

## Headlines:

- **In advance of Trump's visit, US finalising Massive Arms Deal for Saudi Arabia**
- **Erdogan upset over American Arming of Syria's Kurds**
- **Chinese Belt and Road Forum points to the substitution of Western Economic Imperialism by Chinese Economic Imperialism**

## Details:

### **In advance of Trump's visit, US finalising Massive Arms Deal for Saudi Arabia**

Saudi Arabia is not only to host Donald Trump's first foreign visit as US President, but is also expected to be the recipient of a massive arms deal totalling more than \$100 billion. According to Reuters:

*"The United States is close to completing a series of arms deals for Saudi Arabia totalling more than \$100 billion (77.6 billion pounds), a senior White House official said on Friday, a week ahead of President Donald Trump's planned visit to Riyadh.*

*The official, who spoke to Reuters on condition of anonymity, said the arms package could end up surpassing more than \$300 billion over a decade to help Saudi Arabia boost its defensive capabilities while still maintaining U.S. ally Israel's qualitative military edge over its neighbours.*

*"We are in the final stages of a series of deals," the official said. The package is being developed to coincide with Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia. Trump leaves for the kingdom on May 19, the first stop on his maiden international trip."*

The priority that the US administration attaches to Saudi Arabia is not only for earning revenue from arms sales. This administration has intensified Obama's efforts to make Saudi Arabia its principal regional ally. The nature of the arms sales provides some clue to the real objective that the US is seeking to realise from Saudi Arabia, as mentioned by Reuters in the same article referenced above:

*"The package includes American arms and maintenance, ships, air missile defence and maritime security, the official said. "We'll see a very substantial commitment ... In many ways it is intended to build capabilities for the threats they face."*

In fact, China's Silk Sea Route skirts the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, and the war in Yemen, together with naval equipment, will enable Saudi to project power across sea trade routes targeted by the Chinese.

*"Trump will discuss how to counter the threat from Islamic State militants, the war in Yemen and threats of ballistic missiles and maritime shipping in the Red Sea, the official said."*

As America has come to discover its own military weakness, it is increasingly dependent on agent states to do its fighting. Now Saudi is being used not only for war within Muslims but to strategically control and deter Chinese expansionism.

### **Erdogan upset over American Arming of Syria's Kurds**

After the Turkish government's betrayal of the Syrian revolutionaries, enabling the fall of eastern Aleppo, President Erdogan was himself betrayed by America, which is directly arming Syria's Kurds. According to the Guardian:

*“The Turkish president will seek to persuade Donald Trump to reverse his “mistaken and shortsighted” plan to arm Kurdish forces in Syria, announced as part of an American attempt to crush Islamic State’s final stronghold in Raqqa.*

*US officials this week announced a deal to directly supply arms to the People’s Protection Units (YPG), a Kurdish militia that Turkey has long argued is a terrorist organisation affiliated with its own homegrown Kurdish insurgent group, the Kurdistan Workers’ party (PKK).*

*In a wide-ranging speech in London on Friday, the Turkish prime minister, Binyali Yildirim, described the Americans’ chosen partners as “not humans. They are machines that kill people. They are people that will fight for whichever government gives them money.”*

How can the Turkish government accuse America of betrayal when they have themselves betrayed the Syrian revolutionaries? Once again, America is masking its own weakness by using others to fight its wars.

### **Chinese Belt and Road Forum points to the substitution of Western Economic Imperialism by Chinese Economic Imperialism**

In another indication of declining American global influence, world leaders are gathering this weekend for China’s Belt and Road initiative, a grand-scale trans-continental infrastructure programme within Asia and beyond. According to an article at the Foreign Policy website:

*“With Washington in disarray, the Belt and Road Forum kicking off this weekend in Beijing should be a blaring wake up call that U.S. leadership in Asia is in peril. For two days, China will play host to more than 1,200 delegates from 110 countries, including 29 heads of state. The event will be centered on China’s “One Belt, One Road” program — more recently rebranded as the “Belt Road Initiative” (BRI) — which aims to provide much-needed infrastructure to connect Asia, the Middle East, and Europe.*

*Announced by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013, BRI is nothing if not ambitious, with plans to involve upwards of 65 countries and marshal in the neighborhood of \$1 trillion. While skepticism is warranted about the novelty, value, and feasibility of many of the proposed projects, leaders around the world — with nary a better prospect of satisfying their development needs — are pining to take part. This is only the latest manifestation of Chinese leadership at a time when U.S. commitment to the region is less certain than ever.”*

This vast Chinese programme is inspired by the historic ‘Silk Route’, an economic corridor linking the Euro-Asian-African landmass through Muslim lands, and delivering prosperity throughout the world. But the Chinese initiative differs significantly from its Islamic predecessor because of the Capitalist economic principles that China has rapidly adopted from the West.

Capitalism preaches free trade and open markets but, in reality, these slogans conceal a deep mercantilist propensity that is expressed internationally in the form of a voracious imperialist agenda. Where Islamic economic principles guaranteed genuine prosperity for all, Capitalism ensures that all benefit accrues to the dominant state, as wealth is rapidly depleted from colonial territories. The British in India, for example, developed extensive rail and canal infrastructure but the consequence of this was the rapacious extraction of Indian wealth resulting in the wholesale impoverishment of the world’s leading economic region within a century.

Only the Islamic ideology can genuinely provide prosperity for all, as Muslims are fundamentally motivated not by worldly self-interest but by spiritual elevation. With the re-establishment of the righteous Islamic Khilafah (Caliphate) on the method of the Prophet (saw), the world will witness again justice and fairness for all.