

Cranbrook Affirms

Contention 1 Stability

The regional organization meant to uphold peace in the Middle East, the Gulf Cooperation Council, or GCC, is in crisis.

Harb 17 of the Arab Center reports that recent disputes between the members have quickly developed into an intro-GCC split.

Importantly, a US withdrawal cools alliances in two ways.

First is alliances

Ashford 18 from the Cato Institute finds that American predominance in the region prevents states from balancing in the face of threats as they can afford to prioritize ideological factors over security concerns.

That's why **Ashford** concludes that US backing means ideological factors will continue to inhibit alliances.

Second is stopping Iranian alignment

The US does not provide military assistance equally, as **Harb** continues that Trump has backed Saudi Arabia and called to sever ties with Qatar.

Bandow '18 continues that the disproportionate alliance has become a mechanism for Saudi Arabia and the UAE to force their agenda on neighbors.

This prevents cooperation as **Martini '16** of Rand explains that the smaller states' fear of Saudi hegemony acts as the forefront obstacle to GCC cohesion.

In addition, **Bandow** continues that this encourages other countries to compete against Saudi for regional power and cede to Iran to promote regional balance.

Both of these reasons are why **Fraihat 19** from Aljazeera explains that after the US began withdrawing Saudi Arabia and the UAE were de-escalating within the GCC.

However the status quo is reversing this solvency as **Parsi '20** reports that recent increased military action from the US is erasing diplomatic progress.

Failing to bolster these alliances leads to a **regional war**.

The GCC is the only viable Iran deterrent as **Dougherty 20** from Defense One notes that US forces don't alter the calculus of Iran since its strategy is to provoke and exhaust the US.

Importantly, **Vakil 18** finds that Iran has begun pursuing bilateral relations with GCC members, capitalizing on internal tensions, which has enabled Iran to protect itself from past economic and political containment efforts.

If Iran is able to circumvent containment, the ensuing expansion will lead to war as **Watson '18** of SWJ explains that in the previous status quo tensions were reaching a boiling point with Saudi Arabia and Iran nearing direct conflict.

Fisher from NYT concludes that a war on this scale would risk at least 80 million lives in Iran alone and many million more in other areas.

Contention 2 is Iraq

The US fuels terror in 2 ways.

First is by increasing radicalism.

Bowman 12 from The Middle East finds that the US military foments radicalism and popular unrest against the U.S. and the host government that condones it.

He concludes that a dramatic withdrawal would significantly reduce the radicalization of future generations

This reduced incentive has big effects as **Trevor '17** from the Hoover Institute finds terror attacks rose 1,900 percent in the nations the US invaded or conducted strikes in, while others only saw a 42 percent increase.

Second is inflaming sectarianism

Dalay 20 from the Middle East Eye finds that the rising tensions between the US and Iran is further deepening the sectarian framework of Iraqi politics

Pillar 20 from the National Interest furthers that the biggest impediment to an ISIS resurgence in Iraq is good governance, however, by making Iraq into an arena for battling Iran, the U.S. presence fuels sectarianism that makes Iraq favorable for ISIS.

The Impact is ISIS attacks.

Mother Jones '7 concludes that there was a 607% increase in attacks per year and 237% rise in fatality after previous US counter-terror operations in Iraq

Burke 17 from the Guardian furthers that at ISIS's peak they controlled 8 million people and perpetrated a genocide against Iraq's Yazidi minority

Additionally, **Boniteti 14** explains that ISIS would ignite a civil war which would then draw in other countries as they try to protect their interests.

Thus we affirm