

RESEARCH TITLE

The impact of Chinese diplomacy on achieving Saudi-Iranian reconciliation, compared to the American efforts as a model

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of Chinese diplomacy on achieving Saudi-Iranian reconciliation, in comparison with American efforts toward the same objective. It explores how China's diplomatic approach, grounded in dialogue, non-interference, mutual respect, and cooperative development, contributed to the restoration of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran in March 2023. The study also analyzes the wider regional implications of this reconciliation, particularly its potential role in reducing tensions and supporting stability in the Middle East. Using the historical and descriptive analytical approaches, the research traces the development of Saudi-Iranian relations, China's strategic relations with both parties, and the role of the Belt and Road Initiative in creating a framework for cooperation and mutual interests. The findings indicate that Chinese diplomacy has been more effective and constructive than American efforts, which have often been shaped by alliance politics, unilateral policies, and support for one side against another. The study concludes that China's mediation represents a significant diplomatic achievement and a practical model for resolving regional disputes through peaceful negotiation, multilateral cooperation, and respect for sovereignty. It further argues that the success of Saudi-Iranian reconciliation may contribute to addressing broader regional crises in Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Palestine, provided that regional and international actors cooperate to sustain dialogue and avoid escalation.

Key Words: Chinese Diplomacy; Saudi-Iranian Reconciliation; Belt and Road Initiative; Middle East Stability; United States Foreign Policy.

أثر الدبلوماسية الصينية في تحقيق المصالحة السعودية الإيرانية مقارنةً بالجهود الأمريكية نموذجاً

المستخلص

تتناول هذه الدراسة أثر الدبلوماسية الصينية في تحقيق المصالحة السعودية الإيرانية، مقارنةً بالجهود الأمريكية في تحقيق الهدف نفسه. وتبحث الدراسة في كيفية إسهام النهج الدبلوماسي الصيني، القائم على الحوار، وعدم التدخل، والاحترام المتبادل، والتنمية التعاونية، في استعادة العلاقات الدبلوماسية بين المملكة العربية السعودية وإيران في مارس 2023. كما تحلل الدراسة الانعكاسات الإقليمية الأوسع لهذه المصالحة، ولا سيما دورها المحتمل في خفض التوترات ودعم الاستقرار في منطقة الشرق الأوسط. اعتمدت الدراسة على المنهجين التاريخي والوصفي التحليلي، من خلال تتبع تطور العلاقات السعودية الإيرانية، وعلاقات الصين الاستراتيجية مع الطرفين، ودور مبادرة الحزام والطريق في توفير إطار للتعاون والمصالح المشتركة. وتوصلت النتائج إلى أن الدبلوماسية الصينية كانت أكثر فاعلية وبناءً من الجهود الأمريكية، التي غالباً ما اتسمت بسياسات التحالفات، والتوجهات الأحادية، ودعم طرف على حساب آخر. وتخلص الدراسة إلى أن الوساطة الصينية تمثل إنجازاً دبلوماسياً مهماً ونموذجاً عملياً لحل النزاعات الإقليمية عبر التفاوض السلمي، والتعاون متعدد الأطراف، واحترام سيادة الدول. كما تؤكد أن نجاح المصالحة السعودية الإيرانية يمكن أن يسهم في معالجة أزمات إقليمية أوسع في اليمن وسوريا ولبنان والعراق وفلسطين، شريطة تعاون الفاعلين الإقليميين والدوليين في دعم الحوار وتجنب التصعيد.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الدبلوماسية الصينية؛ المصالحة السعودية الإيرانية؛ مبادرة الحزام والطريق؛ استقرار الشرق الأوسط؛ السياسة الخارجية الأمريكية.

Introduction

In April 2022, China announced the "global security initiative" aimed at peacefully resolving differences and disputes through dialogue, adhering to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, and maintaining world peace. The current international changes related to the increase of conflicts and alliances to achieve a goal, especially for some, will affect international peace and development. This requires cooperation, understanding and joint action between all parties to reduce the burden of these challenges and overcome them.

The relationship between China and the countries of the region has a long history, and it has been closely linked for thousands of years through the ancient land and sea Silk Road, and China still attaches great importance to stabilizing the situation in the Middle East by resolving outstanding issues and protecting sustainable peace and development. Therefore, China seeks to promote the concepts of effective diplomatic work between all parties based on mutual respect, respect for the sovereignty of states and non-aggression against others to achieve the success of cooperation and joint work aimed at protecting international peace and security.

In March 2023, China hosted two high-level official delegations from Saudi Arabia and Iran, and with China's efforts, Saudi Arabia and Iran reached a peaceful settlement, through which they ended the years of rupture and confrontation and restored diplomatic relations between the two countries. Thus, there has become an appropriate environment to reduce tension between the two parties, and this will be reflected in the files of the region to reduce conflicts and disputes between many countries and groups, in order to maintain security, peace and stability in the region.

This clearly demonstrates that the region and its crucial issues are one of the most important axes of China's foreign policy with a view to achieving sustainable peace and development. On the other hand, the region is still in a state of instability as a result of the aggravation of conflicts and wars between many parties, and this is due to the lack of cooperation of some forces with the international parties to solve some issues radically, such as the Yemeni, Palestinian, Lebanese and others.

For example, America supports parties at the expense of other parties in the region in order to preserve common interests and protect allies, and the solution of the Iranian nuclear file has been waiting for a long time, as America, under the presidency of Trump, withdrew in May 2018 from the international agreement to resolve the file to satisfy Israel and some countries in the region, and this was reflected in many other files with no solution. Iran and Saudi Arabia have allies and extensions in the region that no one denies.

Therefore, this research came to study and assess the impact of Chinese diplomacy on achieving Saudi-Iranian reconciliation, compared to the American efforts as a model in this framework, and the importance of this lies in motivating the American side to make more efforts to cooperate with the Chinese side and related parties to strengthen this Agreement, and to seriously seek to resolve various outstanding issues in the region that are mainly related to understanding, dialogue and coordination between pivotal countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iran and others.

The absence of effective and responsible coordination among the actors in the Middle East will exacerbate crises and conflicts, and this will portend the absence of peace and stability and thus threaten the security and safety of states and people and their wealth. Accordingly, the importance of this research in its current context is a call for all parties to cooperate with China to achieve the success of what it has accomplished with the Iranian-Saudi file, and reflect on resolving future issues of the region, protecting the sovereignty and rights of countries and their people to live in peace and security.

1. China and Saudi Arabia-Iran relations

The relations between China, Saudi Arabia and Iran have a long history. Entering modern history, the diplomatic relations of the three countries still exist, but the diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran are not exactly similar. On the contrary, they have certain particularities, and this has also become an important factor affecting the relations between the three countries in all aspects.

1.1. Diplomatic relations between China and the parties to the reconciliation

Diplomatic relations between China and Saudi Arabia began in November 1985, and relations between them developed rapidly and reached an unprecedented level, and they have interrelated relations in many areas, for example, China and Saudi Arabia have become an effective source of consumer goods to meet the needs of both parties, and Saudi Arabia meets a large part of China's growing demand for imported oil, China is the second largest source of Saudi imports of consumer goods and the fifth largest importer of Saudi exports, and therefore Saudi Arabia is China's largest trading partner.

In December 2022, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Saudi Arabia at the same time; Saudi Arabia held a Saudi-China summit, this summit painted a new picture of Saudi-China relations, and the statements issued by the two sides confirmed their determination to continue to strengthen coordination and cooperation and strive to maintain world peace and security in the Middle East and international peace, emphasized the importance of stabilizing the global energy market and the grain supply chain represented by wheat in various countries around the world, and expressed the importance of continued cooperation and deepening strategic partnership between the two countries in various fields¹.

Moreover, the two sides also agreed to place the Saudi-Chinese relations in the priority position of the diplomatic relations between the two countries, so as to establish a diplomatic model of unity and cooperation, mutual benefit and mutual benefit, and shared destiny for developing countries. The Saudi side congratulated the successful convening of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. Also the Chinese side expressed its appreciation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for its great achievements in the field of national social development in accordance with the "Vision 2030".

In addition, they emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation between the two sides through the Saudi-China High-level Joint Committee and strengthening cooperation in various fields to achieve common goals, and Saudi Arabia and China also confirmed that they will continue to unswervingly support each other's rights and interests in safeguarding core interests such as sovereignty and equal rights, and work together to defend the rules of international law and the basic principles of international relations represented by the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, therefore Saudi Arabia reiterated its recognition of the one-China principle and discussed in detail the latest regional and international developments, issues of common concern to both sides and efforts to solve these issues².

On the whole, the diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and China in the 21st century have developed steadily, and exchanges and cooperation have advanced by leaps and bounds. And with the implementation of China's "One belt, One Road" initiative, the Saudi-Chinese

¹ حنا، إيمان، قمة السعودية والصين تؤكد: العلاقات بين البلدين أولوية، وأهمية دعم استقرار أسواق الطاقة وإمدادات القمح والحبوب للشعوب، وإتفاقية شراكة إستراتيجية بين البلدين وتعميق التعاون في "الحزام والطريق"، القاهرة: خير صادر عن الصحيفة الإخبارية الإلكترونية، اليوم السابع، مصر، نشر بتاريخ، 2022-09-09

² حنا، إيمان، قمة السعودية والصين تؤكد: العلاقات بين البلدين أولوية، وأهمية دعم استقرار أسواق الطاقة وإمدادات القمح والحبوب للشعوب، وإتفاقية شراكة إستراتيجية بين البلدين وتعميق التعاون في "الحزام والطريق"، القاهرة: خير صادر عن الصحيفة الإلكترونية، اليوم السابع، مصر، نشر بتاريخ، 2022-09-09.

cooperation project has entered a new stage of development, and the steady growth of economic cooperation has also led to political exchanges, although the two have different governing philosophies and leadership methods, the goals of seeking development and happiness for their respective people are the same, which has also continuously promoted the two sides to carry out more in-depth cooperation.

And for the relationship between Iran and China, it has a long history and an ancient civilization, the two civilizations began exchanges and cooperation in various fields along the Silk Road more than 2,000 years ago, and since the founding of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, Iran-China relations have developed significantly in various fields such as politics, economy, and culture, and the diplomatic relations between them have developed most rapidly during the reign of Ibrahim Lehi, and recently Iran and China have developed into a true economic, cultural and commercial strategic partnership³.

In March 2021, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi visited Tehran and met with Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif, he signed the "China-Iran Common Strategic Cooperation Treaty". In addition to emphasizing national defense and military cooperation, the agreement also opened up cooperation in the political, economic and technological fields, specifically the construction of airports, ports, railways and infrastructure in Iran, and cooperation in the fields of energy, petroleum and petrochemical, so the treaty extends the cooperation between the two sides in the above-mentioned fields for 25 years⁴.

Besides, in January 2022, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi also received the foreign ministers of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, he pointed out that Middle Eastern countries need to establish a multilateral dialogue platform, so it is an important basis for Iran and China to implement the 2016 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and promote closer defense relations between the two sides, and there is also an urgent need to strengthen understanding, dialogue and cooperation between Middle Eastern countries and Iran⁵.

As a result, it is undeniable that the stable development of relations between Iran and China has laid a solid foundation for reconciliation between Iran and other countries in the Gulf region, especially with Saudi Arabia. And under the Chinese matchmaking, countries in the Middle East have continuously strengthened cooperation and exchanges, providing solutions to most outstanding issues and making important contributions to achieving regional security and stability.

And to indicate the relationship between Iran and Saudi Arabia, the first diplomatic contact between them was in 1925, after that, in 1929, before the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was officially declared, the two sides concluded a friendly agreement. In 1935, Reza Khan changed the name of the country "Persia" to "Iran" and established a constitutional monarchy, at that time, Britain still had a very important influence in the Arab region, but Saudi Arabia had already begun to rule the country independently, which was contrary to the political views of the British government, the relationship between Iran's pro-British government and Saudi Arabia was more sensitive during this period, and with the rise of Muhammad Reza Pahlavi to power in Iran in 1941, facing the general environment of World War II, the presence of allied forces in Iran and the increasing internal crisis have led to very unstable relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran, especially the occurrence of the Hajj incident in 1943⁶.

³ ساراسوات، ديببكا، الروابط بين إيران والصين: تضافر الإستراتيجيات الجغرافية والإقتصادية، الدوحة: بحث صادر عن المركز العربي للأبحاث ودراسة السياسات، قطر، نشر بتاريخ، 2022-07-08.

⁴ رجا الذيب، لارا، في ضوء المخاوف المحلية والإقليمية والدولية، الطبيعة الإستراتيجية للإتفاقية الصينية - الإيرانية، بيروت: بحث صادر عن مركز الدراسات العربية الأوراسية، لبنان، بتاريخ، 2021-11-20.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ 年朝觐事件：1943年12月11日，沙特处死了一名前来朝觐的伊朗人，理由是他向麦加克尔白天房泼洒脏物；伊朗则强调这名年轻人当时是在酷热环境下引发了呕吐，情有可原，并非故意如此。

It should be noted that Iran's foreign policy developed before 1979 through three stages: in the first stage (1947-1950), Iran adopted a pro-Arab diplomatic position, and in 1950 Iran opened its first embassy in Jeddah⁷.

In the second stage (1950-1967), Iran acceded to the Treaty of Baghdad in 1955, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain delineated their borders in 1958, Iran recognized Israel in 1960, and King Faisal visited Tehran, and Iran in 1965 to hold talks in order to establish an Islamic alliance against the communist alliance in the region, which led to tension between the two sides, and in the third stage (1967-1979), the diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran were further improved, especially King Faisal's second visit to Tehran, Iran, and in 1967 to ensure Iran's support for the Arab war against Israel; after the Six Day War, the Iranian king visited Saudi Arabia, and then there were many high-level visits between the two countries⁸.

And with the occurrence of the Islamic Revolution in Iran led by Al-Khomeini in 1979, the relations between the two countries deteriorated at all levels. Although Saudi Arabia recognized the new regime after the Iranian revolution, Iran announced that it would fight the Saudi-led pro-Western regime; in response, Saudi Arabia did everything possible to support Iraq, which led to the severance of diplomatic relations between the two countries from 1987 to 1991, and during this period, in order to maintain the momentum of the revolution and the unity of the team, Iran's internal political development has received widespread attention, especially because an external enemy represented by the West and its allies is threatening the results of the Iranian revolution, and Iran believes that Saudi Arabia is one of the most important allies of the United States in the Middle East⁹.

From 1991 to 2005, this period was considered a breakthrough period in diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran. The occurrence of many new situations regionally and internationally regarding development efforts has helped to improve relations between the two countries, especially Iran's quest to ease Western sanctions by strengthening relations with countries in the Middle East, most importantly Saudi Arabia.

In 2001, after the September 11 attacks, the relationship between Saudi Arabia and Iran improved, especially after the attacks on Islam in the Western media caused the relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia and Iran to be in an unstable state, so the positions of Saudi Arabia and Iran on the United States' attacks on Islamic countries have become roughly the same, and in 1997, after Muhammad Khatami won the Iranian presidency and adopted a policy of reducing tensions, relations between Iran and the Gulf countries also improved, and with the US invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001 and 2003, it had a negative impact on the relationship between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and with the victory of the conservative party led by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in the Iranian presidential election, tensions between the two countries reappeared¹⁰.

In 2006, Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal said during a visit to Tehran: "The enemy knows very well that the unity of the Islamic world, especially between Saudi Arabia and Iran, has a significant impact on resolving the problems of this world", and in December 2007, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad visited Qatar and participated in the 28th Gulf Cooperation Council Summit, during the summit, he called for the establishment of the

⁷ إلياس، ميسوم، العلاقات السعودية الإيرانية بين التباعد والتقارب (1925-2015) الجزائر: بحث صادر عن مجلة الحقوق والعلوم الإنسانية، منصة المجلة العلمية الجزائرية، الجزائر، بتاريخ، 01-01-1970، مجلد 11، عدد 1، ص 486.

⁸ مرجع سبق ذكره، إلياس، ميسوم، العلاقات السعودية الإيرانية بين التباعد والتقارب (1925-2015) الجزائر: بحث صادر عن مجلة الحقوق والعلوم الإنسانية، منصة المجلة العلمية الجزائرية، الجزائر، بتاريخ، 01-01-1970، مجلد 11، عدد 1، ص 488.

⁹ قريب، بلال، الثابت والمتغير في السياسة الخارجية الإيرانية اتجاه منطقة الشرق الأوسط (العلاقات الإيرانية السعودية نموذجاً) الجزائر: بحث صادر عن مجلة المفكر، منصة المجلة العلمية الجزائرية، الجزائر، بتاريخ، 15-06-2017، مجلد 12، عدد 2، ص 483.

¹⁰ مرجع سبق ذكره، قريب، بلال، الثابت والمتغير في السياسة الخارجية الإيرانية اتجاه منطقة الشرق الأوسط (العلاقات الإيرانية السعودية نموذجاً) الجزائر: بحث صادر عن مجلة المفكر، منصة المجلة العلمية الجزائرية، الجزائر، بتاريخ، 15-06-2017، مجلد 12، عدد 2، ص 484.

Gulf Security Cooperation Organization to resolve the Gulf issue without foreign interference¹¹.

In 2011, most Arab countries in the Middle East underwent dramatic changes, known as the "Arab Spring" in history, and the crisis and conflict between nation-states continued to intensify, and the national relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran deteriorated again, so both countries are in a state of instability and lack of trust, in contrast, in October 2011, US investigation showed that Iran attempted to assassinate Saudi Ambassador Adel al-Jubeir, which had a very bad impact on the relations between the two countries¹².

In 2014, Iran was accused of providing support to the Houthi armed group, and in September of the same year, the Houthi armed group took control of Sana'a, the capital of Yemen, and in 2015, Iran changed its rhetoric after successful negotiations with the "1+5 countries" on the Iranian nuclear issue, and in the contrast Saudi Arabia rejected the agreement signed with the "Six major international organizations" and made it clear that it rejected the agreement, and in January 2016 Saudi Arabia executed 47 criminals, including the Shia cleric Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr, and Sheikh Nimr al-Nimr has a better relationship with Iran, and it coincides with the upcoming implementation of the Saudi-Iranian agreement and the lifting of US sanctions on Iran, therefore Saudi Arabia reached an arms agreement with the Trump administration; after the Saudi embassy in Tehran and the consulate in Mashhad, Iran were attacked, they announced that they had severed diplomatic relations with Iran¹³.

As a result, there are three dimensions of the Saudi-Iranian relationship, including the historical dimension, the geographic dimension, and the political dimension. In March 2023, China successfully facilitated the reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iraq and restored diplomatic relations at the same time. Therefore, both countries look forward to better development of this relationship in all fields, by promoting understanding, dialogue and cooperation between all parties, building a bridge of trust, and contributing to the security, stability and prosperity of countries in the Middle East.

1.2. Relations between the United States of America, Saudi Arabia and Iran

After the events of the eleventh of September 2001, many Arab and Islamic countries were exposed to threats from America, including Saudi Arabia and Iran, and the resulting political, economic and security implications cast a shadow on those countries.

It is worth noting that US-Saudi relations are described as strategic, based on mutual benefits and interests, and in return, the US administration is constantly pressuring the Saudi side to adopt reforms and political openness, fight terrorism, provide oil at cheap prices to the American side, and make concessions to normalize relations with Israel to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

As for the US-Iranian relations, they have been almost severed since the American hostage crisis at the US embassy in Tehran 1979, the rise of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the overthrow of the pro-American Shah regime, and the accompanying Iran-Iraq War and America's support for some parties at the expense of the other to weaken both of them.

Accordingly, America classified Iran, Iraq and North Korea as the so-called "axis of evil", considering that these countries sponsor terrorism and seek to increase their military power by increasing armament, and this, according to the Americans, threatens international peace and

¹¹ مرجع سبق ذكره، إلياس، ميسوم، العلاقات السعودية الإيرانية بين التباعد والتقارب (1925-2015) الجزائر: بحث صادر عن مجلة الحقوق والعلوم الإنسانية، منصة المجلة العلمية الجزائرية، الجزائر، بتاريخ، 1970-01-01، مجلد 11، عدد 1، ص 496-495

¹² Ibid

¹³ مرجع سبق ذكره، قريب، بلال، الثابت والمتغير في السياسة الخارجية الإيرانية اتجاه منطقة الشرق الأوسط (العلاقات الإيرانية السعودية نموذجاً) الجزائر: بحث صادر عن مجلة المفكر، منصة المجلة العلمية الجزائرية، الجزائر، بتاريخ، 2017-06-15، مجلد 12، عدد 2، ص 485.

security, as the American pressures and threats to Iran, aimed at changing the Iranian regime, dividing the country into states to weaken it, as well as pushing both Iran and Saudi Arabia to change their behavior towards Israel and its projects in the Middle East, but this policy has changed a little after the acceleration of the Iranian nuclear program since 2006, and eased after the signing of the Iranian nuclear agreement with Europe and the United States of America at the beginning of 2016¹⁴.

Over the past forty years and more, relations between Iran and the United States of America have witnessed successive tensions, whether at the level of bilateral, regional or international relations, while the areas of cooperation between them have declined to a very limited extent, in some fields, especially in the economic field, taking into account the slight discrepancy in the executive actions of US foreign policies of both Democrats and Republicans successive to rule in the White House in Washington towards Iran, which reflected on the areas of cooperation between the two countries¹⁵.

For example, the administration of US President Donald Trump, who came to power on January 20, 2017, dealt with Iran in different ways, decisively and at the opposite pace to most of the steps of the administration of former US President Barack Obama, and launched a new action strategy towards Iran, aimed at withdrawing the United States from the nuclear agreement signed in mid-2015 between Iran and the permanent members of the UN Security Council in addition to Germany, reintroduced economic sanctions, and focused its declared political, economic and media activities with the aim of changing the political behavior of the Iranian regime¹⁶.

Therefore, it can be said that the influential variables and multiple tracks that contributed to the restructuring of Iranian-American relations show unequivocally the increasing influence of a package of political, economic and military factors on bilateral relations between the two countries, especially towards the utilization of raw materials available in Iran, specifically crude oil and natural gas, as well as the awareness of successive U.S. administrations of the importance of Iran's strategic location and its influence in the Middle East region, so successive U.S. administrations have sought to follow many means to achieve those goals¹⁷.

In view of the continuing tension in Iranian-American relations in all fields, especially the political, economic, military and security fields, and the repercussions of this on the countries of the region, it is clear that the new administration of US President Donald Trump has not changed its policies towards Iran in the near future, and it is likely to exert pressure on it through the imposition of more economic sanctions, and further tightening, especially that the upcoming US-Saudi rapprochement will have the greatest interest for both parties in order to protect their regional and international interests.

2. China's motives for achieving Saudi-Iranian reconciliation

Saudi-Iranian reconciliation can be called a major event in international diplomacy at the beginning of the 21st century. This is something that many countries did not expect, and this matter was successfully completed with the support of China, which has become the focus of the international community's attention. And in the process of reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran, Chinese diplomacy is an indispensable key factor.

2.1. The decline of Saudi-Iranian relations and its impact on the region

Both Saudi Arabia and Iran are major powers in the Middle East and region. The confrontational relationship between the two has lasted for decades and has caused a certain

¹⁴ الهوارى، بلحاج: التهديدات الأمريكية للمملكة العربية السعودية وإيران بعد أحداث 11 من سبتمبر 2001، دراسة مقارنة، أفاق للعلوم، مجلد1، عدد3، الجزائر، 1-6-2016، ص196-205.

¹⁵ خضير عباس النداوي: العلاقات الإيرانية-الأمريكية، المتغيرات والمسارات، مركز الجزيرة للدراسات، 6 أيار 2019.

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Ibid

degree of damage to the political landscape of the Middle East. There are many analyses and opinions in the academic and political circles on the relationship between Saudi Arabia and Iran and the competitive performance between the two countries.

And due to the efforts of both countries to strengthen their international status in the region, different religious sects have led to a significant deterioration of geopolitical conflicts, for example in 1980 to 1988; the Iran-Iraq War broke out, and this war is considered one of the bloodiest wars, and it affected the political balance of the entire Gulf region and led to the escalation of crises and conflicts in the Gulf region, in contrast, in 1990, a major earthquake occurred in the Iranian city of Mangil, killing 60 people; Saudi Arabia provided humanitarian assistance to Iran, since then, the relationship between Iran and Saudi Arabia has improved to a certain extent¹⁸. Therefore, in the 1990s, the Saudi-Iranian trade and security relations eased significantly.

However, this harmonious relationship did not last long, and the confrontation between the two countries soon reappeared, and the reason was that some external factors in the Middle East had a negative impact on the bilateral relations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq, the most important of these was the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, and the Saudi government was worried that Iran's influence in Iraq would strengthen; also Lebanese Prime Minister Rafek Hariri was assassinated in 2005, and on March 8 and March 14 of the same year, Lebanon supported Iran and Syria, so the alliance backed by the resistance movement and the alliance against Iran and Syria supporting the compromise plan were established one after another, the two are in Lebanon, and the country is divided into courts¹⁹.

In addition, the divisions caused by the revolutions in the Arab world in 2011, especially in Syria and Bahrain, the sectarian divisions between Sunnis and Shiites, and when Saudi-led Arab League's declaration of war on the Houthi armed group in Yemen have had a negative impact on Saudi-Iranian relations²⁰. Therefore, the Saudi-Iranian relationship is subject to special objective circumstances. The above-mentioned developments reflect the complex nature of the Saudi-Iranian relationship, and the Saudi-Iranian conflict has cast a shadow over the intensification of the crisis in the Middle East, making peace and stability out of reach.

Scholar Freihart believes that the problem with the Saudi- Iranian conflict lies in its "chaotic structure", which is a huge challenge for the short-term end of the confrontation conflict, because it is a chaotic and disorderly conflict, and its fundamental problem is not clear; the key to overcoming this problem lies in building a dialogue platform for both Saudi and Iran, transparent and organized the cognition of possible differences between the two sides, and establishing an appropriate management system to make conflict resolution an achievable goal²¹.

At the same time, the conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran has not yet been clearly defined. This confrontation and conflict relationship can be either a sectarian conflict, a regional leadership conflict, or a national or security-level conflict, and the Saudi-Iranian confrontation sometimes does not play in person, and often looks for proxies to attack each other, for example, the relationship between the Houthi armed group and Iran has always been the focus of Saudi Arabia's great attention²². Therefore, the confrontation and conflict in the Saudi-

¹⁸ مابون، سايمون، ويستندج، إدوارد، السعودية، إيران: صراعات مستمرة وإحتمالات مطروحة، لانكستر: بحث صادر عن تقرير بعنوان: "العلاقات السعودية الإيرانية في إطار جهود التهذنة وخفض حدة التصعيد في الخليج"، معهد ريتشارد سون، جامعة لانكستر، المملكة المتحدة، سنة، 2020، ص7-14.

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ الصامدي، فاطمة، مسار العلاقات الإيرانية السعودية: الفرص والتحديات، الدوحة: بحث صادر عن مجلس الشرق الأوسط للشؤون الدولية، قطر، سنة 2024.

²¹ فريجات، إبراهيم، المصالحة: السعودية وإيران، لانكستر: بحث صادر عن تقرير بعنوان: "العلاقات السعودية الإيرانية في إطار جهود التهذنة وخفض حدة التصعيد في الخليج"، معهد ريتشارد سون، جامعة لانكستر، المملكة المتحدة، سنة، 2020، ص66-72.

²² Ibid

Iranian relationship will inevitably affect the security and stability of the entire Middle East region, and the relationship between the two sides often shifts between confrontation and cooperation.

From 2016 to 2023, tensions between the two sides could not be eased due to ongoing regional conflicts. For example, the turmoil in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon and Bahrain has had a negative impact on the relations between the two countries, but both sides believe that the settlement of conflicts in Syria and Yemen is achieved through peaceful rather than military means, therefore, there is a certain basis for dialogue between the two countries, and reaching understanding and taking joint actions on regional and international issues in the Middle East is a mutually beneficial act in line with the overall interests of the two countries²³.

Moreover, as representatives who are committed to maintaining peaceful relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran, Samira Nasirzad and Iyad Rifai believe that it is urgent for the two countries to seek a solution to the conflict and open up understanding, dialogue and joint cooperation, through active dialogue, tensions between the two countries and the entire Middle East region can be alleviated, so as to establish peaceful relations²⁴.

2.2. Chinese strategies to embody the reconciliation of Saudi Arabia and Iran

After more than seven years of estrangement between Saudi Arabia and Iran, under the auspices of China, the two countries signed a historic reconciliation agreement in Beijing in March 2023, and the tense confrontation between the two officially ended, at the same time, it has also brought hope for peace to many outstanding issues in the Middle East, such as the crises in Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Iraq²⁵. After the Saudi-Iran reconciliation was reached, it immediately caused a surprise to the international community, so the Chinese diplomatic factors in the Saudi-Iranian reconciliation have become the focus of the international community, among them; there is both the conceptual support of China's foreign policy and the specific implementation of the "Belt and Road" initiative.

2.2.1. Understanding Chinese foreign policy from Arab perspective

China's foreign policy has very distinctive characteristics, and China has repeatedly announced that it will adhere to the road of peaceful development, maintain world peace, and achieve common development and common prosperity for all countries. China is committed to opening up to the outside world, drawing on the experience of various countries, and achieving peaceful development while emphasizing self-reliance, reform and innovation, so Chinese people have a culture of tolerance and peace, and after unremitting struggle, this great goal has finally been achieved, and the Chinese people firmly believe that peace is the only way to achieve prosperity and tranquility, and development is the only way for people from all over the world to become prosperous and live a better life together, and creating a peaceful and stable development environment is the top priority of Chinese diplomacy²⁶.

China insists on opening up to the outside world as its basic national policy, implements a mutually beneficial and win-win opening-up strategy, and is committed to developing friendly and cooperative relations with various countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, and the purpose of China's foreign policy is to maintain world peace

²³ ناصرزاده، سميرة، الرفاعي، إياد، السعودية وإيران: كيف ستمكن بلدينا من صنع السلام و نشر الاستقرار في الشرق الأوسط، لانكستر: بحث صادر عن تقرير بعنوان: "العلاقات السعودية الإيرانية في إطار جهود التهدئة وخفض حدة التصعيد في الخليج"، معهد ريتشارد سون، جامعة لانكستر، المملكة المتحدة، سنة، 2020، ص79-81.

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ مرجع سبق ذكره، ساراسوات، ديببكا، الروابط بين إيران والصين: تضافر الإستراتيجيات الجغرافية والإقتصادية، الدوحة: بحث صادر عن المركز العربي للأبحاث ودراسة السياسات، قطر، نشر بتاريخ، 2022-07-08.

²⁶ مكتب الإعلام التابع لمجلس الدولة، الكتاب الأبيض حول التنمية السلمية في الصين، بكين: كتاب صادر عن وزارة الخارجية الصينية، 2011-09-06.

and promote common development, advocate the construction of a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity, and establish a new security concept with mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation as the core, therefore, Peaceful development is a choice that conforms to the trend of the times; prosperity, development, the rule of law; harmony and stability are the ultimate goals of China's internal affairs and diplomacy²⁷.

From 2013 to 2023, China's foreign policy has put forward many constructive initiatives and propositions to promote understanding, dialogue and cooperation among countries around the world and achieve stability, peace and prosperity in various countries and regions. China proposed the "Belt and Road" Initiative in 2013, the "Global Development Initiative" in 2022, and the "Global Security Initiative" in 2023, therefore, the theory of peaceful rise is in the same vein as the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, and it is the core point of the effective foreign policy of the great powers since China's reform and opening up, in order to achieve global governance and develop peace²⁸.

China's diplomatic philosophy is very advanced. The Chinese government believes that diplomacy is the pillar of the development of human civilization, and its foundation is effective ties between countries, therefore, political and diplomatic activities between countries and within any international institution need to abide by the ethics and rules of diplomatic work, aimed at promoting understanding, dialogue and cooperation, in order to achieve harmonious coexistence between all parties, and strive to maintain the security, peace, stability and prosperity of all people without exception on the basis of equality, respect and mutual benefit²⁹.

China insists on combining the Five Principles of Peaceful rise and Peaceful coexistence, and strives to establish the principles of international peace and development. China seeks to abide by the principles of promoting equality, dialogue, pluralism, mutual respect and openness with all parties without exception in international relations, resolve disputes and conflicts through peaceful means, establish the foundation for security, peace and stability, and achieve mutual benefit and win-win situation, so as to establish the foundation for peaceful development of diplomacy to promote world development and build a peaceful world³⁰. Overall, the concept of Chinese diplomacy is to strive to promote the harmonious development of international relations and create a good international environment for lasting regional and international peace.

Besides, the goal and core of Chinese diplomacy is to create a good and stable international development environment. China will not seek hegemony and bully the weak like some countries, nor will it only consider its own stable development, instead, it will firmly and clearly promote the stable development of the world economy and promote world peace and security, therefore, since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in October 1949, China has pursued a foreign policy of reform and opening up, as an important member of the international community, and committed to international standards in the process of promoting world peace, stability and development, clearly and effectively seeks to achieve a fairer and more justice political and economic system for all³¹.

In the face of increasing international challenges that threaten social stability, security and development, Chinese diplomacy plays an important role and achieving international peace

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ الفقيه، الصادق، الدبلوماسية الصينية: النظرية والتطبيق، الدوحة: كتاب صادر عن مركز الجزيرة للدراسات، قطر، بتاريخ، 13-02-2015، ص 556.

²⁹ بحث بعنوان، السلام و التنمية و التعاون، راية الدبلوماسية الصينية في العصر الجديد، بتاريخ، 22-08-2005.

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ مرجع سبق ذكره، مكتب الإعلام التابع لمجلس الدولة، الكتاب الأبيض حول التنمية السلمية في الصين، بكين: كتاب صادر عن وزارة الخارجية الصينية، الصين، 06-09-2011.

and development is naturally one of the most important features of Chinese diplomacy. At the same time, Chinese diplomacy also has the characteristics of multilateralism and joint actions to safeguard fairness and justice and respect the rights of other countries, especially developing countries, therefore, China insists on credibility and objectivity in its cooperation with other countries in order to achieve common peaceful development and mutual benefit and win-win situation with other countries, which is in line with the open policy of international relations³².

That's why Chinese diplomacy is based on open and joint diplomatic actions to develop international relations in order to achieve peace and stability between all parties, and in line with the principle of mutual benefit and promoting exchanges, China actively seeks understanding, dialogue and communication with other countries, also China fervently hopes to achieve mutual benefit and common development on the basis of mutual respect for the sovereignty of other countries, non-interference in other countries' affairs, and non-aggression against other countries, so China seeks equal respect, regardless of the country's strength or weakness, rich or poor, and its international influence³³. Therefore, Chinese diplomacy is a model for promoting equal and undifferentiated communication between countries, reflecting respect for all without exception, and upholding the same rights on the basis of equal enjoyment of the rights to security, peace and development.

In recent years, the strategic autonomy of countries in the Middle East has generally increased, and they have “multi-faceted bets” among major powers to implement a diversified and balanced strategy, although the United States publicly opposes China and Russia “filling” the so-called “power vacuum in the Middle East,” regional countries generally welcome China to play a greater role in the Middle East³⁴.

Therefore, the stable development of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran demonstrates the effectiveness of China's efforts to achieve reconciliation between the two sides, which in turn helps to promote stability and prosperity for all parties, and seek solutions to various outstanding issues. The philosophy of Chinese diplomacy is conducive to direct dialogue between Saudi Arabia and Iran, thereby promoting conflict resolution negotiations from bilateral to multilateral relations, so China's foreign policy has been fully reflected in the Saudi-Iranian reconciliation incident effectively.

2.2.2. Saudi Arabia and Iran under BRI

In September 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the “Land Silk Road Economic Belt” in Kazakhstan, which aims to build commercial infrastructure in various fields; in October of the same year, President Xi Jinping proposed the “Maritime Silk Road” in Indonesia, which aims to build ports, canals and transportation corridors³⁵. The "Belt and Road" initiative is a development plan initiated by the Chinese government to connect Asia, Europe and Africa through land and sea networks to improve regional integration, increase trade and stimulate economic growth. China has set five priorities for the implementation of the initiative, the most important of which are policy coordination, infrastructure interconnection, unimpeded trade, financial integration and close ties between people from all over the world, so the initiative includes a large-scale investment plan for infrastructure projects and is being transformed into a trade cooperation mechanism between China and the initiative partners³⁶.

Since Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the “Belt and Road” initiative, it has become an

³² مستشار الدولة و وزير الخارجية الصينية، تشين فانغ، التحديث الصيني النمط يوفر فرصة جديدة للعالم، شنغهاي: وثيقة صادرة عن منتدى التعاون الصيني العربي، الصين، بتاريخ، 2023-04-24.

³³ Ibid

³⁴ 丁隆: 《沙特、伊朗复交: 中国斡旋外交开启新时代》, 载《世界知识》2023年第7期, 第35页。

³⁵ Long Ding, “The Belt and Road Initiative: Origin and Objectives”, *Chinese and Arab Studies*, Vol.1, No.1, 2021, p.81.

³⁶ Long Ding, “The Belt and Road Initiative: Origin and Objectives”, *Chinese and Arab Studies*, Vol.1, No.1, 2021, p.83.

important driving force of China's foreign policy, and it was officially included in the government's action plan in 2014. In 2015, the Chinese government issued the "Vision and Action Plan for Promoting the Joint Construction of the "Belt and Road", and since then, various conferences and seminars have been held one after another, and the Chinese media have also conducted extensive reports and analysis on it, so the "Belt and Road" initiative embodies the spirit of the Silk Road of peace and cooperation; it embodies the spirit of the Silk Road of openness and tolerance, mutual learning and mutual learning, mutual benefit and win-win situation, and is committed to building a stable world of lasting peace, universal security, common prosperity, and openness and tolerance³⁷.

Therefore, the proposal of the "Belt and Road" initiative is the main pillar of China's diplomacy, and its foundation is to open up to the outside world, and the purpose is to achieve understanding, cooperation and dialogue in order to achieve peace, stability and prosperity, especially in the Middle East, where geopolitical conflicts are constantly escalating, developing countries and other places that need to develop and prosper.

The importance of the "Belt and Road" initiative lies in the fact that it is a gateway for peaceful development, innovative development, and civilization and harmony, and it solves the "six major relationships" and meets the requirements of the successful construction of the "Belt and Road". The "Six major relations" are mainly the relations between China and the countries along the "Belt and Road", including the relationship between the government, the market and the society, the economic and trade cooperation and cultural exchanges, the opening up to the outside world and maintaining national security, the actual progress and public opinion trends, the overall national goals and specific local goals, and the implementation of comprehensive opening up to the outside world and the direction of comprehensive cooperation.

As a result, the "Belt and Road" initiative has become a strong support for regional and international development, and the concept of jointly building BRI has become a real global movement, so China is committed to promoting the development of the global government system in the direction of harmony, progress and development, therefore everyone can enjoy a fairer and more justice development, that's why on August 2019, China has signed 195 cooperation agreements with 166 countries and international organizations, laying a practical foundation for the implementation of the "Belt and Road" initiative³⁸.

Besides, the initiative continues to strengthen the ties and concepts it has established, namely peace and cooperation, openness and tolerance, understanding and education, mutual benefit and a community of destiny, therefore, through BRI, China's foreign policy, especially that of the Middle East, has achieved trust and cooperation, reflecting political partnership, economic integration, cultural tolerance, and mutual exchanges in the media, promote trade, cultural and scientific exchanges, support and strengthen the Charter of the United Nations and the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, the most important of which is mutual respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs and mutual benefit, the basis of these principles is political coordination between countries, promoting smooth communication, dialogue and trade, and creating an environment in the new era³⁹.

³⁷ Hongxiu Li, "Public Diplomacy in the Belt and Road Initiative within the New Media: Theories and Practices", *Athens Journal of Mass Media and Communications*, Vol.14, No.3, 2018, pp.219-236.

³⁸ الرئيس الصيني شي جين بينغ. خطاب الرئيس الصيني بمنتهى الحزام والطريق يلقى ترحيباً عالمياً واسعاً، بكين: تقرير صادر عن وكالة شنخوا للأخبار، الصين، بتاريخ، 2017-05-15.

³⁹ مطاوع، محمد، طريق الحرير الجديد في الإستراتيجية الصينية: الأهداف الكبرى والوزن الإستراتيجي والتحديات، الدوحة: بحث صادر عن مجلة سياسات عربية للعلوم السياسية والعلاقات الدولية، قطر، سبتمبر 2020، ص28-43.

Moreover, one of the most important goals of the “Belt and Road” initiative is to achieve cooperation and enhance trust between China and all parties, and friendly economic relations between countries can help ease tensions and improve cooperation in various fields, so BRI helps to maintain a favorable strategic environment and promote common progress on the basis of the concepts of equal participation, consultation and mutual assistance, and mutual respect, and it focuses on specific business or social projects to establish successful economic and social links⁴⁰. Therefore, the BRI means extensive consultation, joint cooperation and benefit sharing, and can be regarded as an international cooperation strategy for China and the participating parties to achieve stability, prosperity and the interests of a community of destiny.

As a result, the “Belt and Road” initiative adheres to the concept of cooperation and mutual benefit, shared destiny, and achieves the goal of common development by promoting understanding, dialogue, coordination, cooperation, interdependence and collective action.

In June 2014, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the initiative of China-Arab cooperation to build the “Belt and Road” at the opening ceremony of the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the China-Arab Cooperation Forum, and in January 2016, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited the headquarters of the Arab League and proposed an action plan for China-Arab cooperation in building the “Belt and Road”, which includes four pillars: adhere to peaceful dialogue, promote security and stability with actions, advocate civilized exchanges and mutual learning, and enhance friendship with actions⁴¹.

Besides, in July 2018, the Eighth Ministerial Conference of the China-Arab Cooperation Forum was held in Beijing, and the “China-Arab Implementation Declaration on Jointly Building the”Belt and Road”” was issued., and all ministerial-level resolutions related to China issued by the Council of the Arab League since its 149th session in March 2018 are in line with the concept of cooperating to build the “Belt and Road” initiative⁴².

Moreover, in December 2022, at the closing ceremony of the Arab-Gulf-China Summit held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Arab countries and China announced the establishment of a new pattern of international relations based on a true partnership to create a comprehensive strategic destiny community in various fields, and the basis of this partnership is to promote mutual benefit, consultation and cooperation, which are beneficial to both parties, and this will bring broader development space to both sides, especially Arab countries, and be more capable of forming a balanced and influential foreign policy, not to mention expanding joint cooperation in various industries and fields within the framework of the “Belt and Road” initiative to achieve security, stability and sustainable development⁴³.

Also, in September 2023, the 160th Foreign Ministers-level meeting of the Council of the Arab League adopted the "Resolution on Strengthening Arab-Chinese Relations", and the resolution reiterated that Arab countries support the "Belt and Road" initiative and are willing to strengthen cooperation with China in various fields and continue to promote the construction of the China-Arab Cooperation Forum mechanism, therefore, China has signed cooperation documents with a number of Arab countries to jointly build the “Belt and Road” and promote the integration of the “Belt and Road” initiative into the development strategies of Arab countries⁴⁴.

⁴⁰ Samia Manzoor, Zunaira Majeed, Sundas Khizar, “Belt and Road Initiative: Geopolitical Implications for Global Order”, *Asia Pacific*, Vol.40, 2022, pp.165-179.

⁴¹ مستشار الدولة الصينية، وزير خارجية جمهورية الصين الشعبية، وانغ يي، الأمين العام لجامعة الدول العربية، أحمد أبو الغيط، الإعلان التنفيذي الصيني العربي الخاص ببناء "الحزام والطريق"، بكين: تقرير صادر عن منتدى التعاون الصيني العربي، الصين، بتاريخ 2018-07-10.

Ibid ⁴²

⁴³ أحمد كرار، جعفر، القمة العربية الصينية: نحو بناء مجتمع عربي صيني ذي مصير مشترك، القاهرة: مقال صادر عن مركز الأهرام للدراسات السياسية والإستراتيجية، مصر، بتاريخ، 2023-10-24

⁴⁴ Ibid

At the same time, the BRI has also strengthened China-Iran cooperation, so the economic, trade and technological cooperation between China and Iran has flourished for decades, for example, China is Iran's largest trading partner, with a trade volume of more than US 550 billion in 2014, and the two sides have great potential for cooperation in infrastructure, railways, natural gas, petroleum and other fields, therefore the BRI has steadily and effectively promoted economic and trade cooperation between the two countries on the basis of mutual benefit, strengthened consultations and cooperation, and created a better future together⁴⁵.

Chinese Ambassador to Iran Pang Sen said that Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Iran will be an extraordinary event in the relations between the two countries, and said that the visit will leave a "permanent mark" in the history of bilateral high-level exchanges between Beijing and Tehran; and he added that China and Iran have witnessed a series of high-level exchanges, strengthened mutual trust, understanding and cooperation, and bilateral economic and trade exchanges between the two countries continue to expand, besides, he also said that the "Belt and Road" initiative will bring more prosperity to the bilateral relations between the two countries⁴⁶.

Moreover, he emphasized that Iran is an ancient civilization on the ancient Silk Road and is now an important partner in supporting China's new initiative, and he added that some important cooperation projects between China and Iran are progressing steadily, and it is expected that the leaders of the two countries will exchange views on bilateral relations and major global and regional issues during their visit, as well as the two countries will sign a number of agreements and memoranda of understanding in the fields of industrial capacity cooperation, economic and trade investment, oil and gas, cultural exchanges, information sharing and customs, therefore, Pang Sen concluded by saying that friendly cooperation between the two countries is not only in line with the fundamental interests of the two countries, but will also help promote the security, peace, stability and prosperity of the region⁴⁷.

It is worth noting that the Chinese leadership renamed the project the "Belt and Road" Initiative in 2017 to make it more comprehensive and spread China's concept of peace to other countries without any ideological background⁴⁸. Therefore, the BRI will naturally have a political and economic impact on China's relations with other countries, including Iran, and the relationship between Iran and China has been active since Iran recognized the People's Republic of China in 1967, and soon after, the two countries established diplomatic relations in 1971.

And under the framework of the "Belt and Road" initiative, perhaps one of the most prominent political features of the development of China-Iran relations, is China's concern about regional regime instability and its adoption of a more proactive stance on regional issues and its search for reconciliation, and after 2010, political and social changes have occurred, and the situation in many countries in the region has become unstable, and Iran has gained unprecedented regional status in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Yemen, so China has begun to believe that the active participation of countries around the world in the "Belt and Road" initiative will help promote dialogue and understanding and achieve regional security,

⁴⁵ وكالة شينخوا للأخبار، مقالة خاصة: مبادرة الحزام والطريق تعزز التعاون الصيني الإيراني، بكين: مقال نشر على الموقع الرسمي لوكالة شينخوا للأخبار، الصين، بتاريخ، 2016-01-18.

⁴⁶ السفير الصيني لدى إيران، بانغ سنغ، مقابلة مبعوث صيني: زيارة الرئيس الصيني لإيران حدث إستثنائي للعلاقات الثنائية، بكين: مقابلة صحفية صادرة عن وكالة شينخوا للأخبار، الصين، بتاريخ 2016-01-17.

⁴⁷ Ibid

⁴⁸ Przemyslaw Osiewicz, "The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): Implications for Iran-China Relations", *Przegląd Strategiczny*, Vol.11, No.11, 2018, pp.221-232.

stability and prosperity, which is necessary to solve many problems in the Middle East by promoting cooperation and common interests, eliminate differences, and improve political, economic, and security relations between the parties⁴⁹. Therefore, the BRI is important for strengthening China's relations with Iran and other countries in the region to achieve stability and prosperity.

And through cooperation under the framework of the “Belt and Road” Initiative, China directly connects Saudi Arabia and Iran, and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi praised the agreement between Saudi Arabia and Iran to restore diplomatic relations as a “victory for dialogue and peace” and was widely welcomed around the world, the European Union joined Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Iraq, Cuba and Pakistan in endorsing the agreement; United Nations spokesperson Stefan Dujarric said: “the Secretary-General expressed his gratitude to China for recently hosting the talks and encouraging dialogue between the two countries⁵⁰.”

Also he added this highlights the important role of achieving reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iraq through the “Belt and Road” initiative, and the reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran has ushered in a new era of regional peace and prosperity, brought hope for security and stability to countries in the region, and resolved conflicts through understanding, dialogue and cooperation, reaffirming respect for national sovereignty and non-interference in national internal affairs or aggression against other countries, and also said over the closing ceremony of the Saudi-Iranian talks in Beijing: “the dialogue between the two countries has become a successful practice for the implementation of the ‘Global Security Initiative’⁵¹.”

Moreover, according to the conclusions of the 2018 report of the Middle East Center of the London School of Economics, the problems in the region can only be fully demonstrated under the protection of the collective security system and rely on resilient countries to solve the problems⁵². In April 2022, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the “Global Security Initiative”, the core of which is to adhere to a comprehensive, common and sustainable concept of security, on the basis of respect for the sovereignty and interests of various countries, promote political dialogue and peaceful negotiations, resolve disputes in a peaceful manner, and do not attack or interfere in the affairs of other countries. This is in line with the rules of international law and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. This confirms that China's diplomatic efforts to achieve reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran meet the requirements of the collective security system, and it also reflects China's continued attention to achieving the collective security of countries in the Middle East.

As a result, the framework of the “Belt and Road” initiative, on the one hand, it is a strategic cooperation agreement between China and Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, and on the other hand, it is a strategic cooperation agreement between China and Iran. This has had a positive impact on strengthening dialogue, understanding and cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and finally led to the signing of the reconciliation agreement in March 2023. And due to the both sides are an integral part and partners of the “Belt and Road” initiative, one of the main goals of the “Belt and Road” initiative is to promote cooperation, dialogue and understanding between all parties in order to achieve security, stability and prosperity in the region; the BRI can be the most important part of China's effective diplomatic activities to achieve reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

⁴⁹ Przemyslaw Osiewicz, “The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): Implications for Iran-China Relations”, *Przegląd Strategiczny*, Vol.11, No.11, 2018, pp.221-232.

⁵⁰ عضو المكتب السياسي للجنة المركزية للحزب الشيوعي الصيني ومدير المكتب للجنة الشؤون الخارجية التابعة للجنة المركزية للحزب الشيوعي الصيني، وانغ بي، الإتفاق السعودي الإيراني بشأن إستعادة العلاقات بفيء الأمن الإقليمي ويظهر حسن نية الصين لتعزيز الأمن العالمي، بكين: مقال صادر عن وكالة شينخوا للأخبار، الصين، بتاريخ، 2023-03-14.

Ibid⁵¹

⁵² Ribale Sleiman Haidar, Jack McGinn, *Saudi Arabia and Iran: Beyond Conflict and Coexistence?* London: London School of Economics Middle East Centre, 2018.

3. Chinese diplomatic goals to achieve Saudi-Iranian reconciliation

China's mediation between Saudi Arabia and Iran plays an important role in the relations between the two countries, and is a key step in promoting the normalization of relations between them. At the same time, the reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran also has an important and far-reaching impact on the peaceful development of the entire Middle East region.

3.1. Features of Chinese foreign policy towards Saudi Arabia and Iran

The Middle East region plays an important role in China's foreign policy, so China and the countries in the region have close strategic partnerships in the fields of political, economic, commercial, cultural, media and technical cooperation, and China's support for countries in the region is not accidental or coincidental, but one of the core of China's foreign policy, which is an inherent diplomatic way to seek solutions to most of the problems of countries in the region⁵³.

The crisis-solving diplomacy promoted by China is one of the most prominent components of China's foreign policy, especially in the Middle East, so China firmly stands on the position of Middle Eastern countries and provides all support and assistance within its power to resolve various crises and conflicts between countries in the region, and this reflects China's active efforts to promote peace and stability in the region and the good level of official and civil relations in China, also China strives to create a better internal and external environment for this purpose⁵⁴.

Therefore, China clearly implements the principles of its foreign policy, especially those related to the realization of a common destiny, respect for other countries, non-interference in other countries' affairs, non-aggression, and the settlement of political crises through peaceful means, and this enables China to respond quickly in the face of various crises in the region and making contributions towards humanitarian, medical and health care, culture and education, regional economy, etc, and the Chinese diplomacy played an important and prominent role in resolving the crisis between Saudi Arabia and Iran⁵⁵. Ding Long, a professor at the Institute of Middle East Studies of Shanghai Foreign Studies University, said that the reason why China's "debut" of mediating diplomacy in the Middle East was a great success stems from China's goodwill to persuade peace and promote negotiations⁵⁶.

Since 2016, with the deterioration of relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran, the rift in relations between the two countries has continued to widen, and with it has been the negative impact on various issues in the region, in March 2023, under the witness of the Chinese government, Saudi Arabia and Iran signed a historic reconciliation agreement, and China successfully helped the two countries restore diplomatic relations and promoted political, economic and commercial cooperation between them⁵⁷.

Chinese diplomacy has successfully brought Saudi Arabia and Iran closer, causing the two countries to sign an unexpected reconciliation agreement after many years of severing diplomatic relations, and quickly restored diplomatic relations, so there are many supporting factors for the success of China's diplomatic efforts, the most important of them is that China has a broader understanding of the Saudi-Iranian relationship, and therefore China's foreign

⁵³ الأزرق، عماد، الصين ودبلوماسية الأزمات في الشرق الأوسط، القاهرة: مقال صادر عن مركز المعلومات ودعم اتخاذ القرار، رئاسة مجلس الوزراء، مصر، بتاريخ 2024-03-12.

⁵⁴ 牛新春: 《中国斡旋沙伊复交: 新格局、新规则和新力量》, 载《当代世界》2023年第4期, 第66页。

⁵⁵ مرجع سبق ذكره، الأزرق، عماد، الصين ودبلوماسية الأزمات في الشرق الأوسط، القاهرة: مقال صادر عن مركز المعلومات ودعم اتخاذ القرار، رئاسة مجلس الوزراء، مصر، بتاريخ 2024-03-12.

⁵⁶ 丁隆: 《沙特、伊朗复交: 中国斡旋外交开启新时代》, 载《世界知识》2023年第7期, 第34页。

⁵⁷ برهومة، محمد، الشرق الاوسط بعد عام على الوساطة الصينية بين السعودية و ايران: مَنْ يملأ فراغ القوة في المنطقة، أبوظبي: بحث صادر عن مركز الإمارات للسياسات، الإمارات العربية المتحدة، بتاريخ، 2024-03-18.

policy goals in the Middle East are clear, and its effective role in achieving regional peace and prosperity is a key factor that cannot be ignored⁵⁸.

In addition, other objective situations that have emerged due to regional development have also successfully helped China achieve reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran, the first that Saudi Arabia is eager to establish a stable and prosperous development environment in the region to support its political, economic and military rise; the second Iran's internal factors are due to the deepening of political, economic and social transformation. Therefore, the Iranian government is aware of the need to properly deal with these key issues in the transition period, maintain internal stability, and maintain its status as a great power in the Middle East with a pragmatic attitude.

The relationship between China and Saudi Arabia is getting closer. In particular, the China-Saudi Summit in December 2022 has laid the foundation for Saudi Arabia to implement the results of the summit, build a new era of China-Arab community, and reach a strategic partnership agreement within the framework of the BRI, besides, Iran has a deep relationship with China and seeks to strengthen this close relationship in all fields, and Iran's participation in the "Belt and Road" initiative enables it to achieve understanding, dialogue and cooperation with countries in the Middle East, thus becoming an important constituent country to achieve the stable development of the initiative.⁵⁹

The two countries have also launched a security dialogue to exchange views on resolving issues in the region, so that the region can enjoy lasting stability and prosperity, so there have been many exchanges between Saudi Arabia, Iran and other GCC countries, in order to achieve greater reconciliation, the two sides can encourage more such exchanges, academic institutions of the two countries can invite scholars from both sides to visit and hold academic conferences to enhance the relationship between them, in addition, the two countries can work together to strengthen economic cooperation, and economic benefits will bring about political reconciliation⁶⁰.

Despite Western sanctions on Iran, Saudi Arabia and other GCC countries can try to invest in Iran, and this will also encourage Iran to deepen its reconciliation with all parties, which will bring a better future of cooperation in various fields⁶¹. Also it can be seen that the foreign policy advocated by the Chinese government is applicable and fruitful in resolving Saudi relations, therefore, this effectiveness comes from China's commitment to promoting understanding, dialogue and cooperation among countries in order to achieve the security, peace and prosperity of all countries and people in the region, so China's mediation in the resumption of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran can be described as another new attempt by the new rules in the new pattern⁶².

3.2. Prospects of China's political efforts in the Middle East

China's successful mediation of the reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran is not only of great significance to Saudi Arabia and Iran, but also has a very important impact on the entire Middle East region. Therefore, the resumption of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran has become a major opportunity for China to enter the political affairs of the Middle East⁶³.

⁵⁸ Najaf Ali, Asif Mehdi, Kousar Ali, "China's Quite Diplomacy: Assessing Its Role in Saudi-Iran Reconciliation Process", *Annals of Human and Social Sciences*, Vol.5, No.2, pp.467-479.

⁵⁹ Najaf Ali, Asif Mehdi, Kousar Ali, "China's Quite Diplomacy: Assessing Its Role in Saudi-Iran Reconciliation Process", *Annals of Human and Social Sciences*, Vol.5, No.2, pp.467-479.

⁶⁰ Liangxiang Jin, "Saudi-Iranian Reconciliation and How can It be Strengthened", *Middle East Council on Global Affairs*, March 7, 2024, https://mecouncil.org/blog_posts/consolidating-the-reconciliation-between-saudi-arabia-and-iran/.

⁶¹ Liangxiang Jin, "Saudi-Iranian Reconciliation and How can It be Strengthened", *Middle East Council on Global Affairs*, March 7, 2024, https://mecouncil.org/blog_posts/consolidating-the-reconciliation-between-saudi-arabia-and-iran/.

⁶² 牛新春: 《中国斡旋沙伊复交: 新格局、新规则和新力量》, 载《当代世界》2023年第4期, 第67页。

⁶³ 牛新春, 李绍先: 《乘势而上: 中国斡旋沙特伊朗复交及其影响》, 载《国际问题研究》2023年第3期, 第47页。

As far as Saudi Arabia and Iran are concerned, building a bridge of trust and strengthening bilateral relations once again reflect the responsibility of these two countries to achieve the collective security of the entire Middle East region. The reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran will guide the way to resolve the crises in the region, flexibly seek solutions to these problems, and promote dialogue, understanding and cooperation between all parties in order to achieve security, stability and prosperity. Therefore, China, Saudi Arabia and Iran share a common development goal, which is to achieve understanding and cooperation between countries in the Middle East to promote security, peace, stability and prosperity in the region.

Saudi Arabia's "successful diplomacy" will also strengthen its position in the Middle East and at the international level, as well as the realization of the socio-economic reform plan in the "Vision 2030", because Saudi Arabia has realized that the realization of this ambitious plan depends on regional stability, and regional stability can only be achieved through the normalization of relations with Iran⁶⁴. Besides, China has mediated the reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and the entire Middle East region has entered a new stage of political diplomacy for international politics based on the Law, and the reconciliation & resumption of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran represent a new atmosphere of mutual respect and equal treatment⁶⁵.

China now seems to be ready to assume a proactive diplomat role in global affairs, especially China's political credibility as a non-imperialist country has given it the greatest diplomatic impetus, and it also enjoys the advantages of being the largest developing country; therefore, all this have given China a more trustworthy political role in the international system, which will accelerate the decline of the unilateral system in the Middle East and on the international stage⁶⁶. Moreover, this will also help strengthen governance in the Middle East and restore an international order based on multilateralism, so as to realize the concepts of the "Global Development Initiative" and the "Global Security Initiative" proposed by President Xi Jinping, which will help build a community of human destiny and promote the prosperity of all mankind.

In 2023, Chinese President Xi Jinping, accompanied by Foreign Minister Wang Yi, met with the leaders of Iran, Palestine, Algeria, Mauritania, Syria, Kuwait, Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries to discuss cooperation plans and seek the future development prospects of bilateral relations, he said that China's diplomacy with great powers with Chinese characteristics in the Middle East has achieved fruitful results, injecting impetus and confidence into the realization of peaceful, stable and harmonious development in the Middle East⁶⁷. This confirms the effective role played by Chinese diplomacy in achieving peace and stability in the Middle East and seeking to establish a community of destiny. As President Xi Jinping pointed out when he proposed the initiative to establish a China-Arab community of Destiny in 2014, the BRI was adopted and implemented at the first China-Arab Summit in 2022.

Therefore, the influence of Chinese diplomacy on achieving peace and stability in the Middle East is not only reflected in helping the reconciliation of Saudi Arabia and Iran, but also in helping the development of Middle Eastern countries by achieving peace and stability for all.

⁶⁴ Ali Omid, "What are the Drivers and Implications of Reconciliation between Iran and Saudi Arabia?" *Middle East Monitor*, October 4, 2023.

⁶⁵ 牛新春, 李绍先: 《乘势而上: 中国斡旋沙特伊朗复交及其影响》, 载《国际问题研究》2023年第3期, 第54页。

⁶⁶ Reference mentioned, Ali Omid, "What are the Drivers and Implications of Reconciliation between Iran and Saudi Arabia?" *Middle East Monitor*, October 4, 2023.

⁶⁷ عضو المكتب السياسي للجنة المركزية للحزب الشيوعي الصيني، وزير الخارجية الصينية، وانغ يي، الدبلوماسية الصينية في الشرق الأوسط عام 2023، الإبتكار والحصاد، بكين: وثيقة صدرت عن منتدى التعاون الصيني العربي، الصين، بتاريخ، 2024-01-15.

On January 1, 2024, the four Middle East countries Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates became members of the BRICS countries, which also increased the representation and influence of the BRICS countries and better protected the common interests of developing countries. And the decision of the two countries to resume diplomatic relations is considered a victory for dialogue and peace, and it has become a model for the Middle East and the world to resolve their differences through dialogue and negotiation, and has opened a “tide of reconciliation” in the Middle East.

For example, Syria's return to the Arab League, Egypt and Turkey, Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, and the normalization of relations between Iran and Sudan, besides, China has adhered to an objective and fair position on the Palestinian issue, and supports the case of the Palestinian people to restore their legitimate national rights in accordance with international law and the “two-state solution”, therefore China calls on both Palestine and Israel to achieve peace through negotiations, take the initiative to assume international responsibilities, and uphold fairness and justice⁶⁸.

This confirms the firm determination of Chinese diplomacy to promote understanding, dialogue and cooperation, and to achieve security, peace, stability and prosperity in the Middle East through unity and self-improvement.

4. The geostrategic importance of the Middle East for America

It can be said that the Obama administration (2009-2017), had a relative decline in interest in the Middle East in American foreign policy compared to previous and subsequent administrations, but the developments in the region and the development of the international system, renewed interest in the region again by America, because the region is of great importance to America to maintain its international standing, along with supporting its allies.

The Middle East region occupies a prominent strategic position in American politics due to its geographical location, its huge energy reserves, and its pivotal role in global security and economic issues, and the region is considered the center of many vital interests of the United States, including securing energy sources, combating international terrorism, promoting regional stability, maintaining its international position as the leader of the international system, and relations with Middle Eastern countries play a key role in influencing American policy towards major international issues; which makes the region a crucial element in drawing Washington's strategies on the international arena⁶⁹.

Accordingly, the Middle East will remain at the core of the American strategy due to its geostrategic location, its role as a major source of energy, its impact on international stability and competition between major powers, and that these factors make the United States continue to develop its policies to ensure its interests in the region in the long term.

4.1. Multiple resources and benefits

The Middle East region is located in an important region culturally, security, politically and economically, which has become of strategic importance due to the role of this region in the movement of world politics due to its distinctive characteristics, and this is what has made the foreign policy of major countries active in its direction as it is a key bet for the future of achieving their interests and increasing their power. The Middle East is a meeting point of Civilizations, a region connecting three continents (Europe, Asia and Africa), a trade corridor and a source of energy, especially oil and gas, to world markets.

During the Cold War, the Middle East was the scene of rivalry between the United States and

⁶⁸ Ibid

⁶⁹ تريندز للبحوث والدراسات: الشرق الأوسط في الإستراتيجية الأمريكية: مصالح حيوية وتحديات معقدة، قسم الدراسات الإستراتيجية، 23 أيلول 2024.

the former Soviet Union, as each Power sought to expand its influence through multiple regional alliances. For its part, the United States focused on traditional powers such as Turkey, Egypt, the Gulf Arab states and Iran under the Shah, due to their geostrategic locations and regional influence, and countries such as Iraq, Syria and Lebanon witnessed proxy wars and power struggles between the two superpowers⁷⁰.

The importance of the Middle East to the United States continues due to energy resources, as the region owns about 48% of the world's oil reserves and 40% of natural gas reserves, and these riches make the region vital to the global economy, which affects American and global energy security, and the security and political situation in the Middle East also plays a big role in the American interest; as the region is witnessing transformations and conflicts, the effects of which extend to the world arena, such as competition between regional powers in the region, and the rise of non-traditional forces such as armed organizations and militias; which pushes the United States to maintain a strong military presence in the region in order to protect its interests and preserve stability, along with the increasing volume of US arms exports to Middle Eastern countries, as the United States is one of the largest arms exporters to the region, where US arms exports to the Middle East amounted to about 20 billion dollars in 2020⁷¹.

Despite the geostrategic and economic importance of the Middle East in the American calculations, the regional security of the Middle East is still a challenge to American policy; due to the continuation and growth of conflicts in the region, which negatively affect American interests in several strategic, economic and political aspects, and the presence of threats to the American strategy may represent lost opportunities for it if they continue, and may end up receding strategic relations in the region in favor of new competitors. Therefore, we point out that the US role in the region may change with global and regional transformations, especially as international interactions to create a new world order are taking shape.

4.2. Supporting influence and allies in the Middle East

The United States seeks to balance the regional influence of rival powers such as Iran, Russia and China, as Iran seeks to extend its influence in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen and Palestine, while Russia is working to strengthen its military and political presence in Syria and other countries in the region, and China's role is growing economically and politically in the Middle East countries, so these moves make the Middle East a competitive arena between world powers, which increases the importance of the region in the American calculations.

In this regard, some experts and politicians believe that the United States of America has succeeded in strengthening its presence as a superpower in the Middle East region by supporting its allies with all available means, and sometimes using force to deter, but this matter needs to achieve tangible political, diplomatic, security and legal results in the long term to achieve security and stability in the Middle East, and then prove to the international community the ability to promote sustainability and achieve sustainable development and peace for people and not vice versa.

For instance, Ambassador Dennis Ross is a former Special Assistant to President Obama, has held senior positions related to the Middle East in four US presidential administrations, said that On October 6, 2023, the Biden administration undoubtedly saw that the Middle East was on the verge of a deep transition towards peace and stability, and a normalization agreement between Saudi Arabia and Israel seemed close at hand, but achieving this goal would bring

⁷⁰ Ibid

⁷¹ Ibid

new possibilities for a deep regional transformation, most notably the opportunity to regain control over Lebanon from Hezbollah, achieve normalization between Israel and Saudi Arabia, along with a complementary defense treaty between the United States and Saudi Arabia, thereby expanding the scope of Arab-Israeli peace, reducing the Iranian threat, liberating Lebanon from Hezbollah's dominance, and dealing meaningfully with the Israeli conflict-the Palestinians, and therefore the realization of these steps would strengthen Also the credibility of the United States on the world stage, which is a crucial element of effective competition with China in the long run⁷².

With reference to the above, it is clear through reviewing this position to assess the American position and the foreign policy of their country towards the aggravation of wars and conflicts in the Middle East region, especially with regard to America's support for Israel at the regional and international levels, and the prospects of this support for people of the region and the world as a whole in order to achieve peace, stability and sustainable development, especially that the Middle East region is the key to international security and peace. America is a power state and it is responsible for protecting international peace and security, not the other way around, and this responsibility must be measured by action on the ground and by results.

But when it comes to Iran and its regional allies, America supports Israel's steps to eliminate Iran's arms in the region, such as Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis and others, and supports Saudi Arabia in its security concerns in the Gulf and the region. In this regard, America does not cooperate with China, Russia and many countries of the Arab and regional international community whom demand to stop the war and protect civilians in order to maintain peace and stability in the region. America insists on using its veto in the UN Security Council when it comes to the Middle East. In return, China sought and supported the cessation of war and the protection of civilians to maintain international peace and security, and was able to achieve Saudi-Iranian reconciliation to ease tensions between the two parties, in an attempt to address most of the outstanding issues in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Palestine to reach a stable and secure Middle East.

5. The US war on Iran and Chinese efforts to contain the escalation

America and Israel began large-scale air strikes on Iran on Saturday, April 28, 2026, and lasted for more than 40 days. It aimed to destroy Iran's military capabilities and nuclear facilities and overthrow the regime's symbols. Later, the United States and Iran agreed on a two-week truce under the auspices of Pakistan, where efforts are being made by regional and international parties to contain the escalation and stabilize the truce for a longer period in order to reach a comprehensive agreement.

In this context, the Chinese government's special envoy to the Middle East, Mr. Zhai Jun, said that China's efforts to mediate diplomatically in the Middle East will not subside as long as the conflict continues, in this regards the special envoy for the Middle East visited a number of Arab and Gulf countries to contain the escalation, where he confirmed that China's policy towards the Middle East aims to promote reconciliation and peace, and stressed that China is communicating with all parties to resume dialogue and achieve lasting calm and stability⁷³.

And to talk about the further actual measures taken by China in order to contain the escalation and not to expand the scope of the war, China did not support a draft resolution submitted at

⁷² دينس روس، دانا ستروول، ديفيد شينكر: السياسة الأمريكية في الشرق الأوسط بعد 7 أكتوبر: نظرة إلى الماضي والمستقبل، معهد واشنطن لسياسة الشرق الأدنى، واشنطن، 7 أكتوبر 2024.

⁷³ 2026-03-23 21:21:30|arabic.news.cn. Chinese envoy: China's diplomatic mediation efforts in the Middle East will not subside as long as the conflict continues.

the UN Security Council on April 7, 2026, which was submitted by Bahrain and supported by the United States, aimed at justifying the use of force by all parties for the safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz, which was controlled by Iran and declared closed due to the war. China believes that the decision will lead to further escalation and the expansion of the circle of war, especially that the decision gives America the right to make alliances to use force in this regard, stressing that international waterways should remain safe and out of any conflicts. The only way to do this is through dialogue and understanding, not the use of force. Furthermore, Chinese president Xi Jinping put forward a four-point vision on maintaining and strengthening peace and stability in the Middle East: adhering to the principle of peaceful coexistence, respecting the sovereignty of states, adhering to the rule of international law, and reconciling development and security, because security is a prerequisite for development, and development is a guarantee of security.

This confirms that China's diplomacy seeks to promote reconciliation and stability in the Middle East region, as it has already sponsored the Saudi-Iranian reconciliation agreement, as well as the Beijing Declaration to achieve reconciliation between the Palestinians in the framework of supporting a political solution to the Palestinian issue, and contain the escalation in the Palestinian Territories, as it is an essential pillar to promote peace and stability in the region. Besides, Affirming respect for the sovereignty of states and non-interference in their affairs or aggression, and that everyone is equal before the rule of international law in rights and duties.

Therefore, China's diplomatic efforts are committed to upholding the sovereignty of countries, non-aggression or interference in their affairs, as well as adherence to the law and the outcomes of international consensus. Unlike, for example, America, which takes measures and steps that could endanger international peace and security, such as striking Iran without a mandate from the United Nations, as well as ignored international law and the decisions of the international consensus in this regard.

Findings and Discussion

China's foreign policy has played an active role in achieving reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and this has made neighboring countries feel satisfied with the completion of this historic agreement. This is considered as a roadmap to start achieving understanding, dialogue and joint action among many countries to reduce the conflicts and tensions that many countries in the region are going through. And this is certainly in line with the goals and aspirations of the Chinese "Belt and Road" Initiative, in which most Arab and Islamic countries and Iran have become key partners.

The cooperation agreement within the framework of the "Belt and Road" Initiative has certainly helped to bring the views between Saudi Arabia and Iran closer through China's active diplomatic efforts to achieve this historic agreement. This will be a prelude to achieving a community of common destiny in the new era between China and the Arab and Islamic countries and Iran, especially since the strategic partnership agreements between China and those countries have become linked to the strategic development plans of many of them in the coming years.

There has become specificity in Arab-Chinese relations, including relations between China and Saudi Arabia, where significant progress has been made in implementing the outputs of the first Sino-Arab initiative held in Riyadh in December 2022, especially emphasizing the importance of the three global initiatives, security, civilization and development, to build a community of common destiny in the new era. This also applies to China-Iran relations, as Iran has become a strategic partner of China in the region, a founding member of the "Belt

and Road" Initiative. Accordingly, this will be reflected in the strengthening of cooperation and understanding in international and regional relations, and therefore seek to ensure respect for the sovereignty and rights of states, and the resolution of disputes through dialogue and peaceful negotiation and rejection of aggression. This is in line with the charter and principles of the United Nations and international law.

And to consolidate this step and embody a better future, international actors in the region, such as the United States of America and others, should cooperate with China and with the pivotal countries in the region, such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt, Qatar, and others, with the aim of building on what has been achieved, and moving to resolve outstanding issues and end conflicts. And then achieve regional and international peace.

This confirms that China's diplomatic efforts seek to achieve reconciliation and solidarity between all parties in the region in order to promote peace and stability in to preserve the sovereignty and independence of states, the acquisition and capabilities of people, as well as embodying the principles of international relations in a proper manner based on equality and respect for others.

Conclusion

There is an interest in Chinese foreign policy to promote peace and stability between all parties in the Middle East, especially between Saudi Arabia and Iran, because of the importance of reflecting on other issues for resolution. Besides, there is an active role for Chinese diplomacy to achieve reconciliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and thus predict a better future for the development of relations between them in all fields, and the restoration of diplomatic relations within the framework of international relations. In addition, strengthen the relationship with China for both countries within the strategic partnership within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative.

On the other hand, there are some obstacles to the effectiveness of this reconciliation in the required sense, which is the lack of cooperation between America and the relevant regional parties with China's efforts to promote understanding and dialogue with all parties to resolve most issues in the region. The US position continues to ignore the resolution of outstanding issues with Iran, and focus on the relationship with Saudi Arabia and Israel to strengthen leverage and support allies. We witnessed this recently when America struck Iran without an international mandate, which led to a decline in the growth of the global economy and also threatened the sovereignty of states, people's lives and their national gains, such as the events in Iran, the Gulf States, Lebanon and other countries.

Therefore, China's diplomatic efforts in comparison with the US efforts in this regard are more effective and realistic to strive to create a good environment between Saudi Arabia and Iran in bilateral relations. Thus, enhancing dialogue, consultation and coordination between them to resolve most of the relevant issues of the region, and then achieve security, peace and stability in the Middle East.

This confirms that there is an urgent need for cooperation and joint action to protect the sovereignty and rights of states within the principles of international relations within the framework of international law, away from exclusivity and the protection of private interests at the expense of others.

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The Hajj Incident: On December 11, 1943, Saudi Arabia executed an Iranian pilgrim, claiming that he had thrown filth on the Kaaba in Mecca. Iran maintained that the young man had vomited due to extreme heat, that the act was excusable, and that it was not intentional.

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