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The RAND Center for Middle East Public Policy (CMEPP) brings together analytic excellence and regional expertise from across the RAND Corporation to address the most critical political, social, and economic challenges facing the Middle East today. We focus not only on near-term challenges but also on critical long-term trends and solutions.

Our goal is to inform policy in order to help improve the security and well being of people living in the region. RAND’s work in the region helps decisionmakers better understand how to tackle their domestic challenges and build capacity in ways that will make their societies safer, smarter, and more prosperous.

As part of a nonprofit and nonpartisan organization, RAND’s Middle East experts are committed to high-quality, objective research and analysis. They hold advanced degrees in an array of disciplines and specialize in a uniquely broad range of capabilities, including long-range planning and forecasting, risk assessment, and program evaluation. Many of our Middle East experts have advanced regional language skills and were born or have lived in the region.

RAND’s Middle East work is funded by governments, private foundations, and through the generous philanthropic support of individual donors and CMEPP’s advisory board.

For more information about the RAND Center for Middle East Public Policy, visit www.rand.org/cmepp or contact its director, Dalia Dassa Kaye at dkaye@rand.org.
Democratization in the Arab World
Prospects and Lessons from Around the Globe
Laurel E. Miller, Jeffrey Martini, F. Stephen Larrabee, Angel Rabasa, Stephanie Pezard, Julie E. Taylor, Tewodaj Mengistu

Daunting challenges lie ahead for Arab countries where revolutions have upended longstanding authoritarian regimes. This monograph aims to help policymakers understand the challenges ahead, form well-founded expectations, shape diplomatic approaches, and take practical steps to foster positive change.
An updated summary is available in English and Arabic.
www.rand.org/t/MG1192z2 (English),
www.rand.org/t/MG1192z1 (Arabic)

Building Democracy on the Ashes of Authoritarianism in the Arab World
Workshop Summary
Laurel E. Miller, Jeffrey Martini

Regime changes in the Arab world have presented challenges related to building new, more open political systems and responding to popular expectations of improved living conditions. The RAND Corporation and the Ankara-based International Strategic Research Organization convened a workshop in Istanbul where a range of authorities from Arab countries could reflect collaboratively in a private setting on how to overcome obstacles to democratization.
8 pages, 2013, www.rand.org/t/CF312

Internet Freedom and Political Space
Olesya Tkacheva, Lowell H. Schwartz, Martin C. Libicki, Julie E. Taylor, Jeffrey Martini, Caroline Baxter

This report examines how Internet freedom may transform state-society relations in nondemocratic regimes and includes case studies of Egypt and Syria.

Voting Patterns in Post-Mubarak Egypt
Jeffrey Martini, Stephen Worman

As a means of helping U.S. policymakers and Middle East watchers better understand voting patterns in Egypt since the 2011 revolution, RAND researchers identified regional voting trends, where Islamist parties run strongest, and where non-Islamists are most competitive. The report found that Egypt was heading toward a much more competitive political environment in which Islamists were increasingly challenged to maintain their electoral edge before the ouster of President Morsi.

Knowledge-Based Economies and Basing Economies on Knowledge
Skills a Missing Link in GCC Countries
Krishna B. Kumar, Desiree van Welsum

In addition to an Information and Communication Technology infrastructure, a skilled labor force and a supportive environment are necessary to the balanced development of a knowledge-based economy. Without sufficient human capital and policies in place to promote the use of adopted technologies, their full potential may not be realized. This paper uses a cross-country perspective and various economic indicators to assess the development of Gulf Cooperation Council countries in the dimensions of a knowledge economy.
Building the Future
Summary of Four Studies
to Develop the Private Sector, Education, Health Care, and Data for Decisionmaking for the Kurdistan Region—Iraq
C. Ross Anthony, Michael L. Hansen, Krishna B. Kumar, Howard J. Shatz, Georges Vernez

This report summarizes the approaches, findings, and recommendations of four studies intended to help the Kurdistan Regional Government expand access to high-quality education and health care, increase private-sector development and employment for the expanding labor force, and design a data-collection system to support high-priority policies. The detailed findings appear in four separate reports. Published in English/Kurdish and English/Arabic versions.

Future Challenges for the Arab World
The Implications of Demographic and Economic Trends
Keith Crane, Steven Simon, Jeffrey Martini

This report assesses likely demographic and economic trends in the Arab world through 2020, focusing on changes that are likely to affect U.S. defense planning and U.S. policy in the region.

Facing Human Capital Challenges of the 21st Century
Education and Labor Market Initiatives in Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates: Executive Summary
Gabriella C. Gonzalez, Lynn A. Karoly, Louay Constant, Hanine Salem, Charles A. Goldman

This book summarizes the education and labor market initiatives implemented or under way in four countries in the Arab region—Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates—to address the human resource issues they each face as they prepare their countries for a place in the 21st century global economy. Together, these countries highlight the variety of challenges faced by countries in the region and responses to those challenges. Published in both English and Arabic.
154 pages, 2008, www.rand.org/t/MG786z1

Recommended Research Priorities for the Qatar Foundation’s Environment and Energy Research Institute
Nidhi Kalra, Obaid Younossi, Kristy N. Kamarck, Sarah Al-Dorani, Gary Cecchine, Aimee E. Curtright, Chaoling Feng, Aviva Litovitz, David R. Johnson, Mohammed Makki, Shanthi Nataraj, David S. Ortiz, Parisa Roshan, Constantine Samaras

The Qatar Foundation is establishing a national research institute to conduct and collaborate on applied research in energy, environment, and water issues, the Qatar Environment and Energy Research Institute. This book recommends research priorities for the new institution and reports on a survey of relevant research institutions in the region.
Effective Policing for 21st-Century Israel

Jessica Saunders, Steven W. Popper, Andrew R. Morral, Robert C. Davis, Claude Berrebi, Kristin J. Leuschner, Shira Efron, Boaz Segalovitz, K. Jack Riley

Israel has changed dramatically in the past two decades. The Israel Police is transforming itself to meet the needs of modern Israel. The Ministry of Public Security, the Ministry of Finance, and the Israel Police asked RAND to conduct a study to address issues of public perceptions and trust in the police, benchmarking the police against other police organizations, performance measurement, and deterrence and crime prevention.


Natural Gas and Israel’s Energy Future

Near-Term Decisions from a Strategic Perspective

Steven W. Popper, Claude Berrebi, James Griffin, Thomas Light, Endy M. Daehner, Keith Crane

This book discusses the opportunities and risks Israel faces in shifting to a greater reliance on domestic and imported natural gas. By applying newly developed methods for strategic planning and decisionmaking under deep uncertainty, the analysis seeks to help the Israeli government engage in managed change by choosing robust strategies that minimize potential consequences of relying more heavily on natural gas. Published in both English and Hebrew.

186 pages, 2009, www.rand.org/t/MG927

Helping a Palestinian State Succeed

Key Findings

The RAND Palestinian State Study Team

A summary of two RAND studies on options for facilitating successful Palestinian development, MG-146-1-DCR and MG-327-1-GG. The former examines options for strengthening governance, security, economic development, access to water, health and health care, and education. The latter examines options for addressing housing, transportation, and related infrastructure needs. Both studies estimate the financing needed for successful development.

86 pages, 2007, www.rand.org/t/MG146z1-1

The Arc

A Formal Structure for a Palestinian State

Doug Suisman, Steven Simon, Glenn Robinson, C. Ross Anthony, Michael Schoenbaum

An examination of options for strengthening the housing and transportation infrastructure of a potential future independent Palestinian state in the context of a large and rapidly growing Palestinian population. The book includes initial cost estimates for improving and expanding infrastructure to facilitate successful development.


Building a Successful Palestinian State

The RAND Palestinian State Study Team

An examination of how an independent Palestinian state, if created, can be made successful. The authors describe options for strengthening governance, security, economic development, access to water, health and health care, and education, and estimate the financial resources needed for successful development over the first decade of independence.


www.rand.org/cmepp
Qatar’s School Transportation System
Supporting Safety, Efficiency, and Service Quality
Keith Henry, Obaid Younossi, Maryah Al-Dafa, Shelly Culbertson, Michael G. Mattock, Thomas Light, Charlene Rohr

In consideration of the many challenges associated with Qatar’s continued growth and demographic changes, the government of Qatar is interested in updating its school transportation system (STS). This volume assesses parents’ and school administrators’ perspectives on Qatar’s STS, identifies a vision and goals for the STS, and discusses strategies to achieve the vision and better align Qatar’s STS with international norms. Published in both English and Arabic.


Implementation of the K–12 Education Reform in Qatar’s Schools
Gail L. Zellman, Gery W. Ryan, Rita Karam, Louay Constant, Hanine Salem, Gabriella C. Gonzalez, Charles A. Goldman, Hessa Al-Thani, Kholode Al-Obaidli

To assess progress made in the first years of Qatar’s implementation of its K–12 education reform, RAND analyzed data from school-level observations, national surveys, and national student assessments. Findings reveal that the new, Independent schools had implemented many elements of the reform, that students in these schools were performing better than students in Ministry of Education schools, and that much work was still needed to enable students to meet the new, higher standards.


Artists and the Arab Uprisings
Lowell H. Schwartz, Dalia Dassa Kaye, Jeffrey Martini

Regional artists can play a positive role in shaping public debate and supporting democratic transition in the Middle East. This report explores the challenges artists have faced since the Arab uprisings, U.S. government programs to support arts in the region, and the wide array of nongovernmental activities to engage Arab artists, offering recommendations to improve support for these artists.

100 pages, 2013, www.rand.org/t/RR271

RAND Review
Cultural Oasis: For Arab Children, Collected Works Offer Roads to Tolerance, Critical Thinking
Gail L. Zellman, Jeffrey Martini, Michal Perlman

The cover story discusses the promotion of tolerance and critical thinking in the Arab world through books and other media targeted toward children.


Original source for RAND Review story:
Identifying Arabic-Language Materials for Children That Promote Tolerance and Critical Thinking
Gail L. Zellman, Jeffrey Martini, Michal Perlman

Describes the creation of developmentally appropriate criteria used to identify and screen Arabic-language works for children that promote tolerance and critical thinking and the characteristics of the materials that were found. The authors present several examples of works that met the criteria, discuss barriers that prevent the development and dissemination of more such works, and suggest ways to address and overcome these barriers.

84 pages, 2011, www.rand.org/t/TR856
Barriers to the Broad Dissemination of Creative Works in the Arab World
Lowell H. Schwartz, Todd C. Helmus, Dalia Dassa Kaye, Nadia Oweidat

A growing body of creative works by Arab authors and artists counters the intellectual and ideological underpinnings of violent extremism. Unfortunately, many of these works are not widely disseminated, marginalizing the influence of these alternative voices. This monograph examines the barriers to the broad dissemination of such works, with a focus on Arabic literature, and suggests ways to overcome these barriers.


Iran After the Bomb
How Would a Nuclear-Armed Tehran Behave?
Alireza Nader

This study explores how a nuclear-armed Iran would behave and what this would entail for the United States and its main regional allies. It analyzes the Islamic Republic’s ideology, motivations, and national security doctrine; examines a nuclear-armed Iran’s potential policies toward Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council; discusses its potential behavior toward Israel; explores its relations with terrorist groups; and presents key findings.


China and Iran
Economic, Political, and Military Relations
Scott Warren Harold, Alireza Nader

The partnership between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the People’s Republic of China presents a unique challenge to U.S. interests and objectives, including dissuading Iran from developing a nuclear weapons capability. This paper examines factors driving Chinese-Iranian cooperation, potential tensions in the Chinese-Iranian partnership, and U.S. policy options for influencing this partnership to meet U.S. objectives.


Coping with a Nuclearizing Iran
James Dobbins, Alireza Nader, Dalia Dassa Kaye, Frederic Wehrey

Some time in the coming decade, Iran will probably acquire nuclear weapons or the capacity to quickly produce them. This monograph provides a midterm strategy for dealing with Iran that neither begins nor ends at the point at which Tehran acquires a nuclear weapon capability. It proposes an approach that neither acquiesces to a nuclear-armed Iran nor refuses to admit the possibility—indeed, the likelihood—of this occurring.

Iran’s Nuclear Future
Critical U.S. Policy Choices
Lynn E. Davis, Jeffrey Martini, Alireza Nader, Dalia Dassa Kaye, James T. Quinlivan, Paul Steinberg

As Iran’s nuclear program evolves, U.S. decisionmakers will confront a series of critical policy choices involving complex considerations and policy trade-offs. These policy choices could involve dissuading Iran from developing nuclear weapons; deterring Iran from using its nuclear weapons, if it were to acquire them; and reassuring U.S. regional partners. The U.S. Air Force will need to prepare to carry out whatever policies are chosen.


What Do Iranians Think?
A Survey of Attitudes on the United States, the Nuclear Program, and the Economy
Sara Beth Elson, Alireza Nader

A phone survey of Iranian public opinion revealed considerable opposition to the reestablishment of U.S.-Iranian ties and significant support for development of nuclear weapons. Negative attitudes toward the Iranian economy were less prevalent than expected, and many respondents did not consider sanctions to have had a significant negative impact on the economy.


The Next Supreme Leader
Succession in the Islamic Republic of Iran
Alireza Nader, David E. Thaler, S. R. Bohandy

As the commander in chief and highest political authority in Iran, the current Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has played a critical role in the direction of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This monograph identifies three key factors that will shape succession of the next Supreme Leader and outlines five alternative scenarios for the post-Khamenei era. It situates all of this within the context of the June 2009 election.


Israel and Iran
A Dangerous Rivalry
Dalia Dassa Kaye, Alireza Nader, Parisa Roshan

Israel and Iran have come to view each other as direct regional rivals. The two countries are not natural rivals; they have shared geopolitical interests, which led to years of cooperation both before and after the 1979 Islamic revolution. But their rivalry has intensified recently, particularly with the rise of fundamentalist leaders in Iran and the prospect of a nuclear-armed Iran posing grave strategic and ideological challenges to Israel.


Mullahs, Guards, and Bonyads
An Exploration of Iranian Leadership Dynamics
David E. Thaler, Alireza Nader, Shahram Chubin, Jerrold D. Green, Charlotte Lynch, Frederic Wehrey

The U.S. ability to “read” the Iranian regime and formulate appropriate policies has been weakened by lack of access to the country and by the opacity of decisionmaking in Tehran. To improve understanding of Iran’s political system, the authors describe Iranian strategic culture; investigate Iran’s informal networks, formal government institutions, and personalities; assess the impact of elite behavior on Iranian policy; and summarize key trends.

Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) has evolved well beyond its origins as an ideological guard for the regime. Today, in addition to wielding military force, its influence extends into virtually every corner of Iranian political life and society. Wehrey et al. assess the IRGC less as a traditional military entity and more as a domestic actor, emphasizing the variety of roles it plays in Iran’s economy and political culture.


This book surveys how Saudi-Iranian relations have unfolded in the Persian Gulf, Iraq, Lebanon, and Palestine since 2003, identifying the sources of rivalry and cooperation between the two powers. Understanding and leveraging this relationship will be a critical part of U.S. efforts to promote stability after the drawdown of U.S. forces in Iraq and to manage the regional impact of Iran’s nuclear ambitions.


Without presuming that intervening in the Syrian civil war is the right course, this report considers the goals a U.S.-led aerial intervention might pursue and examines the requirements, military potential, and risks of five principal missions that intervening air forces might be called on to carry out: negating Syrian airpower, neutralizing Syrian air defenses, defending safe areas, enabling opposition forces to defeat the regime, and preventing the use of Syrian chemical weapons.


Ending the U.S. war in Iraq required redeploying 100,000 military and civilian personnel; handing off responsibility for 431 activities to the Iraqi government, U.S. embassy, U.S. Central Command, or other U.S. government entities; and moving or transferring ownership of over a million pieces of property in accordance with U.S. and Iraqi laws, national policy, and Department of Defense requirements. This book examines the planning and execution of this transition.

560 pages (approximate), forthcoming

Since the beginning of the uprising in Syria, localized protests have morphed into full-blown civil conflict, and external actors have become involved as well. RAND conducted an analytic exercise to generate a greater understanding of the parties and issues in play, including the actors, their motivations, and potential impact of their activities.

Libya’s Post-Qaddafi Transition
The Nation-Building Challenge
Christopher S. Chivvis, Keith Crane, Peter Mandaville, Jeffrey Martini

Since Qaddafi’s death, the light-footprint approach adopted for Libya’s postwar transition is facing its most serious test. Security, the political transition, and economic development all present challenges. But if Libya’s transitional authorities and the international community handle this issue set adroitly, Libya could still emerge as a positive force for democratic stability in North Africa and a valuable partner against al-Qaeda.


Resolving Kirkuk
Lessons Learned from Settlements of Earlier Ethno-Territorial Conflicts
Larry Hanauer, Laurel E. Miller

Past efforts to resolve ethno-territorial conflicts in Brčko, Mostar, Northern Ireland, and Jerusalem provide insights that could facilitate a negotiated settlement regarding the disputed Iraqi city of Kirkuk. The case studies show that Arabs, Kurds, and Turkomen must emphasize governance over symbols of sovereignty, develop adaptable power-sharing mechanisms, marginalize spoilers, empower local leaders, and create multi-ethnic security forces.


Troubled Partnership
U.S.-Turkish Relations in an Era of Global Geopolitical Change
F. Stephen Larrabee

U.S.-Turkish relations, long a vital element of U.S. policy, have seriously deteriorated in recent years. Priority should be given to harmonizing policy toward Iraq and the Middle East as well as Central Asia and the Caucasus.


TERRORISM

The Terrorist Threat from Syria
Seth G. Jones

Testimony presented before the House Homeland Security Committee, Subcommittee on Counterterrorism and Intelligence, on May 22, 2013.

10 pages, 2013, www.rand.org/t/CT388

The Long Shadow of 9/11
America’s Response to Terrorism
Edited by Brian Michael Jenkins, John Godges

This book provides an array of answers to the question, In the years since the 9/11 attacks, how has America responded? In a series of essays, RAND authors lend a farsighted perspective to the national dialogue on 9/11’s legacy; assess the military, political, fiscal, social, cultural, psychological, and moral implications of U.S. policymaking since 9/11; and suggest options for effectively dealing with the terrorist threat in the future.


How Terrorist Groups End
Lessons for Countering al Qa’ida
Seth G. Jones, Martin C. Libicki

All terrorist groups eventually end. But how? Most modern groups have ended because they joined the political process or local police and intelligence agencies arrested or killed key members. This has significant implications for dealing with al Qa’ida and suggests fundamentally rethinking post-9/11 U.S. counterterrorism strategy: Policing and intelligence, not military force, should form the backbone of U.S. efforts against al Qa’ida.


Ungoverned Territories
Understanding and Reducing Terrorism Risks
Angel Rabasa, Steven Boraz, Peter Chalk, Kim Cragin, Theodore W. Karasik, Jennifer D. P. Moroney, Kevin A. O’Brien, John E. Peters

Using a two-tiered framework applied to eight case studies from around the globe, the authors of this ground-breaking work seek to understand the conditions that give rise to ungoverned territories and make them conducive to a terrorist or insurgent presence. They also develop strategies to improve the U.S. ability to mitigate their effects on U.S. security interests.

To learn more about the RAND Center for Middle East Public Policy, visit www.rand.org/cmepp or contact its director, Dalia Dassa Kaye, at 310.393.0411, x7276, or dkaye@rand.org.

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