

## ALL THE MONEY CAN BUY.

### THE SAUDI ARABIAN ARMED FORCES

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#### *Introduction*

The Saudi Arabian Armed Forces (SAAF) are considered to be one of the best armed and best equipped forces in the Middle East. However, despite enormous amounts of money that have been invested in developing its military capabilities, there are still doubts about their real power and quality on the battlefield. The article seeks to overview the size and strength of the Armed Forces of Saudi Arabia as well as to investigate its advantages and disadvantages on the modern battlefield. To this end, the focus will be first on the structure of SAAF and military expenditure of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The various types of armed forces will be assessed and evaluated. This will be followed by analysis of their roles and duties which will allow for estimation of the quality of their cooperation and their ability to execute combined arms operations.

The origins of the regular armed forces in Saudi Arabia precede the very establishment of modern Saudi Arabian states, and date back to the times of the First World War, when Abdul Aziz ibn Saud, the first monarch and founder of modern Saudi Arabian state, led tribal Bedouin forces to assist him in further conquests of the Arabian Pen-

insula. This military-religious militia, known as Ikhwan (The Brethren) and often also referred to as the White Army, consisted of tribesmen loyal to the House of Saud and Wahhabi religious zealots and played a vital role in fights against the Ottoman rule and establishment of the Saudi state<sup>1</sup>. The commander-in-chief of all the armed forces is the king of Saudi Arabia, who formally oversees all the branches of the military. The total number of active military personnel exceeds 227,000<sup>2</sup> which makes the Saudi Arabian army the third largest in the Middle East (second only to the forces of Egypt and Iran). The Saudi military forces have a dual structure with regular armed forces on the one hand and completely independent National Guard on the other hand. Huge military expenditure (the third largest expenditure in the world in 2015<sup>3</sup>) allows Saudi Arabia to purchase large amounts of state-of-the-art equipment. This makes Saudi Arabian armed forces the best equipped in the whole region of the Middle East, except for the Israeli forces.

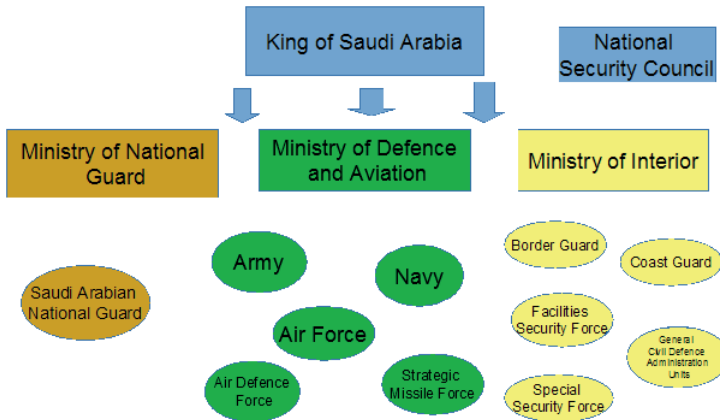
### *Structure*

The security apparatus of the Saudi Arabia consists of three parts: the armed forces, the National Guard, and the internal security apparatus. The King who commands the armed forces as well as the whole security apparatus is advised by the National Security Council of Saudi Arabia. This body was created in 2005 “to coordinate Saudi strategies regarding defense, intelligence, and foreign policy with the ultimate aim to increase effectiveness and efficiency across agencies while also maintaining the flexibility necessary to adapt to changing circumstances”<sup>4</sup>. The King, as the head of government, directly appoints ministers responsible for the “power” ministries – posts that are considered to be the most important and prestigious in the Kingdom, and as such are hotly contested by members of the royal family.

The Ministry of Defense and Aviation (MODA) has direct control over the Army (land forces), the Navy, the Air Force, the Air Defense Force, and the Strategic Missile Force. The Ministry of National Guard (MNG) was created in 2013 by the late king Abdullah to supervise the Saudi Arabian National Guard (SANG) and make it fully independent from the other branches of the security apparatus<sup>5</sup>. The Ministry of Interior (MOI) controls a number of forces mainly responsible for internal and border security, including the General Security Service (various police forces), the Border Guard, the Coast Guard, the Facilities Security Force (responsible for pipelines and other petroleum infrastructure), General Civil Defense Administration Units, the Special Security Force. The other independent security forces, not subordinated to any of the ministries but directly to the government, include i.a. the General Intelligence Presidency (the main intelligence agency of Saudi Arabia) or the Committee for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice (a religious police enforcing traditional Islamic morality, chasing witches, breaking their spells, etc.)<sup>6</sup>. This complicated structure of multiple military institutions is at least partially a result of deliberate policy of the royal family which tries to balance the power of different military forces and decreases the risk of a coup or mutiny in any of its branches<sup>7</sup>.

The division of competences between various elements of the security apparatus remains blur as many of them perform overlapping tasks and share responsibilities in the same areas. In consequence, the armed forces are struggling with never-ending problems, such as lack of jointness and proper coordination of operations, as well as poor leadership and organization<sup>8</sup>.

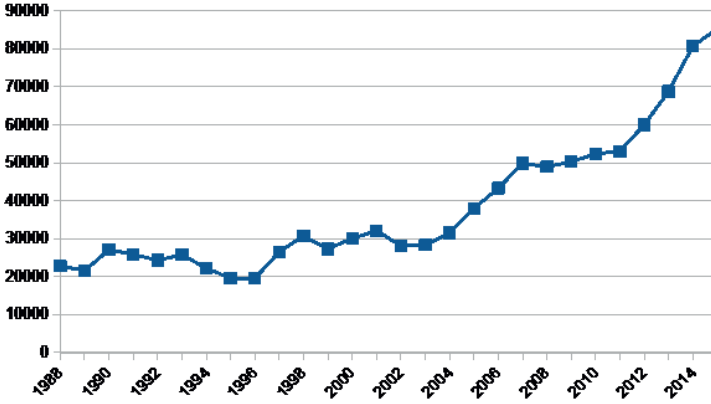
Graph 1. *The structure of the Saudi Arabian security apparatus*



### *Military expenditures*

Although the military spending has increased significantly in the whole region of the Middle East within the last decades, nowhere was the rise as spectacular as in Saudi Arabia. At the end of the Cold War, Saudi Arabia's military spending was slightly above 20 billion dollars<sup>9</sup>. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 resulted in the rise of Saudi military spending to 27 billion dollars, but the next years brought gradual decrease, to 19 billion dollars in mid-1990. A surge occurred in the years 1997 and 1998, up to 26 and 30 billion dollars respectively, then oscillated around 27–32 billion dollars until 2004. Since 2004, military expenditure of Saudi Arabia had been rising significantly in every single year<sup>10</sup>, reaching 50 billion dollars in 2009, 60 billion dollars in 2012 and 80 billion in 2014.

Graph 2. *Rise of military spending of Saudi Arabia  
1988-2015*



As a percentage of GDP, however, the expenditure remained more or less constant because the Saudi economy grew rapidly in the same period driven by oil and gas exports<sup>11</sup>. Since 1988 until the present time, the military spending was mostly between 8% and 10% of Saudi Arabia's GDP and between 25% and 30% of overall government spending. In 2015, the Saudi military spending reached a record high of 85.3 billion dollars (327 billion rials), which accounted for 13.7% of country's GDP and 27.4% of its overall government spending. This allowed Saudi Arabia to surpass Russia and made it the third biggest military spender in the world, second only to the US and China.

### *Army*

The land forces of Saudi Arabia constitute a backbone of the country's military and perform the standard tasks of a regular army, including protection of the state's territory, deterrence of potential aggressors, a projection of power,

etc. It comes as no surprise therefore, that much of the army's forces are deployed near the Saudi borders and in military cities in and around the Eastern Province<sup>12</sup>. They number 75,000, are fully mechanized and well armed with mostly modern, if somewhat varied, weapons. The land forces are organized into four armoured brigades, five mechanized brigades, one Royal Guard regiment, one airborne brigade, one artillery brigade, and one aviation command. Each of the armoured brigades consists of one reconnaissance company, three tank battalions, one mechanized battalion, one field artillery battalion, one air defense battalion, one anti-tank battalion, an engineer company, a logistics battalion, a maintenance company, and a medical company. Mechanized brigades consist of one tank brigade and three mechanized brigades, otherwise they have a structure identical to the armoured ones. The Royal Guard regiment is a formation of three light infantry battalions, while an air maneuver force includes an airborne brigade that consists of two airborne battalions and three special force companies. The close combat support is provided by aviation command of the army (one attack helicopter brigade and one transport helicopter brigade) and an artillery brigade (five field artillery battalions, two multiple rocket launcher battalions and one missile battalion)<sup>13</sup>.

Equipment of the land forces is a mixture of older platforms, obtained in the first period of its development (the 1970s and 1980s) and later additions, purchased in the 1990s and in the 21st century. Although most of the equipment was made in America and France, there are also numerous armoured vehicles, artillery pieces or rocket launchers delivered by the United Kingdom, Germany, and Italy, as well as some produced domestically under license. The use of diverse types of equipment causes interoperability problems as well as numerous maintenance and sustainability issues, especially during

operations away from the main bases<sup>14</sup>. The Saudi Arabian army operates 730 main battle tanks, including 200 M1A2/A2S Abrams, 140 AMX-30 and 390 M-60A3 (plus 170 M1A2 Abrams in store). They are supported by over 2300 reconnaissance vehicles, armored infantry fighting vehicles, and wheeled and tracked armored personnel carriers, of various types, including 300 AML-60/AML-90, 10 TPz-1 Fuchs NBC, 380 AMX-10P, 385 M2A2 Bradley, 1,190 M113A1/A2/A3, 150 M3 Panhard, 40 AF-40-8-1 Al-Fahd, 73 Aravis and 160 M-ATV<sup>15</sup>. The artillery consist of over 830 pieces of self-propelled and towed units of various calibers as well as mortars and multiple rocket launchers<sup>16</sup>. A large number of self-propelled and portable anti-tank weapons include such systems as AMX-10P (HOT), VCC-1 ITOW, M47 Dragon, TOW-2A, Carl Gustav, M40A1, M67, and APILAS, while the army's own air defense equipment consists of self-propelled Crotale and portable FIM-92A Stinger systems<sup>17</sup>. The air component of the land forces is equipped with attack helicopters (35 AH-64D/E Apache), multi-role helicopters (6 AS365N Dauphin 2 for medical evacuation and 15 Bell 406CS Combat Scouts) and transport helicopters (12 S-70A1 Desert Hawks, 22 UH-60A Black Hawks, 24 UH-60L Black Hawks).

### *Navy*

Saudi Arabia has a coastline borders of over 2640 km, including the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba to the west and the Persian Gulf to the east. As much of Saudi oil exports is transported by sea, access to open seas and security of maritime trade routes is of strategic importance to the country. One would expect development of the Navy to be one of the priorities of Saudi security policy. However, for many decades, the development of naval forces had been belated in comparison to other branches of the military and their combat readiness and effectiveness

presented major problems<sup>18</sup>. Only in recent years, significant investments in the expansion of the navy have been made. The Saudi Arabia Navy is organized geographically with the main Navy headquarters in Riyadh and two fleets: the Eastern Fleet with headquarters in Jubail and the Western Fleet with headquarters in Jeddah.

The recent process of faster development of Navy includes the purchase of numerous new ships, both principal as well as patrol and coastal combatants. The main fighting force of the Navy are three destroyers of the *Al Riyadh* class (the modified French *La Fayette* class) and four *Madina* class frigates (the French *F-2000* class). The fleet of patrol and coastal combatants includes 4 *Bard* class corvettes (the US *Tacoma* class), 9 large patrol crafts of *Al Siddiq* class (US 58 m) and 56 smaller patrol boats (mostly of the *Halter Marine* and *Simonneau* class)<sup>19</sup>. In addition, the Saudi Navy operates a number of support and specialized ships of various size and purposes, including the warfare, amphibious, logistics and support ones. Naval Aviation operates 46 multi-role and transport helicopters (AS365N Dauphin 2, AS565, Bell 406CS Combat Scout, AS332B/F Super Puma). The Navy commands also one marine regiment (3,000 soldiers) equipped i.a. with 140 BMR-600P armoured personnel carriers<sup>20</sup>.

### *Air Force*

The Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF) is a pride and joy of the Saudi armed forces and over the past decades has attracted the most attention and enjoyed the biggest investments on the part of the government. Apart from the Israeli one, it is definitely the most technically advanced air force in the Middle East, constantly rearmed and upgraded. Yet, the technical advancement of the air fleet does not go hand in hand with leadership, training and combat readiness of the RSAF. Concentrating on



purchases of new state-of-the-art airplanes and missiles, the Saudi authorities apparently did not pay enough attention to the aircrew and maintenance staff training, contracting high-quality support personnel, development of offensive air capabilities (instead concentrated on air defense), joint warfare capabilities, battle management and communication systems<sup>21</sup>. Such shortcomings significantly undermine the combat capabilities of the air force and do not allow for full development of its potential.

The RSAF is organized into a structure consisting of 12 fighter and fighter/ground attack squadrons, one airborne early warning squadron, one electronic intelligence squadron, eight transport and tankers squadrons, seven training squadrons and four transport helicopter squadrons. The staff of RSAF numbers over 20,000 troops who man and maintain an impressive fleet of over 325 combat capable aircraft<sup>22</sup>. This number includes 81 fighter aircraft (56 F-15C Eagle units, 25 F-15D Eagle units), 192 fighter/ground attack aircraft (70 F-15S Eagle units, 69 Tornado IDS units, 53 Typhoon units), some ISR, AEW&C and ELINT<sup>23</sup> aircraft (12 Tornado GRIA units, two Beech 350ER King Air units, five E-3A Sentry units, two Saab 2000 Erieye units, one RE-3A, one RE-3B), 20 tanker and transport/tanker aircraft (six A330 MRTT units, seven KC-130H Hercules units, seven KE-3A units), over 50 transport aircraft (30 C-130H Hercules units, three C-130H-30 Hercules units, three L-100-30 units, 10 Beech 350 King Air units; four CN-235 units, one Jetstream Mk31 unit) and more than 120 training aircraft of various types (i.a. Hawk Mk65, Hawk Mk65A, MFI-17 Mushshak, PC-9, PC-21, SR22T)<sup>24</sup>. Additionally, the RSAF operates also 35 multi-role and transport helicopters (15 Bell 412 Twin Huey units, 10 AS532 Cougar units, 20 Bell 212 units) and some UAVs (including the Chinese Gongji-1 type)<sup>25</sup>.

### *Air Defense Force and Strategic Missile Force*

The development of an Air Defense Force (ADF) as a separate branch of military has for some time been a priority for the Saudi armed forces. The 16,000 of troops serving in the Air Defense Force are organized into 6 battalions with MIM-104D/F Patriot, 17 batteries with Shahine/AMX-30SA, 16 batteries with MIM-23B I-HAWK and 73 static defense units with Crotale/Shahine. They operate a total of 1,317 surface-to-air missile systems including 581 self-propelled ones (40 Crotale, 400 M1097 Avenger, 73 Shahine, 68 Crotale/Shahine), 236 towed ones (128 MIM-23B I-HAWK, 108 MIM-140D/F Patriot PAC-2 GEM/PAC-3) and 500 Mistral naval systems. Additionally, the Saudi ADF possesses 1,070 anti-aircraft guns of various types (M163 Vulcan; AMX-30SA, GDF Oerlikon, L/70). Detection and tracking of air targets and guidance missiles is possible thanks to 80 air defense radars (17 AN/FPS-117, 28 AN/TPS-43, AN/TPS-59, 35 AN/TPS-63, AN/TPS-70)<sup>26</sup>.

By purchasing in 1988 Chinese Dong Feng-3 (CSS-2) intermediate range ballistic missiles, Saudi Arabia started to develop its strategic missile force as a means to deter attack and provide the retaliatory capability. Today this obsolete and not very efficient weapon does provide much firepower, its service status remains unclear though. Among more recently reported acquisitions there are additional modern Dong Feng-21 (CSS-5) medium-range ballistic missiles, whose number and variant remain unclear though<sup>27</sup>.

### *Saudi Arabian National Guard*

In 1954, the tribal militia known as Ikhwan and serving under the office of Jihad and Mujahidin was renamed the Saudi Arabian National Guard (SANG). The National Guard owes its reform and modernization to Prince Ab-

dullah ibn Abdul Aziz (later King in the years 2005-2015), who took command thereof in 1963. Abdullah ibn Abdul Aziz led the National Guard for over 50 years, until May 2013 when he turned SANG into a separate Ministry of National Guard and transferred command thereof to his third son Mutaib bin Abdullah<sup>28</sup>. In 1973, Prince Abdullah signed an agreement with the US Government, thus starting a multi-billion program of National Guard modernization, implemented by a private contractor Vinnell Corporation (a subsidiary of Northrop Grumman Corporation) and overviewed by the US Army<sup>29</sup>. The Saudi Arabian National Guard is an entity fully separate from other branches of the military. It is led by the Ministry of National Guard, with its commander in the rank of minister, a separate chain of command, budget and the communication network.

An important part of SANG original mission was to protect the reigning monarch, counterbalance influences of the other armed forces and security services, as well as to thwart any coup attempts. The tasks and competencies of the National Guard are not precisely defined and it has a great freedom of action, both in the field of external and internal security. This allows SANG to supplement gaps in the security system and work wherever it is most needed and effective<sup>30</sup>. On the other hand, however, such a situation causes conflicts of competence with other structures, introduces confusion and leads to damaging internal rivalries between different services.

The SANG regular forces number 75,000 troops plus 25,000 tribal levies called Fouj. Its main fighting force consists of four mechanized brigades (each including three mechanized infantry battalions, one self-propelled artillery battalion, one reconnaissance company, one combat engineer company, one signals company and one logistics battalion) and five light infantry brigades (each including three combined arms battalions, one artillery

battalion, one logistics battalion). Support units include one military police battalion and one ceremonial cavalry squadron<sup>31</sup>. The National Headquarters of the Guard are located in Riyadh and two regional headquarters in Dammam (Eastern) and Jeddah (Western). The National Headquarters directly control three mechanized brigades, one light infantry brigade, military police battalion, ceremonial cavalry squadron as well as the King Khalid Military College. The Eastern Headquarters control one mechanized brigade and one light infantry brigade, while the Western Headquarters have under their command three light infantry brigades. Each of the headquarters also formally control the Fouj units in their area of responsibility<sup>32</sup>. Contrary to the Army, the National Guard does not possess heavy equipment (such as main battle tanks) and is intended to be a light, mobile, and versatile fighting force. To this end, its main combat equipment consists of more than 1450 LAV wheeled armored fighting vehicles in a variety of versions<sup>33</sup>. Artillery support is provided by 155 mm CAESAR self-propelled guns and a number of towed guns and mortars as well as their own anti-tank and air defense systems. So far SANG has had no air component of its own, however, this is about to change, as recent purchases for the National Guard include a number of AH-64E Apache Guardian attack helicopters and AH-6i Little Bird light multi-role helicopters<sup>34</sup>.

### *Roles and duties*

As a commander-in-chief the King of Saudi Arabia formally nominates commanders of all the armed forces. Serving in such important and prestigious positions, they are, however, heavily embedded into the internal politics of the state and royal family. Thus, similarly to the power ministries, these are hotly contested positions, and their staffing is a result of complicated negotiations, disputes,

and compromises. Separate structures and chains of command of individual armed forces, particularly the unique position of the National Guard, is not a Saudi phenomenon. Numerous other states in the region, including Iran, Iraq or Syria, still have or had in the past a kind of dual military structure, which supposedly provides the authorities with greater level of control over them. An additional feature of the politics of security of Saudi Arabia is that competences of most armed forces and security services of the state have been only outlined but not specified.. Some of them, particularly SANG, combine competences of the armed forces with that of the police<sup>35</sup>.

As a result, numerous tasks of the armed forces overlap with the tasks of other security services and military units. This is particularly visible in the fields of counter-terrorism and counterinsurgency operations, defending critical facilities like pipelines and oil infrastructure, as well as important places, especially religious sites. Border protection, operations of a military nature in the country as well as protection of the King and members of the royal family are other areas of responsibility of more than one branch of the military and/or security services. One of the recent developments is the growing role of the National Guard in the out-of-area operations, which was previously the domain of the Army, Navy and Air Force. SANG deployment and engagement in the Yemeni campaign since April 2015<sup>36</sup> marks an opening of the area of tasks and duties for the force, which was previously known mainly for its military activities inside the country<sup>37</sup>.

### *Conclusions*

Over the past four decades, oil wealth has allowed Saudi Arabia to build one of the most powerful armed forces in the Middle East. The transformation of the 19th-century tribal fighters, who constituted the majority of Saudi

military after the World War II, into a greatly equipped, modern and capable fighting force is an impressive deed. At the same time, however, it is hard to resist the impression that development of the armed forces was unequal and ill-considered, and that a significant part of the resources invested in it have been wasted. Monstrous military expenditures of Saudi Arabia (given the size of the country and the fact that Saudi Arabia has not been at the state of war) have been mostly incurred in order to purchase new weapons and equipment. Much less care has been taken to the human factor and as a result, the Saudi armed forces have been unable to solve many crucial problems, which significantly undermines their combat capabilities. They include, *inter alia*, a poor level of command, uncertain morale, ineffective use of combined force, lack of comprehensive military doctrine, and perilous competition between the various branches of the armed forces. What is more, purchases of large numbers of various types of weapons and military equipment often pose a serious difficulty as a large number of types and countries of origin leads to a huge diversity and incompatibility of weapon platforms.

Despite some efforts made in the past, Saudi Arabia has not managed so far to free its military from tribal, religious or regional influences and divisions, or to turn it into a truly professional national armed force. The upper echelons of officer corps consist in large part of members of the royal family or other loyal clans, who get promoted because of their connections rather than because of their skills or talents. Another problem is a constant shortage of available manpower. The Saudi authorities have never decided to introduce conscription, thus military service remains voluntary<sup>38</sup>. With numerous other job opportunities within reach, young Saudis are not motivated to join the military and the gap has to be often filled by hiring foreign mercenaries.

There is significant room for improvement in terms of structure and command. The dual structure of the armed forces, in which the National Guard forces are supposed to check and balance the power of regular armed forces, increases the loyalty and definitely pays off for security of the regime. At the same time, however, it obliterates the capabilities and efficiency of all the forces. So far, when , the Saudi authorities, forced by the circumstances, were faced with a choice between meeting expectations of the royal family and ensuring the loyalty of tribal elites on the one hand and increasing the combat capability of its armed forces on the other hand, they have usually chosen the former. However, if the country decides to have a truly capable and combat-ready armed force, such difficult decisions and significant sacrifices will have to be made in the near future.

#### NOTES

1. S. Cronin, "Tribes, Coups and Princes: Building a Modern Army in Saudi Arabia", [in:] *Middle Eastern Studies* 49:1, 2013, p. 5-6.
2. *The Military Balance 2016*, International Institute for Security Studies, London 2016, p. 351.
3. *Military Expenditure*, SIPRI, <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex> [01.03.2017].
4. N. Obaid, *A Saudi Arabian Defense Doctrine: Mapping the expanded force structure the Kingdom needs to lead the Arab world, stabilize the region, and meet its global responsibilities*, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, 2014, p. 17-18.
5. *Saudi Arabia: A New National Guard for a New King?*, Stratfor Analysis, 8.05.2015, <https://www.stratfor.com/analysis/saudi-arabia-new-national-guard-new-king>, [01.03.2017].
6. A. Cordesman, N. Obaid, *National Security in Saudi Arabia. Threats, Responses, and Challenges*, Praeger Security International, Westport 2005, p. 293-304; D. E. Miller, "Saudi Arabia Anti-Witchcraft Unit Breaks Another Spell", *The Jerusalem Post*, 20.07.2011, <http://www.jpost.com/Middle-East/>

- Saudi-Arabias-Anti-Witchcraft-Unit-breaks-another-spell, [01.03.2017].
7. S. Cronin, op.cit., p. 4.
  8. A. Cordesman, N. Obaid, op. cit., p. 153.
  9. All data on military expenditure are based on the SIPRI Milex database and are presented in US dollars in constant prices for the year 2014. The SIPRI data for Saudi Arabia include defense and security spending of the Ministry of Interior and resemble the adopted budget rather than actual expenditure. The data exclude additional, extra budgetary spending as well as state budget significant overspending, which is consistently reported by the Saudi Ministry of Finance. Military Expenditure, SIPRI, <https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex>, footnote 99, [01.03.2017].
  10. Except for a slight decrease in 2008 as a result of a global financial crisis. Ibidem.
  11. J. Jarzabek, *G.C.C. Military Spending in Era of Low Oil Prices*, MEI Policy Focus 2016–19, August 2016, p. 4, <http://www.mei.edu/content/gcc-military-spending-era-low-oil-prices>, [03.03.2017].
  12. Where main Saudi oil facilities are located. A. Cordesman, N. Obaid, op.cit., p. 184–185.
  13. *The Military Balance 2016*, International Institute for Security Studies, London 2016, p. 351; A. Cordesman, K. Al-Rodhan, *Gulf Military Forces in an Era of Asymmetric Wars*, Praeger Security International, Westport 2007, p. 184.
  14. A. Cordesman, N. Obaid, op.cit., p. 184.
  15. *The Military Balance 2016*, International Institute for Security Studies, London 2016, p. 351.
  16. Self-propelled 155mm guns: 60 AU-F-1, 110 M109A1B/A2, 54 PLZ-45; towed 105mm: 100 M101/M102; towed 155mm: 50 M114, 60 M198; towed 203mm: 8 M115; multiple rocket launchers 127mm: 60 ASTROS II Mk3; 220 self propelled and 217 towed mortars (including M30, Brandt, M12-1535 and other types). *The Military Balance 2016*, op.cit., p. 351.
  17. Ibidem.
  18. There has also been a significant difference between a much stronger fleet in the Persian Gulf and a much weaker one in the Red Sea. A. Cordesman, N. Obaid, op.cit., p. 217–218.
  19. *The Military Balance 2016*, op.cit., p. 351.
  20. Ibidem, p. 351–352.
  21. A. Cordesman, N. Obaid, op.cit., p. 230–231.



22. *The Military Balance 2016*, op.cit., p. 352.
23. Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR), AEW&C (Airborne Early Warning and Control), Electronic Intelligence (ELINT).
24. *The Military Balance 2016*, op.cit., p. 352.
25. Ibidem.
26. *The Military Balance 2016*, op.cit., p. 352.
27. Ibidem, p. 352.
28. "Asharq Al-Awsat", Sept. 11 2006, available at: <http://english.aawsat.com/2006/09/article55265322>, [13.03.2016].
29. Sarah Yizraeli, *Politics and Society in Saudi Arabia. The Crucial Years of Development 1960–1982*, Columbia University Press, New York 2012, p. 176-7, 294; Anthony Cordesman, *Saudi Arabia. National Security in a Troubled Region*, Praeger Security International, Santa Barbara 2009, p. 175-6.
30. A. Cordesman, op.cit., p. 176.
31. *Military Balance 2016*, op.cit. p. 352-353.
32. The Fouj units resemble the 19th-century tribal militia, have little or no regular military training, are inactive for most of the time and it is reported that many of the tribesmen are on the roster only because of the social benefits (e.g. healthcare) provided to them by SANG. A. Cordesman, op.cit., p. 177–180.
33. Armed with 90mm and 25mm guns, command vehicles, anti-tank, mortar turrets, combat recovery vehicle and other. Unknown number of new vehicles is to be purchased in the near future. For now, some SANG units are still equipped with older V-150 Commando armored fighting vehicles, which are slowly withdrawn from service. *Military Balance 2016*, op.cit., p. 352–353.
34. *Military Balance 2016*, op.cit., p. 353, 364.
35. A. Cordesman, N. Obaid, op.cit., p. 153–163.
36. Saudi king orders National Guard to take part in Yemen campaign, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-saudi-guard-idUSKBN0NC1GP20150421>, [13.03.2017].
37. S. Cronin, op. cit., p. 23-24.
38. Ibidem.

