

# The Real Purpose of a U.S.-Saudi Security Agreement

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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**A treaty would pave the way for better security integration among U.S. partners in the region and reduce the need for direct American intervention.**

**E**arlier this year, the United States and Saudi Arabia were close to sealing a bilateral defense treaty. The agreement's terms are largely agreed upon, but its formal signing was postponed amid the present conflict in the Middle East. Analysts have frequently viewed this deal as but a piece of a larger puzzle. As conflict has racked the Middle East since Hamas's heinous October 7 terrorist attack, the potential treaty tends to be characterized as one element of a "megadeal" aimed at pacifying the region: a cease-fire in Gaza would set the stage for the Saudis to normalize relations with Israel in return for a U.S. security guarantee and strengthened American and Israeli commitments to Palestinian statehood. But that is the wrong way to look at a U.S.-Saudi treaty. In reality, the impetus for it preceded the conflict in Gaza. If signed, the agreement will not merely be another transaction in which the United States pays for an Arab state to normalize ties with Israel...

[Read the full article on the Foreign Affairs website. \(https://www.foreignaffairs.com/saudi-arabia/real-purpose-us-saudi-security-agreement\)](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/saudi-arabia/real-purpose-us-saudi-security-agreement) ❖

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