

Video: Evolving Middle East Crisis, Israel, Saudi Arabia Setting Preconditions for War with Hezbollah

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The crisis in the Middle East is developing further.

In Saudi Arabia, the purge continued. According to [Middle East Eye](#), senior Saudi figures were tortured and beaten in the purge under the banner of an anti-corruption movement, conducted by current Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

He has overseen arrests of hundreds of people, including senior royals, ministers and tycoons, with some of them reportedly being tortured so badly during their arrest or subsequent interrogations that they required hospital treatment. Even Prince Bandar bin Sultan — Saudi Arabia’s most famous arms dealer, longtime former ambassador to the US, and recent head of Saudi intelligence — was reported to be among those detained as part of the purge.

If confirmed, this will be the most significant and high profile case of this purge, even above that of high profile billionaire investor Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal, considering Bandar’s closeness to multiple US administrations.

This comes amidst rumors that King Salman [was set](#) to make his son king. Speculation peaked when Al-Arabiya tweeted, then quickly deleted, details of the allegedly imminent Mohammed bin Salman’s ascension ceremony. These rumors were not confirmed. However, Prince Mohammed already plays a key role in decision making at almost all levers of government.

The Crown Prince also [accused](#) Tehran of delivering missiles to Yemen’s Houthi forces for use against the kingdom that he described as “direct military aggression”.

The United States also [chimed in](#) and said “there have been Iranian markings on those missiles.”

The Arab League will hold an extraordinary [meeting](#) on November 18 at the request of Saudi Arabia to discuss “violations” committed by Iran in the region, with Saudi Arabia rumored to mobilize fighter jets.

Houthi forces have threatened to attack oil tankers and warships of Saudi Arabia and its coalition in response to the Saudi-led naval blockade of Yemen.

Ex-Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri is still in Saudi Arabia, with his movements

reportedly controlled by the Saudis.

An oil pipeline between Saudi Arabia and Bahrain [exploded](#), with Bahrain accusing Iran of blowing it up. Israel is beyond itself with Iran and Hezbollah increasing their influence in the region and in Syria. The Israeli media [claimed](#) that the US and Russia have reached an agreement, which would push Iranian-backed forces from an area close to the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. However, this likely an example of wishful thinking. Iran is reportedly [building a permanent military base](#) in Syria. Israel's Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman said that Tel Aviv "will not allow the Shi'ite axis to establish Syria as its forefront base" and threatened to bomb it. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Tel Aviv has informed Moscow and Washington that Israeli forces will continue to take action in Syria according to its interests despite any ceasefire established there.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah [accused](#) Saudi Arabia of encouraging Israel to attack Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Secretary of Iran's Expediency Council, Mohsen Rezaei, [said](#) that the US, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Israel are planning a war against Lebanon.

Lacking a clear strategy for their involvement in the Middle East, Washington is forced to play second fiddle to its "allies". Trump's administration's bold claims against the 2015 Iran nuclear accords and Iran in general only stir up the anti-Iranian block in the region.

The conflict is developing in its own way, with the conflicting sides immersed so deep that it proves more and more difficult for them to stop even if they wanted to. Now, the sides are finalizing the coalition, which may participate in the expected standoff and blame each other setting preconditions for a war.

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