

Stopping Activities Underpinning Development In Weapons of Mass Destruction Act (“SAUDI WMD Act”)

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The Problem:

- [Press reports](#) from June 2019 suggest that China has assisted Saudi Arabia in building a ballistic missile production facility, an activity which runs contrary to China’s commitment as an adherent to the 1987 Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) to not export items associated with delivery of a nuclear weapon.
- Additionally, a [press report](#) from August 2020 suggested the possible existence of a previously undisclosed uranium yellowcake extraction facility in Saudi Arabia, allegedly constructed with the assistance of China.
- China has and continues to proliferate missile technology to a number of countries and reportedly exported nuclear-capable ballistic missiles (300 km. range/500 lb. payload) to Saudi Arabia in the [1980s and the 2000s](#).
- Along with this reported illicit trade that could set off a regional arms race, Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia [Mohammad bin Salman’s warning](#) that “if Iran developed a nuclear bomb, we would follow suit as soon as possible” should raise concerns that a future Saudi Arabian nuclear program may not remain exclusively peaceful.

Bill Details:

- First, the ***SAUDI WMD Act*** calls for a presidential determination into whether any “foreign person” (such as a country) has knowingly exported, transferred, or engaged in trade with Saudi Arabia in a Category 1 MTCR item. If such a trade has occurred, the bill asks the President to list the non-discretionary sanctions imposed on the offending party(ies). The Presidential waiver authority for sanctions on Saudi Arabia can only be applied if the Kingdom verifiably no longer possesses a MTCR Category I item(s).
- Second, the bill terminates most U.S. arms sales to Saudi Arabia if the Kingdom has received assistance in the construction of a nuclear fuel cycle facility not under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards **OR** if the Kingdom has received help in the construction of an enrichment or reprocessing facility on its own territory.
- The Secretary of State may waive the prohibition on the above arms sales if:
 1. Saudi Arabia has brought into force the Additional Protocol to its IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement allowing for increased inspector access; and
 2. Saudi Arabia has entered into a civilian nuclear cooperation “123” agreement with the United States or another country that meets the nonproliferation “gold standard” – no enrichment of uranium or reprocessing for plutonium on its own territory; and
 3. Saudi Arabia has rescinded its Small Quantities Protocol and is in full compliance with its IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement.
- Lastly, the bill calls on the State Department to produce a strategy to prevent the proliferation of missile and nuclear technology to the Middle East and North Africa.