwait. Osama Bin Laden, who had fought with the mujahideen against the Soviets in Afghanistan, offered to reform the mujahideen to expel Iraqi forces. He was turned down by the Saudi government, and eventually took his organization Al-Qaeda into world-wide jihad against America and the West. Other Saudis were as offended:

“Let there not be two religions in Arabia,” ran the text thundered across Arabia upon the arrival of the American troops, in contemptuous defiance of the ulema’s government-supportive fatwa.

“To defend ourselves we have invited the help of our real enemies,” complained Dr. Safer Al-Hawali, a young middle-ranking cleric who was not afraid to take on the establishment. “The point is that we need internal change. The first war should be against infidels *inside*. Then we will be strong enough to face our external enemy.”⁴⁵ (Italics in the original)

⁴³ David E. Long and Sebastian Maisel, *The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, 2nd ed. (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2010), 104, <http://www.questia.com/read/127865567/the-kingdom-of-saudi-arabia>.

⁴⁴ Karen Elliott House, *On Saudi Arabia: Its People, Past, Religion, Fault Lines and Future* (New York: Vintage Books, 2013), 3.

⁴⁵ Lacey, 150.

The presence of U.S. forces remained a source of tension until the withdrawal of the Gulf War forces in 2003. The Arab Spring in 2011 was another anxious time for the Saudi royal family, as perhaps revelations about MBS's involvement in the murder of Jamal Kashoggi have been more recently. Many subjects are concerned "[c]orruption is rampant, entrapping almost every Saudi in a web of favors and bribes large and small . . . turning a society governed by supposed strict Sharia law into an increasingly lawless one, where law is whatever the king or one of his judges says it is – or people feel they can get away with."⁴⁶ This would perhaps present more of a challenge to the regime if tradition, religion and the government's rentier policies did not lead to the limiting factor, "individual initiative and enterprise are virtually nonexistent."⁴⁷

Women

As some analysts have pointed out, if the Prophet's first wife Kadajah had not first hired the Prophet, and then married him, making him a man of leisure with her wealth, he may never have had the opportunity to recline in his cave and hear from the angel Gabriel. Muhammad had many wives, and at least one led Muslim troops in battle. Ironically, then, given these facts, Wahhabi Islam, which is supposed to turn the path of submission to the One True God back to its origins shorn of sinful adumbrations, maintains that men answer to God, but women answer to men. In some ways women have been at the forefront of challenges to the regime, protesting when their husbands, fathers and brothers were imprisoned after the Arab Awakening, or posting YouTube vehicles of themselves driving a car and unescorted, before that was made legal. Progress has been made, but many Saudis doubt their leaders are actually committed to increasing rights for women.⁴⁸

Shi'i

After women, Shiites may be the most oppressed group in Saudi Arabia. Concentrated in the northeast of the country, no Shiite has ever held office in Saudi Arabia, and they are subject to violent purges. Saudi Arabia's, to some minds, existential struggle with Iran only worsens the plight of this minority.

⁴⁶ House, 4-5.

⁴⁷ Ibid, ix.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 72-101.

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Infrastructure in KSA

Electricity and Natural Gas

Electricity is available to almost 100 percent of the population, most of it produced by natural gas generators.

Water and Sanitation

Given the prevalence of desert climate and geology on the peninsula, water is a perennial problem. The KSA has the largest desalinization plant in the world, and it has managed to become self-sufficient in some basic crops, however. The majority of Saudi now live in cities, with urban sewer systems, though maintenance tends to be an issue.

Food

The Kingdom is self-sufficient in “wheat, eggs, and milk, among other commodities, though it still imports the bulk of its food needs.”⁴⁹

*Roads, Railways, Airports and Seaports*⁵⁰

Roads: Total road network length (km), 221,372; Paved (km), 47,529; Unpaved (km), 173,843

Railways: Total rail network length (km), 5,410; Standard gauge (mm). 1,435

Airports: Six commercial international airports: Dammam, Jeddah, Riyadh, Medina, Al-Hofuf / Al-Ahsa, Yanbu.

Seaports: 18 Seaports - Dammam, Jeddah, Jizan, Jubail, Ras Tanura, Yanbu Commercial Port, Dhuba, Qadimah, Ras Al Khafji, Ras al Mishab, King Fahd Industrial Port (Yanbu), Rabigh, Ras al Ghar, Duba Bulk Plant Terminal, Port Tanaqib, Ras Al Khair, King Abdullah Port, Al Shuqaiq.

⁴⁹ Harry St. John Bridger Philby, Joshua Teitelbaum and Others, “Saudia Arabia,” Encyclopædia Britannica, February 8, 2020, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Saudi-Arabia>.

⁵⁰ “Saudi Arabia > Infrastructure,” Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment – The Gulf States, April 2, 2019, <https://janes.ihs.com/Janes/Display/sauds060-GULF>.

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Information in Saudi Arabia

Radio broadcasts were first heard in the kingdom in 1948. Television broadcasts began in 1965. The broadcasts are controlled by the state, and are largely accessible. Internet, as well, is almost universally accessible. Smart phone usage is widespread, as is texting. Though YouTube videos, for instance, have been used to protest some kingdom policies, the danger of imprisonment or worse – such as the murder of Jamal Kashoggi after he wrote an opinion article critical of the royal family – have placed a chill on such protests.

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Ummah Definition: The Ummah is a community of believers from diverse backgrounds,
ancestry, locations and nationalities bound together with a common purpose, to
worship God and advance the cause of Islam.
<https://www.islamreligion.com/articles/11312/concept-of-ummah-in-islam/>

Ulama Definition: Ulama (also Ulema), the body of religious scholars who are versed
theoretically and practically in the Muslim sciences - theologians, canon lawyers
(muftis), judges (qadis), professors-and high state religious officials. In a narrower
sense ulama may refer to a council of learned men holding government
appointments in a Muslim state. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/ulama>

Annex H. Acronyms and Abbreviations

DIME-FIL - Diplomatic, Information, Military, Economic, Financial, Intelligence and Law Enforcement

ENI - Essential Non-Infrastructure Investment

GDP - Gross Domestic Product

ISIL - Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant

KSA – Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

MbS - Mohammed bin Salman

MbN - Muhammad bin Nayef

MSD - Modeling and Simulations Directorate

PMESII-PT - Political, Military, Economic, Social, Infrastructure, Information, Physical Environment, and Time

RSADF - Royal Saudi Air Defense Forces

RSAF - Royal Saudi Air Force

RSLF - Royal Saudi Land Force (Regular Saudi Army)

RSNF - Royal Saudi Naval Force

SAAF - Saudi Arabian Armed Forces

SANG - Saudi Arabian National Guard

SDF - Syrian Democratic Forces

SMA - Strategic Multilayer Assessment

SME - Subject Matter Expert

TRADOC - Training and Doctrine Command

USCENTCOM – United States Central Command

VEO - Violent Extremist Organizations

YPG - YPG is an acronym whose translation means People's Protection Units

Annex I. Points of Contact

Study Lead:

- Mr. Howard Lee; Senior Research Analyst / Athena Program Lead
howard.e.lee6.ctr@mail.mil; 913-684-3867

Study Team:

- Dr. Jumanne Donahue; Senior Athena Analyst / Modeler (Radicalization)
jumanne.k.donahue.ctr@mail.mil; 913-684-7963
- Mr. Nathan 'Luke' Roth; Athena Analyst / Modeler (Regime Change)
nathan.l.roth.ctr@mail.mil; 913-684-7895
- Dr. David Hunter-Chester; Senior Research Analyst
david.e.hunterchester.ctr@mail.mil; 913-684-5965