## New

### 1NC – Relations DA

#### Relations strong now – mutual interests over arm sales

**Utter 18** Michelle Utter, 2-20-2018, "Bahrain-US relations steadily moving forward," Global Ties, [https://www.globaltiesus.org/news/international-exchange-in-the-news/1009--bahrain-us-relations-steadily-moving-forward#](https://www.globaltiesus.org/news/international-exchange-in-the-news/1009--bahrain-us-relations-steadily-moving-forward) // ash

"His Royal Highness Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa’s recent visit to the United States was an important reaffirmation of the strategic partnership enjoyed between the United States and Bahrain," Justin Siberell said. "During his visit, the Crown Prince concluded many important agreements. There is no question that the Crown Prince’s trip to the United States lifted relations between our two countries to an even higher level, demonstrating that the vibrant friendship between Bahrain and the United States has never been stronger. Bahrain is one of the few countries with which the United States has in a place a Free Trade Agreement (FTA)," Siberell told Bahrain News Agency (BNA).

Text of the interview:

The recent visit of HRH the Crown Prince to the United States resulted in the signing of a number of MoUs. How do you view this visit and its impact on further bolstering of the joint relations? And will it result in more agreements in the near futures?

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa’s recent visit to the United States was an important reaffirmation of the strategic partnership enjoyed between the United States and Bahrain. His meetings with President Donald Trump, Vice President Pence, Secretary of Defense Mattis, Secretary of State Tillerson, the leaders of both houses of Congress, as well as private American citizens and business representatives demonstrated the depth of commitment in the United States to the partnership with Bahrain.

During his visit, the Crown Prince concluded many important agreements. These included an extension of the Bahrain - US Defence Cooperation Agreement, the purchase of F-16 fighter aircraft, as well as Boeing 787 commercial aircraft, and agreements with American companies to modernize the BAPCO refinery and expand the ALBA aluminum smelter set the stage for further growth in our long-standing partnership.

#### Strong US-Bahrain alliance preserves naval power projection

**Katz 12** Douglas Katz [Retired Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy], 10-29-2012, "Navy's Fifth Fleet key to stability in Gulf, Bahrain," TheHill, [https://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/264553-navys-fifth-fleet-key-to-stability-in-gulf-bahrain //](https://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/264553-navys-fifth-fleet-key-to-stability-in-gulf-bahrain%20//) ash

Regrettably, unrest continues in Bahrain and it raises serious questions. What would happen if the ruling Al Khalifa family is forced to step down? They have ruled the island kingdom since the 19th century. Would chaos result and set off instability throughout the Gulf? Would the Fifth Fleet be forced to leave? And if it were to happen, would any other moderate GCC state be willing to host a long-term American military presence? If the U.S. Navy and other forces were to depart the Gulf, who would be there to ensure the flow of oil and other commodities through the critical choke point of the Strait of Hormuz, where the Gulf meets the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean? Would Iran dominate and threaten shipping as well as block energy exports and reserves? These are difficult questions that are hard to answer, but must be addressed; the outcomes have severe global ramifications.

The U.S. has been working to maintain a peaceful co-existence in the region since sending naval forces to Bahrain in 1949. From that time on, the Kingdom has played a major role in Gulf security and stability, and has remained a close ally and friend ever since.

It was during my tour of duty in Bahrain from 1992 to 1994 that I first came to know then Crown Prince, now King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and his son, Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the present Crown Prince. I was fortunate to see them often then, and meet with numerous other government ministers, including the Minister of Defense, who remains in that role and is still a friend. All of these leaders, then and now, continue to express a sincere commitment to ensuring that every Bahraini is able to make progress, prosper and develop personally regardless of sect or religious affiliation.

I have watched the demonstrations with growing concern. I have seen overreactions on the part of the Bahrain Security Forces, and observed strident rhetoric followed by uncontrolled violence generated by the radical opposition. Many innocent civilians, demonstrators and policemen have been killed and injured. Bahrain has witnessed unprecedented violence and divisions that I would not have thought possible in the 1990s or even after my last visit there in 2009. This is not the Bahrain I know.

As I traveled there in late spring of this year, I did get the feeling that the government was trying to move toward a more democratic structure that will provide greater opportunity, stability and internal harmony for all Bahrainis. The process is slow and uneven but there is movement. The Kingdom is one of our strongest allies and it is in our own interest to support a continued friendship even as we press for and encourage their move toward democratic reform.

During my recent visit, I met with the king and the crown prince, and we talked, not only about old times, but the present unrest and their vision for the future. I know the King to be a strong leader and that was even more apparent during our conversation. I do think the demonstrations of a year and a half ago surprised him and he regrets the violence that resulted on both sides. He understands the need to play an essential role in maintaining a balance between the conflicting interests. I am convinced he is also making every effort to meet all the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) recommendations, even while acknowledging they cannot happen as quickly as many would like.

As for the years ahead, I find it difficult to believe that the Al Khalifa ruling family will be forced to step down or that the Fifth Fleet will leave Bahrain or the Gulf; both are too important to ensuring peace in the region, open sea lanes and the containment of Iran’s hegemonic ambitions.

**Effective naval power prevents global nuclear war**

Seth **Cropsey 16**, Director, Center for American Seapower, 4/13/16, “New American Grand Strategy,” http://www.hudson.org/research/12409-new-american-grand-strategy

The U.S. today faces a heretofore unfamiliar strategic challenge, the possibility of **three linked hegemonies** that span the Eurasian land mass. Russia is on the ramparts in Ukraine, Georgia, and the Middle East. Its Baltic State ambitions are not a secret. NATO’s failure to respond in a real crisis means the alliance’s end and a maturing Russian hegemony that stretches from Central Asia to the Atlantic. China actively seeks to become Asia’s hegemon. Iran’s rulers, armed with missiles of increasing range, added financial resources, and the likelihood of nuclear weapons, have their eye on dominating the strategic space between Moscow’s influence and Beijing’s. A single hegemony on the Eurasian land mass threatens U.S. markets, our ability to keep conflict at a distance, regional stability, and democracy. At a minimum, the three hegemonies would **overturn the current liberal international order**. If the U.S. does not take effective action to prevent this, its run as a pre-eminent global power will end. **Proximity to the oceans and seas** offers the U.S. the opportunity to leverage its **still-dominant seapower** as **the key** to countering or if necessary opposing the three would-be hegemons. Since Woodrow Wilson, the goal of American foreign policy has been to prevent regional hegemony. Two decades after Wilson, President Roosevelt led the United States in another global conflict, against Nazi Germany and the Empire of Japan. Both Europe and Asia were—and remain— critical to our hopes for greater prosperity, security, and an increasingly democratic world. The United States and its allies destroyed both totalitarian hegemons. Finally, the United States contained the Soviet Union for almost half a century, blunting its threat to Europe, and confronting its expanding influence in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. Emerging from this century of nearly continuous global conflict, the United States was the unquestioned global power. No state could challenge it economically, politically, or militarily. The U.S. destroyed the Iraqi military twice in slightly over a decade, and put a stop to ethnic cleansing in the Balkans. New threats have ended this brief period of America’s benevolent international leadership. Three competitors are at odds with the American-led international system. The sum of their ambitions is to undermine U.S. global power. A resurgent Russia aims to reclaim its previous glory, and capitalize on the current U.S. administration’s idea that a small America translates into a more secure world. The European refugee crisis and potential destabilization in the European Union challenge the American alliance system in Europe – the cornerstone of American security policy since the end of World War II. America’s remaining allies show little resolve. Meager European defense budgets make matters worse. In Asia, a rising China focuses on cultivating its economic resources and marshalling them to develop its military power. China’s island-building campaign that seeks to extend its territorial claims into international waters directly confronts the international order. As Admiral Harry Harris, commander of U.S. forces in the Pacific recently told Congress, “China has unilaterally changed the (region’s) status quo.” Beijing combines its land reclamation campaign with high-tempo presence operations, conducted by the PLAN and coast guard in contested areas of the South and East China Seas. The Chinese are also **accelerating their ability to project naval power** and control the seas by constructing troop transports, large surface combatants, and a second aircraft carrier. This situation bears a resemblance to the world America faced before World War II when Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan initially overwhelmed the European powers that had refused to rearm following World War I. But the semblance is passing. America faces not two aspiring hegemons, but three. The Middle East is the critical link between Europe and Asia. Its oil-rich states supply a large amount of the world’s energy resources, and facilitate exchange between the two hemispheres. With the Red Sea and Persian Gulf/Arabian Sea in the South, the Mediterranean to the West, and the Caspian and Black Sea to the North, the Middle East is more like an island than a contiguous land mass. On this island Iran attempts to assert its dominance. Russia aids Iran with weapons transfers and its support of Iranian proxy Bashar al-Assad. Relieved of sanctions, the Islamic Republic has begun to receive massive financial inflows, and has actively directed some of its profits towards obtaining dual-use military technology like jet engines. Iranian Special Forces, known as the Quds Force, conduct paramilitary operations in Iraq and Syria, expanding Tehran’s influence over its neighbors. Although America’s adversaries have worked with one another in the past, the current degree of cooperation between China, Russia, and Iran is a strategic terra incognita. Iranian oil shipped into Chinese ports generates financial resources that the Islamic Republic uses to purchase advanced weapons from Russia. Russia helps Iran fight its proxy wars while Iran supports growing Russian influence in the Eastern Mediterranean. America’s three strategic competitors oppose the U.S. in similar ways. China, Russia, and Iran understand the lessons of the First Gulf War. Since the Cold War’s end, America’s style of warfare has been to build coalitions, amass men and resources in neighboring countries, and launch combined arms assaults that overwhelm the enemy technologically and operationally. The American-led coalition in the First Gulf War of nearly one million soldiers eviscerated an entrenched Iraqi army of over 1.5 million. However, without neighboring Saudi Arabia’s willingness, the U.S. would have been unable to conduct the operation. A naval assault would have been smaller, and Kuwait’s crowded coastline could have meant high casualties. The First Gulf War suggested a clear strategy to counter the U.S. Deny American forces access to a region, and the U.S. loses power. Chinese, Russian, and Iranian efforts have all focused on denying America access to their respective regions. As it turns up the heat on the Baltic States, Russia is proscribing options for a rapid buildup by deploying long-range air defense and strike missiles at NATO’s borders. This is consistent with U.S. European Command commander General Philip Breedlove’s late February statement to Congress that “President Putin has sought to undermine the rules-based system of European security and attempted to maximize his power on the world stage.” China’s land reclamation campaign, increasing naval power, and anti-ship missiles aim to keep American forces at a distance from which effective combat power cannot readily be applied. Iran’s low-cost missile boats, midget subs, large numbers of ballistic and cruise missile as well as mines, and its influence at the Strait of Hormuz seek to offset American escalation. Instability in Iraq and the U.S.’s shaky relations with Pakistan further restrict staging points for an American attack. Declining U.S. military budgets and a shrinking force combined with poor treatment of critical allies have made things worse calling into question the US’ ability to honor its commitments. The current administration’s abrogation of ballistic missile defense agreements with Poland and the Czech Republic; its prolonged interruption of defensive arms sales to Taiwan; and its failure to keep the Saudis informed about last year’s deal with Iran are examples of treating allies shabbily. As a result, the U.S. is less able to rely on adequate basing rights where they are needed both to deter and if necessary to fight. The man or woman who takes office 10 months from now faces a new challenge to U.S. national security. It calls for changes to American strategy. The access that once allowed us to deter the Soviets has been eroded. Its resurrection in today’s Europe is unlikely. Such access is largely nonexistent in the Middle East and tenuous in East Asia. Coalitions of allied and partner nations remain extremely important—as they have since the U.S. became a major power. U.S. ground forces will not go it alone. They rarely have. Even the 1994 operation to remove Haiti’s military junta engaged coalition partners: Poland and Argentina. The combat operation, had it been necessary, would have been staged out of the U.S, Puerto Rico and Guantanamo. Equally reliable options are limited in Eurasia. So, while alliances and partnerships—for example, of Sunni states opposed to ISIS—are vital, they may not always be available, or dependable. If North Korea were to invade the South, there is no guarantee that Japan would allow its bases to be used for repelling the invaders or striking deep into North Korea. **Seapower** possesses the advantages of geography, mobility, and—with sufficient investment—numbers and growing technological edge. It will be **essential in future conflicts** because it depends less on nearby bases. Logistics ships in sufficient number can keep battle groups including amphibious forces on station, present, and combat-ready largely independent of basing agreements. Maritime coalitions will likely offer more security in the future. But there is **no alternative to dominant U.S. seapower today**. Allies like Japan lack the industrial capacity to make up the deficit between the U.S. Navy and the expanding PLAN. Newer partners like Vietnam cannot hope to hold against a Chinese onslaught without American support. Seapower is the surest means to assure constant access to effective combat capability in the Western Pacific. The same shift in thinking applies to the greater Middle East. Its gulfs and seas allow access that is largely independent of diplomatic agreement. Robust seapower may not be sufficient to cover our security interests in the Middle East, but its usefulness increases proportionately to the territorial holdings on which ISIS makes its claim as a caliphate. The Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman are Iran’s southwest and southern borders. It’s a long haul from there or from the Eastern Mediterranean to Tehran but a doable one with refueling tankers based in Gulf States or carrier-launched drones of the foreseeable future that can refuel the ship’s strike aircraft. The Cold War plan to mass land forces in defense of Europe has been voided by continental hopes that perpetual peace arrived. Even the most stalwart American partners, such as the UK, have cut military capacity and capability. But Europe is a peninsula. It is surrounded by accessible waters from St. Petersburg to Crimea. Seapower cannot stop a Russian ground invasion of the Baltics but it can snap the supply lines of an attack and give such ground forces as NATO can muster a chance to prevail. **Naval vessels’ ability to project power inland can also deter Russia**. The U.S. has emerged into a new world. To the potential for **nuclear warfare with a would-be peer competitor**—**China**—that American statesmen most wished to avoid after the Cold War have been added threats from a **nuclear-armed Russia**, **North Korea**, and sooner or later, **Iran**. The more immediate prospect of a triple hegemony may not be an existential threat. But its outcome would cripple our markets, destroy our alliances, and endanger us where we live. **All can be avoided** by a change in grand strategy that continues to hold threats at a distance as it relies on the **independence, accessibility, and technological superiority of seapower**.

## Old

### 1NC – PIC

#### CP text: [Aff actor] should continue to provide military aid funding the US Fifth Fleet in Bahrain. [Aff actor] should block all other forms of military aid to Bahrain.

### 1NC – Oil

#### The US Fifth Fleet protects oil shipping lanes from terrorism now – withdraw collapses global oil markets.

**Knickerbocker 11** Brad Knickerbocker [Brad joined the CS Monitor in 1972, covering Boston City Hall, where he learned everything he’s ever needed to know about politics. Since then, he’s been the San Francisco bureau chief, Washington bureau news manager and Pentagon correspondent, National News Editor, and Chief Editorial Writer], 2-19-2011, "US faces difficult situation in Bahrain, home to US Fifth Fleet," <https://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Foreign-Policy/2011/0219/US-faces-difficult-situation-in-Bahrain-home-to-US-Fifth-Fleet> // ash

Perhaps more critical, Bahrain also is the homeport for the US Fifth Fleet.

From there, US warships and contingents of US Marines can keep an eye on – and, if necessary, rattle sabers – close to oil shipping lanes, Iran, and the increasing activity of pirates. (It was reported Saturday that an ocean-going sailboat with four Americans aboard had been hijacked by pirates.)

With about 30 ships (including two aircraft carriers) the Fifth Fleet patrols the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea, and the east coast of Africa.

In a post 9/11 world, the US fleet plays a role similar to the US Navy’s outpost in Subic Bay in the Philippines during the Vietnam War. It’s a critical staging area for combat (or in this case, the possibility of combat) in an area perceived to be crucial to US interests. But instead of toppling dominoes in Southeast Asia, it’s a major regional supplier of oil and the threat of Islamic terrorism.

Bahrain has provided basing and overflight clearances for US aircraft engaged in Afghanistan, and it has helped cut off money supplies to suspected Islamic terrorists. More than 4,000 US service personnel live and move about freely there.

"Could we find some other place to put a fleet headquarters? Probably we could," Anthony Cordesman, a defense analyst at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, told the Wall Street Journal. "But if Bahrain becomes unstable, if it comes under Iranian influence … [that] threatens the entire structure of world oil markets."

#### Rising oil prices devastate the US economy

Amy Myers Jaffe. 4/23/2018. [David M. Rubenstein Senior Fellow for Energy and the Environment and Director of the Program on Energy Security and Climate Change], Oil Prices and the U.S. Economy: Reading the Tea Leaves of the Trump Tweet on OPEC, Council on Foreign Relations. <https://www.cfr.org/blog/oil-prices-and-us-economy-reading-tea-leaves-trump-tweet-opec>. EC

But there is no question that President Trump is aware that important U.S. geopolitical decisions that could affect oil prices are coming in the month of May, the kickoff to the U.S. summer driving season. The anti-OPEC tweet was presumably popular with the President’s base who care deeply about gasoline prices. That begs the question: Would a return to relatively high oil prices still hurt the U.S. economy? The answer is yes, but like many things, it’s complicated.

Energy economist James Hamilton, who is among the most cited academics on the subject of oil price shocks and the U.S. economy, noted in a pivotal 2009 paper that the high oil prices of 2007-2008 had significant effects on overall consumption spending and especially on purchases of domestic automobiles. With Detroit increasingly offering U.S. consumers high profit margin, gas-guzzling SUVs, high oil prices could be problematical for American car makers. Hamilton concluded that the 2007-2008 period of high oil prices can be added to “the list of recessions to which oil prices appear to have made a material contribution.” Along similar lines, economists at Deutsche Bank are forecasting that higher gasoline prices would erode the financial benefits low-income households gained from the tax cuts.

The other problem with rising oil prices is that they can create a deterioration in consumer sentiment, by signaling the possibility of economic slowdown or crisis. Research shows that there is a significant negative correlation between gasoline price increases and perceptions of individual well-being in the United States. With U.S. mid-term elections around the corner, Republicans could find it tougher to sell the President’s economic agenda in a sharply rising gasoline price environment.

Economic research from the U.S. Federal Reserve shows a more nuanced picture for oil prices in recent years, as the shale boom has been found as a driver to increased employment across many regions of the United States (Decker, McCollum, Upton Jr.) Fed economists have also touted improving energy efficiency and better monetary policy as an important factor that will inhibit negative economic effects from rising oil prices. But so far, the recent oil price rise has been gradual and has yet to hit tipping point levels that have, in past times affected consumer driving behavior.

#### Decline causes nuke war

Mann 14 (Eric Mann is a special agent with a United States federal agency, with significant domestic and international counterintelligence and counter-terrorism experience. Worked as a special assistant for a U.S. Senator and served as a presidential appointee for the U.S. Congress. He is currently responsible for an internal security and vulnerability assessment program. Bachelors @ University of South Carolina, Graduate degree in Homeland Security @ Georgetown. “AUSTERITY, ECONOMIC DECLINE, AND FINANCIAL WEAPONS OF WAR: A NEW PARADIGM FOR GLOBAL SECURITY,” May 2014, <https://jscholarship.library.jhu.edu/bitstream/handle/1774.2/37262/MANN-THESIS-2014.pdf)>)

The conclusions reached in this thesis demonstrate how economic considerations within states can figure prominently into the calculus for future conflicts. The findings also suggest that security issues with economic or financial underpinnings will transcend classical determinants of war and conflict, and change the manner by which rival states engage in hostile acts toward one another. The research shows that security concerns emanating from economic uncertainty and the inherent vulnerabilities within global financial markets will present new challenges for national security, and provide developing states new asymmetric options for balancing against stronger states. The security areas, identified in the proceeding chapters, are likely to mature into global security threats in the immediate future. As the case study on South Korea suggest, the overlapping security issues associated with economic decline and reduced military spending by the United States will affect allied confidence in America’s security guarantees. The study shows that this outcome could cause regional instability or realignments of strategic partnerships in the Asia-pacific region with ramifications for U.S. national security. Rival states and non-state groups may also become emboldened to challenge America’s status in the unipolar international system. The potential risks associated with stolen or loose WMD, resulting from poor security, can also pose a threat to U.S. national security. The case study on Pakistan, Syria and North Korea show how financial constraints affect weapons security making weapons vulnerable to theft, and how financial factors can influence WMD proliferation by contributing to the motivating factors behind a trusted insider’s decision to sell weapons technology. The inherent vulnerabilities within the global financial markets will provide terrorists’ organizations and other non-state groups, who object to the current international system or distribution of power, with opportunities to disrupt global finance and perhaps weaken America’s status. A more ominous threat originates from states intent on increasing diversification of foreign currency holdings, establishing alternatives to the dollar for international trade, or engaging financial warfare against the United States.

### 1NC – Naval Power

#### Strong US-Bahrain alliance preserves naval power projection

**Katz 12** Douglas Katz [Retired Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy], 10-29-2012, "Navy's Fifth Fleet key to stability in Gulf, Bahrain," TheHill, [https://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/264553-navys-fifth-fleet-key-to-stability-in-gulf-bahrain //](https://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/foreign-policy/264553-navys-fifth-fleet-key-to-stability-in-gulf-bahrain%20//) ash

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Since the Cold War’s end, America’s style of warfare has been to build coalitions, amass men and resources in neighboring countries, and launch combined arms assaults that overwhelm the enemy technologically and operationally. The American-led coalition in the First Gulf War of nearly one million soldiers eviscerated an entrenched Iraqi army of over 1.5 million. However, without neighboring Saudi Arabia’s willingness, the U.S. would have been unable to conduct the operation. A naval assault would have been smaller, and Kuwait’s crowded coastline could have meant high casualties. The First Gulf War suggested a clear strategy to counter the U.S. Deny American forces access to a region, and the U.S. loses power. Chinese, Russian, and Iranian efforts have all focused on denying America access to their respective regions. As it turns up the heat on the Baltic States, Russia is proscribing options for a rapid buildup by deploying long-range air defense and strike missiles at NATO’s borders. This is consistent with U.S. European Command commander General Philip Breedlove’s late February statement to Congress that “President Putin has sought to undermine the rules-based system of European security and attempted to maximize his power on the world stage.” China’s land reclamation campaign, increasing naval power, and anti-ship missiles aim to keep American forces at a distance from which effective combat power cannot readily be applied. Iran’s low-cost missile boats, midget subs, large numbers of ballistic and cruise missile as well as mines, and its influence at the Strait of Hormuz seek to offset American escalation. Instability in Iraq and the U.S.’s shaky relations with Pakistan further restrict staging points for an American attack. Declining U.S. military budgets and a shrinking force combined with poor treatment of critical allies have made things worse calling into question the US’ ability to honor its commitments. The current administration’s abrogation of ballistic missile defense agreements with Poland and the Czech Republic; its prolonged interruption of defensive arms sales to Taiwan; and its failure to keep the Saudis informed about last year’s deal with Iran are examples of treating allies shabbily. As a result, the U.S. is less able to rely on adequate basing rights where they are needed both to deter and if necessary to fight. The man or woman who takes office 10 months from now faces a new challenge to U.S. national security. It calls for changes to American strategy. The access that once allowed us to deter the Soviets has been eroded. Its resurrection in today’s Europe is unlikely. Such access is largely nonexistent in the Middle East and tenuous in East Asia. Coalitions of allied and partner nations remain extremely important—as they have since the U.S. became a major power. U.S. ground forces will not go it alone. They rarely have. Even the 1994 operation to remove Haiti’s military junta engaged coalition partners: Poland and Argentina. The combat operation, had it been necessary, would have been staged out of the U.S, Puerto Rico and Guantanamo. Equally reliable options are limited in Eurasia. So, while alliances and partnerships—for example, of Sunni states opposed to ISIS—are vital, they may not always be available, or dependable. If North Korea were to invade the South, there is no guarantee that Japan would allow its bases to be used for repelling the invaders or striking deep into North Korea. **Seapower** possesses the advantages of geography, mobility, and—with sufficient investment—numbers and growing technological edge. It will be **essential in future conflicts** because it depends less on nearby bases. Logistics ships in sufficient number can keep battle groups including amphibious forces on station, present, and combat-ready largely independent of basing agreements. Maritime coalitions will likely offer more security in the future. But there is **no alternative to dominant U.S. seapower today**. Allies like Japan lack the industrial capacity to make up the deficit between the U.S. Navy and the expanding PLAN. Newer partners like Vietnam cannot hope to hold against a Chinese onslaught without American support. Seapower is the surest means to assure constant access to effective combat capability in the Western Pacific. The same shift in thinking applies to the greater Middle East. Its gulfs and seas allow access that is largely independent of diplomatic agreement. Robust seapower may not be sufficient to cover our security interests in the Middle East, but its usefulness increases proportionately to the territorial holdings on which ISIS makes its claim as a caliphate. The Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman are Iran’s southwest and southern borders. It’s a long haul from there or from the Eastern Mediterranean to Tehran but a doable one with refueling tankers based in Gulf States or carrier-launched drones of the foreseeable future that can refuel the ship’s strike aircraft. The Cold War plan to mass land forces in defense of Europe has been voided by continental hopes that perpetual peace arrived. Even the most stalwart American partners, such as the UK, have cut military capacity and capability. But Europe is a peninsula. It is surrounded by accessible waters from St. Petersburg to Crimea. Seapower cannot stop a Russian ground invasion of the Baltics but it can snap the supply lines of an attack and give such ground forces as NATO can muster a chance to prevail. **Naval vessels’ ability to project power inland can also deter Russia**. The U.S. has emerged into a new world. To the potential for **nuclear warfare with a would-be peer competitor**—**China**—that American statesmen most wished to avoid after the Cold War have been added threats from a **nuclear-armed Russia**, **North Korea**, and sooner or later, **Iran**. The more immediate prospect of a triple hegemony may not be an existential threat. But its outcome would cripple our markets, destroy our alliances, and endanger us where we live. **All can be avoided** by a change in grand strategy that continues to hold threats at a distance as it relies on the **independence, accessibility, and technological superiority of seapower**.

### \*\*2NR\*\*

### UQ – Relations High

#### Relations strong now

**Utter 18** Michelle Utter, 2-20-2018, "Bahrain-US relations steadily moving forward," Global Ties, [https://www.globaltiesus.org/news/international-exchange-in-the-news/1009--bahrain-us-relations-steadily-moving-forward#](https://www.globaltiesus.org/news/international-exchange-in-the-news/1009--bahrain-us-relations-steadily-moving-forward) // ash

"His Royal Highness Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa’s recent visit to the United States was an important reaffirmation of the strategic partnership enjoyed between the United States and Bahrain," Justin Siberell said. "During his visit, the Crown Prince concluded many important agreements. There is no question that the Crown Prince’s trip to the United States lifted relations between our two countries to an even higher level, demonstrating that the vibrant friendship between Bahrain and the United States has never been stronger. Bahrain is one of the few countries with which the United States has in a place a Free Trade Agreement (FTA)," Siberell told Bahrain News Agency (BNA).

Text of the interview:

The recent visit of HRH the Crown Prince to the United States resulted in the signing of a number of MoUs. How do you view this visit and its impact on further bolstering of the joint relations? And will it result in more agreements in the near futures?

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa’s recent visit to the United States was an important reaffirmation of the strategic partnership enjoyed between the United States and Bahrain. His meetings with President Donald Trump, Vice President Pence, Secretary of Defense Mattis, Secretary of State Tillerson, the leaders of both houses of Congress, as well as private American citizens and business representatives demonstrated the depth of commitment in the United States to the partnership with Bahrain.

During his visit, the Crown Prince concluded many important agreements. These included an extension of the Bahrain - US Defence Cooperation Agreement, the purchase of F-16 fighter aircraft, as well as Boeing 787 commercial aircraft, and agreements with American companies to modernize the BAPCO refinery and expand the ALBA aluminum smelter set the stage for further growth in our long-standing partnership.