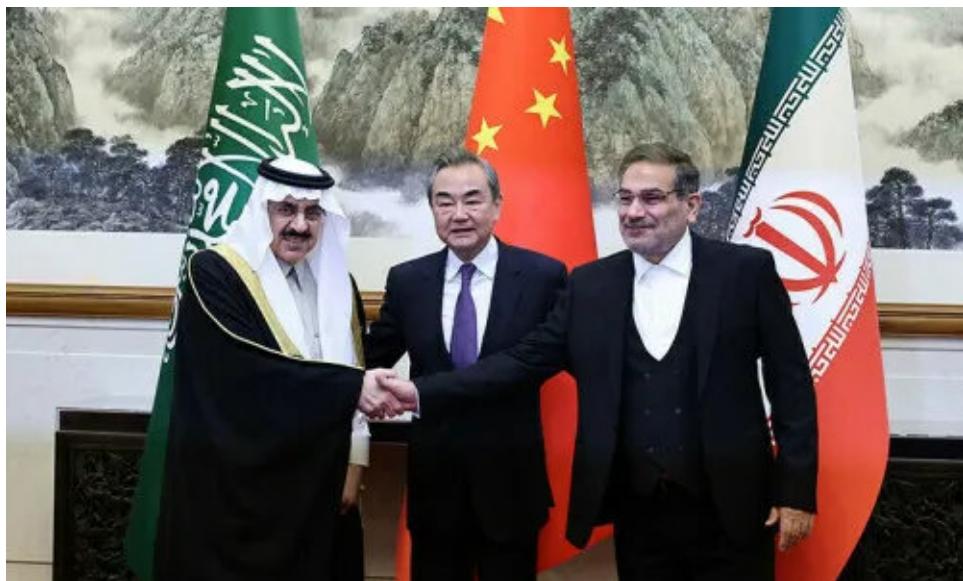


China breakthrough: Mediates deal to restore Iran-Saudi Arabia ties

written by Gary Wilson

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(L-R) Saudi Minister of State, Advisor to the Council of Ministers, and Saudi National Security Adviser Musaed bin Muhammad Al-Aiban, Director of the Office of the Central Foreign Affairs Commission of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Wang Yi and Iranian Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Shamkhani pose for a photo

after their meeting.

Iran and Saudi Arabia agreed to restore diplomatic relations, a dramatic breakthrough brokered by China after years of soaring tensions, NBC News reported on March 10.

“The deal, which will see the two leading oil producers reopen embassies in each other’s capitals, was sealed during a meeting in Beijing — a boost to China’s efforts to rival the United States as a broker on the global stage,” NBC reports.

The [joint statement](#) by Saudi Arabia, Iran, and China says:

“In response to the noble initiative of His Excellency President Xi Jinping, President of the People’s Republic of China, of China’s support for developing good neighborly relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran;

“And based on the agreement between His Excellency President Xi Jinping and the leaderships in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran, whereby the People’s Republic of China would host and sponsor talks between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran;

“Proceeding from their shared desire to resolve the disagreements between them through dialogue and diplomacy, and in light of their brotherly ties.”

[Iran’s mission to the United Nations](#) says the agreement with Saudi Arabia will help bring a political settlement to Yemen’s years-long war. The IRNA news agency said the deal with Saudi Arabia would accelerate efforts to renew an expired ceasefire deal, “help start a national dialogue, and form an inclusive national government in Yemen.” The ceasefire, the longest of the Yemen conflict, expired in October.

The Wall Street Journal [reported on March 10](#): “The deal signals a sharp increase in

Beijing's influence in a region where the U.S. has long been the dominant power broker, and could complicate efforts by the U.S. and Israel to strengthen a regional alliance to confront Tehran ... It comes as the U.S. has been trying to broker a peace deal between Saudi Arabia and Israel, an effort now clouded with uncertainty."

M.K. Bhadrakumar at [Indian Punchline writes](#): "The U.S.'s humiliating exclusion from the center stage of West Asian politics constitutes a 'Suez moment'... comparable to the crisis experienced by the U.K. in 1956, which obliged the British to sense that their imperial project had reached a dead end and the old way of doing things — whipping weaker nations into line as ostensible obligations of global leadership — was no longer going to work and would only lead to a disastrous reckoning."

