

Is Saudi Arabia Joining Trump's Political Game?

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In quest of seeking the support of the Arab Muslim leaders for an international stance against Iran, Saudi Arabia is hosting [three](#) consecutive summits at the holy city of Mecca after Iran's alleged [attacks](#) on Saudi Arabia's oil installations. Saudi monarch King Salman, interestingly, called this emergency summit of Arab leaders just hours after the US National Security Advisor John Bolton's [comment](#) regarding Iran's probable involvement in the sabotage of four ships, including two Saudi oil tankers, off the UAE coast. While the UAE has not publicly [blamed](#) anyone for this incident, Mr. Bolton made his comments without providing any [evidence](#) to support the allegation, says BBC. Consequently, amid the escalated tensions between Iran and the US, King Salman reiterated in the summit to use "all [means](#) to stop the Iranian regime from interfering in the internal affairs of other countries."

Surprisingly, in order to address swelling tensions with Iran, Saudi Arabia has even [reached](#) out to Qatar, the Arab neighbor against which Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Egypt issued a [blockade](#) two years ago, cutting off the diplomatic relationship via land and sea. Andreas Krieg, a lecturer at the King's College London School of Security Studies, told that Saudi Arabia's direct contact with Qatar [indicates](#) that the tension with Iran has been taken very seriously in Riyadh, according to CNBC. If this is true, then, my question is: what is the outcome of these emergency summits by Arab nations? Just attending to the summits organized by Saudi Arabia and listening to Saudi King Salman's political rhetoric is nothing but bolstering the ongoing US-Iran [tension](#).

Trump's Political Game

U.S. President Donald Trump has a particular way of—can be termed as game plan—winning any political issue, especially in case of bilateral relationships, be it between political competitors from his own country or foreign leaders. At the outset, he uses mocking, aggressive political rhetoric to escalate the tension, getting momentous media coverage at the same time. After a while, he, almost suddenly, calls for reconciliation or negotiation. He has impeccably used this gambit from the beginning of his election campaign for the US presidency in 2016. His political game with Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas in the 2016 U.S. election is a picture-perfect example of Trump's game plan. According to Business Insider, the political dispute between Donald Trump and Sen. Ted Cruz during the 2016 election was one of the [dirtiest](#) in recent U.S. election memory. Both of them viciously attacked each other including their wives, citizenship, and integrity. Entertainingly, they even went on threatening each other to sue for lying and cheating on various [issues](#). However, following his own rule, Trump resolved malicious issues with his rival Ted Cruz and later [rallied](#) together in Houston. Even after Trump's win, both of them started [working](#) together, keeping us all flabbergasted and speechless.

Similarly, the intensified tension between North Korea and the United States— during all over 2017 and half of 2018— began with North Korea’s series of missile tests and augmented by the exchange of political rhetoric between the two hot-tempered leaders: Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un. Even calling Kim “the little rocket man”, Trump furiously announced that any threats against the U.S. would be “met with [fire and fury](#) like the world has never seen.” Again, after getting substantial media coverage, both the leaders met at Singapore on June 12, 2018 for an unanticipated [summit](#), making a new-fangled history of first time meeting between a North Korean leader and a sitting US president. Nevertheless, the summit yielded nothing but gave both leaders the media attention they yearn for. Jenny Town, a Korea specialist and research analyst at BBC, published an article titled “Trump Kim summit: [Rhetoric versus reality](#)”, questioning the willingness of the both the administration to fulfill commitments towards sustainable solutions. This summit also bears a resemblance to the type of political game Mr. Trump usually plays.

Saudi Arabia: Joining Trump’s Game

Without any straightforward goals or plausible actions against Iran, Saudi Arabia has called for two emergency summits of GCC countries and a regular meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation ([OIC](#)), making it [three](#) consecutive summits at one place. So, is there an emergency? Calling three consecutive summits in one place, unquestionably, trigger our attention towards the compulsion of addressing something urgently. Yet, as an outcome of the summit, it has been brought to us nothing but political rhetoric against Iran, as Trump often does. More importantly, it seems like joining the Trump’s political game: using piercing rhetoric to gain media attention. Throughout the summit, the Saudi King Salman [accused](#) Iran of threatening the Arab regional security. Subsequently, asking for a global stance against Iran, Saudi king also labeled the recent Gulf attacks as “[terrorist acts](#)” by Iran. However, Abbas Mousavi, Iran’s foreign ministry spokesperson, has rejected and [condemned](#) Saudi monarch’s accusations of Tehran interfering in the region.

Intensifying tension in the Muslim world, Donald Trump perhaps enjoying the exchange of fiery, harsh political rhetoric between two neighboring Arab nations. The current monarch of Saudi Arabia seems to become more and more dependent on Trump administration to protect its own power. US president also repeats— from time to time—his continuous support for the Saudi monarchy quoting “Saudi Arabia [buys a lot](#), I don’t want to lose them.” Even Trump’s continuous support in the Saudi-led war in Yemen has been [criticized](#) in the US Congress. Plus, Human rights groups have repeatedly [condemned](#) Saudi Arabia for unending war in Yemen, causing disproportionate civilian deaths in the conflict. In addition to that, Saudi Arabia has literally [fractured](#) the 39-year-old alliance—the joint defense force under the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)—by leading the Qatar blockade. Many believe that the blockade was prompted by US President Donald Trump because it took place just two days after the US President Donald Trump met Arab leaders in [Riyadh](#). Thus, this is quite clear that Trump is playing his game keeping Iran under extreme pressure with the help of Saudi Arabia. However, the greater Muslim world expects more mature actions by Saudi Arabia, as it’s the birthplace of the Prophet of Islam, in order to bring peace and solidarity among the Arab nations as well as in the Muslim world.

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