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February 6, 1985

National Security  
Study Directive 4-85

U.S. Arms Transfer Policy for the Middle East (U)

Introduction

This National Security Study Directive establishes the guidelines for a review of U.S. arms transfer policy for the nations of the Middle East. The purpose of this review is to develop a comprehensive Middle East arms transfer strategy consistent with NSDD-5 and NSDD-99 in support of twin U.S. goals of peace and regional stability. Specifically, the strategy will consider how we can best integrate arms transfers with our military strategy and political policies in the area, particularly the peace process.

(S)

Scope

The NSSD will address the topics in the attached Terms of Reference and will make specific recommendations to implement their conclusions. (U)

Administration

The study shall be conducted by an interagency group comprised of representatives of the Departments of State and Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, OMB, and the National Security Council staff. The Department of State will chair the study, which should be completed by March 14, 1985. (S)

FOR THE PRESIDENT:

  
Robert C. McFarlane

Attachment  
Terms of Reference

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**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**U.S. Arms Transfer Policy for the Middle East**

I. Threat Environment: What circumstances create a need for U.S. arms transfers to Middle East/Southwest Asian countries? This subject should be detailed in an Annex. (A partial list of issues is shown below each subsection.)

What are the military threats to U.S. interests within the region now and in the period through 1990?

A. Threats against Israel

- Disruption of Israeli mobilization or military operations (by commando raids, SS-21 attack, etc.)
- Syrian capabilities for rapid mobilization
- Security assistance to Israel and the composition of expected FMS purchases. What will be the effect upon the Arab-Israeli military balance? The study should compare NIE 36/35-84 with Israel's own assessment of the balance and provide rationale for the major differences which exist.

B. Impact of Soviet presence and arms build-up in Syria

- Military impact if Israel is constrained from preemptive attack on installations with Soviet personnel
- Military impact of SA-5, SA-13, and TIN SHIELD air defense equipment
- Military impact of Soviet withdrawal

C. Threats to Jordan

- Syrian threat to Jordan
  - What military requirements do Israel, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Egypt have if called upon to respond to Syrian action against Jordan?
  - What Jordanian defensive preparations would help delay a Syrian attack until outside pressures could be brought to bear?

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- Internal and terrorist threats to Jordan
- D. Threats to Saudi Arabia and the GCC
  - Threat from Syria, Iran, Iraq, Ethiopia, YAR and the PDRY.
  - Threat from the Soviet Union and/or their surrogates.
  - Threats from terrorism and internal subversion.
  - Threats from the Gulf War, such as attacks on Persian Gulf shipping.
- E. Threats to Egypt
  - Libyan subversion or overt attack.
  - Internal threats.
- F. Regional threats to U.S. interests
  - What threat does the construction of the Soviet design airbase at Al Jufrah, Libya, create for U.S. Sixth Fleet forces?
  - What constraints do Libyan submarine and air forces create for the operation of U.S. Sixth Fleet forces?
  - What dangers are posed to U.S. ships by Soviet naval cooperation with Libya and Syria?
  - Threats to U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf.
- G. What is the Soviet intervention threat in the region?
  - What is the Soviet Naval Aviation and Air Force threat to U.S. Sixth Fleet and potential USCENTCOM deployments?
  - Summarize the Soviet ground force threat to Iran. What military requirements does this create for USCENTCOM if USCENTCOM is to prevent Soviet movement into the oil fields of Iran? of Saudi Arabia?

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II. Relationship of Arms Transfers and Security Cooperation to Military Strategy and Regional Security. Using NSDD-5, NSDD-32 and NSDD-99 as a baseline, analyze the role that U.S. arms transfers can have in supporting our military strategy for the area and the enhancement of regional stability. Among the topics that should be addressed are:

- A. Enhancing indigenous capabilities to deal with internal subversion and terrorism.
- B. Enhancing indigenous capabilities to deal with intra-regional threats (e.g., Jordan's defense against Syria) and extra-regional threats (e.g., Saudi defense against Soviet attack).
- C. Enhancing capabilities of regional powers (e.g., Egypt, Jordan) to give military support to friendly states in the area.
- D. Enhancing the ability of regional states to structure collective defense, e.g., the GCC.
- E. Enhancing the capability of the U.S. to project and support U.S. forces into the area should deterrence and indigenous forces fail. This should include prepositioning, joint contingency planning, interoperability, and joint exercises.
- F. Fulfillment of prior commitments.

The study should discuss whether and to what extent U.S. arms transfers support those goals and diminish shortfalls in capabilities to meet the threats described in Section I. It should analyze the particular types of weapons that would be appropriate in that context for each of the following countries:

- A. Israel.
- B. Egypt.
- C. Sudan.
- D. Jordan.
- E. Saudi Arabia.
- F. Oman.
- G. Other GCC Members.

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The central--though not the exclusive--emphasis of this section will be the addressal of the following specific areas:

A. Types of Equipment:

-- Air defense equipment

1. Review of fighter aircraft sales policy. What are the fighter requirements of the regional states? Should U.S. fighter export policy to Gulf states be changed and, if so, how?
2. What is the utility of STINGER and mobile I-HAWKS in Jordan against possible Syrian attacks? What impact would such weapons in Jordan have on the Israeli ability to concentrate their forces against Syria in the event of a war?
3. What could the sale of early warning/air defense equipment to Egypt do to help the Sixth Fleet deal with Soviet BACKFIRE attacks from Al Jufrah?
4. What effect would the replacement of Saudi LIGHTNING aircraft at Tabuk with advanced U.S. or foreign aircraft have on Israeli air defense requirements? On the overall Arab-Israeli air balance?
5. What is the military utility of STINGERS in Saudi Arabia against the current attacks on Persian Gulf shipping? Against possible Iranian attacks on Saudi oil facilities? Against attacks on other possible targets in Saudi Arabia?

-- Naval equipment

1. What military value would the sale of surface ships to Egypt have against Libyan submarine or mine threats? What is the value of multi-national naval deployments to assist Egypt against the same threat?
2. What military value does the sale of surface ships or air-launched HARPOON to Persian Gulf states have against the current threats? Against projected Iranian threats?

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-- Ground force equipment

1. Given the regional threats, what military rationale exists for the sale of heavy ground force equipment to Saudi Arabia? To Jordan?
2. What forms of ground force equipment best help the Israelis deal with possible surprise attacks from Syria?

B. Supporting U.S. Forces: How does the sale or stockpiling of U.S. equipment in Middle East states help the U.S. if we need to intervene in the region?

- Status of U.S. prepositioning in the region, including prospects for additional agreements in the near term and how implementation can be integrated to reduce or eliminate intra-regional criticism. Would implementation increase criticism?
- What are existing logistical capabilities of regional states to help facilitate the flow of U.S. equipment to Southwest Asia? How could the sale of U.S. equipment augment that capability?
- What is the ability of regional states to provide air defense against preemptive attack in defense of equipment prepositioned there for U.S. use? How could the sale of U.S. equipment augment that capability?
- Under what circumstances would equipment and munitions sold to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, as well as construction of related military facilities, be of value to the U.S. in responding to a Soviet invasion of Iran? Where would it have to be deployed? What prior assurances and arrangements would be necessary?
- What is the military value of equipment and munitions in Jordan for the U.S. in responding to a Soviet invasion of Iran? Of equipment and munitions in Israel?
- What actions can regional powers take to support other friendly states in the area?

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- C. What is the ability of regional states to absorb proposed arms transfers? This assessment should include financial, personnel, and technical considerations.
- D. What is the relationship of U.S. arms transfers to the Middle East to U.S. global arms transfer policy?

III. Political Strategy and the Peace Process: How can U.S. arms transfer policy and regional strategic cooperation be integrated with U.S. efforts to advance the peace process?

- A. What is the likely effect of the sale of advanced arms to Israel and the Arab states upon their willingness to support the peace process?
- B. How do Israeli military capabilities affect its policies regarding the peace process?
- C. Should the peace process affect the content and timing of specific arms sales? If so, how?
- D. What specific actions by Israel or the Arab states relevant to the peace process may have military or security consequences for the participants?
  - Increases the threat of conventional or terrorist attacks on them.
  - Can specific arms sales be keyed to these threats?
  - Other forms of security cooperation which could support the peace process.
- E. Pros and cons of U.S. security initiatives in advance of peace process progress.

IV. Conclusions/Recommendations:

- A. What arms transfers are recommended to meet the needs of the Middle East countries, particularly Jordan and Saudi Arabia?
- B. How will these transfers affect Israel's security over the next five years, assuming Israel realizes its current military procurement programs?

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- C. How should the timing and content of these arms transfers be set in order to give optimum support to U.S. positions in the peace process?
- D. What should U.S. strategy be for presenting the recommended arms transfers to Congress?
- E. Recommend a public affairs strategy to enable broad understanding of these policies domestically and abroad.

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