

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 1146

To counter Saudi Arabia’s possible pursuit of weapons of mass destruction,  
and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 15, 2021

Mr. MARKEY (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY) introduced the following bill;  
which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

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## A BILL

To counter Saudi Arabia’s possible pursuit of weapons of  
mass destruction, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Stopping Activities Un-  
5 derpinning Development In Weapons of Mass Destruction  
6 Act” or the “SAUDI WMD Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

8 Congress makes the following findings:

9 (1) The People’s Republic of China (in this Act  
10 referred to as “China”), became a full-participant of

1 the Nuclear Suppliers Group in 2004, committing it  
2 to apply a strong presumption of denial in exporting  
3 nuclear-related items that a foreign country could  
4 divert to a nuclear weapons program.

5 (2) China also committed to the United States,  
6 in November 2000, to abide by the foundational  
7 principles of the 1987 Missile Technology Control  
8 Regime (MTCR) to not “assist, in any way, any  
9 country in the development of ballistic missiles that  
10 can be used to deliver nuclear weapons (i.e., missiles  
11 capable of delivering a payload of at least 500 kilo-  
12 grams to a distance of at least 300 kilometers)”.

13 (3) In the 1980s, China secretly sold the King-  
14 dom of Saudi Arabia (in this Act referred to as  
15 “Saudi Arabia”) conventionally armed DF-3A bal-  
16 listic missiles, and in 2007, reportedly sold Saudi  
17 Arabia dual-use capable DF-21 medium-range bal-  
18 listic missiles of a 300 kilometer, 500 kilogram  
19 range and payload threshold which should have trig-  
20 gered a denial of sale under the MTCR.

21 (4) The 2020 Department of State Report on  
22 the Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Con-  
23 trol, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament Agree-  
24 ments and Commitments found that China “contin-  
25 ued to supply MTCR-controlled goods to missile pro-

1 grams of proliferation concern in 2019” and that  
2 the United States imposed sanctions on nine Chinese  
3 entities for covered missile transfers to Iran.

4 (5) A June 5, 2019, press report indicated that  
5 China allegedly provided assistance to Saudi Arabia  
6 in the development of a ballistic missile facility,  
7 which if confirmed, would violate the purpose of the  
8 MTCR and run contrary to the longstanding United  
9 States policy priority to prevent weapons of mass de-  
10 struction proliferation in the Middle East.

11 (6) The Arms Export and Control Act of 1976  
12 (Public Law 93–329) requires the President to sanc-  
13 tion any foreign person or government who know-  
14 ingly “exports, transfers, or otherwise engages in the  
15 trade of any MTCR equipment or technology” to a  
16 country that does not adhere to the MTCR.

17 (7) China concluded two nuclear cooperation  
18 agreements with Saudi Arabia in 2012 and 2017, re-  
19 spectively, which may facilitate China’s bid to build  
20 two reactors in Saudi Arabia to generate 2.9  
21 Gigawatt-electric (GWe) of electricity.

22 (8) On August 4, 2020, a press report revealed  
23 the alleged existence of a previously undisclosed ura-  
24 nium yellowcake extraction facility in Saudi Arabia  
25 allegedly constructed with the assistance of China,

1 which if confirmed, would indicate significant  
2 progress by Saudi Arabia in developing the early  
3 stages of the nuclear fuel cycle that precede uranium  
4 enrichment.

5 (9) Saudi Arabia's outdated Small Quantities  
6 Protocol and its lack of an in force Additional Pro-  
7 tocol to its International Atomic Energy Agency  
8 (IAEA) Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement se-  
9 verely curtails IAEA inspections, which has led the  
10 Agency to call upon Saudi Arabia to either rescind  
11 or update its Small Quantities Protocol.

12 (10) On January 19, 2021, in response to a  
13 question about Saudi Arabia's reported ballistic mis-  
14 sile cooperation with China, incoming Secretary of  
15 State Antony J. Blinken stated that "we want to  
16 make sure that to the best of our ability all of our  
17 partners and allies are living up to their obligations  
18 under various nonproliferation and arms control  
19 agreements and, certainly, in the case of Saudi Ara-  
20 bia that is something we will want to look at".

21 (11) On March 15, 2018, the Crown Prince of  
22 Saudi Arabia, Mohammad bin-Salman, stated that  
23 "if Iran developed a nuclear bomb, we would follow  
24 suit as soon as possible," raising questions about  
25 whether a Saudi Arabian nuclear program would re-

1 main exclusively peaceful, particularly in the absence  
2 of robust international IAEA safeguards.

3 (12) An August 9, 2019, study by the United  
4 Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights  
5 found that the Saudi Arabia-led military coalition  
6 airstrikes in Yemen and its restrictions on the flow  
7 of humanitarian assistance to the country, both of  
8 which have disproportionately impacted civilians,  
9 may be violations of international humanitarian law.

10 **SEC. 3. DETERMINATION OF POSSIBLE MTCR TRANSFERS**  
11 **TO SAUDI ARABIA.**

12 (a) MTCR TRANSFERS.—Not later than 30 days  
13 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President  
14 shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress  
15 a written determination, and any documentation to sup-  
16 port that determination detailing—

17 (1) whether any foreign person knowingly ex-  
18 ported, transferred, or engaged in trade of any item  
19 designated under Category I of the MTCR Annex  
20 item with Saudi Arabia in the previous three fiscal  
21 years; and

22 (2) the sanctions the President has imposed or  
23 intends to impose pursuant to section 11B(b) of the  
24 Export Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C.  
25 4612(b)) against any foreign person who knowingly

1 engaged in the export, transfer, or trade of that item  
2 or items.

3 (b) WAIVER.—Notwithstanding any provision of  
4 paragraphs (3) through (7) of section 11(B)(b) of the Ex-  
5 port Administration Act of 1979 (50 U.S.C. 4612(b)), the  
6 President may only waive the application of sanctions  
7 under such section with respect to Saudi Arabia if that  
8 country is verifiably determined to no longer possess an  
9 item designated under Category I of the MTCR Annex re-  
10 ceived in the previous three fiscal years.

11 (c) FORM OF REPORT.—The determination required  
12 under subsection (a) shall be unclassified with a classified  
13 annex.

14 **SEC. 4. PROHIBITION ON UNITED STATES ARMS SALES TO**  
15 **SAUDI ARABIA IF IT IMPORTS NUCLEAR**  
16 **TECHNOLOGY WITHOUT SAFEGUARDS.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—The United States shall not sell,  
18 transfer, or authorize licenses for export of any item des-  
19 ignated under Category III, IV, VII, or VIII on the United  
20 States Munitions List pursuant to section 38(a)(1) of the  
21 Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. 2778(a)(1)) to Saudi  
22 Arabia, other than ground-based missile defense systems,  
23 if Saudi Arabia has, in the previous 3 fiscal years—

24 (1) knowingly imported any item classified as  
25 “plants for the separation of isotopes of uranium”

1 or “plants for the reprocessing of irradiated nuclear  
2 reactor fuel elements” under Part 110 of the Nu-  
3 clear Regulatory Commission export licensing au-  
4 thority; or

5 (2) engaged in nuclear cooperation related to  
6 the construction of any nuclear-related fuel cycle fa-  
7 cility or activity that has not been notified to the  
8 IAEA and would be subject to complementary access  
9 if an Additional Protocol was in force.

10 (b) WAIVER.—The Secretary of State may waive the  
11 prohibition under subsection (a) with respect to a foreign  
12 country if the Secretary submits to the appropriate com-  
13 mittees of Congress a written certification that contains  
14 a determination, and any relevant documentation on which  
15 the determination is based, that Saudi Arabia—

16 (1) has brought into force an Additional Pro-  
17 tocol to the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agree-  
18 ment based on the model described in IAEA  
19 INFCIRC/540;

20 (2) has concluded a civilian nuclear cooperation  
21 agreement with the United States under section 123  
22 of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2153)  
23 or another supplier that prohibits the enrichment of  
24 uranium or separation of plutonium on its own terri-  
25 tory; and

1           (3) has rescinded its Small Quantities Protocol  
2           and is not found by the IAEA Board of Governors  
3           to be in noncompliance with its Comprehensive Safe-  
4           guards Agreement.

5           (c) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this Act  
6           shall be construed as superseding the obligation of the  
7           President under section 502B(a)(2) or section 620I(a) of  
8           the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C.  
9           2304(a)(2), 22 U.S.C. 2378–1(a)), respectively, to not  
10          furnish security assistance to Saudi Arabia or any country  
11          if it—

12           (1) engages in a consistent pattern of gross vio-  
13          lations of internationally recognized human rights;  
14          or

15           (2) prohibits or otherwise restricts, directly or  
16          indirectly, the transport or delivery of United States  
17          humanitarian assistance.

18 **SEC. 5. MIDDLE EAST NONPROLIFERATION STRATEGY.**

19          (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Starting with the first report  
20          after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary  
21          of State and the Secretary of Energy, in consultation with  
22          the Director of National Intelligence, shall provide the ap-  
23          propriate committees of Congress, as an appendix to the  
24          Report on the Adherence to and Compliance with Arms  
25          Control, Nonproliferation, and Disarmament Agreements



1 and Commitments, a report on MTCR compliance and a  
2 United States strategy to prevent the spread of nuclear  
3 weapons and missiles in the Middle East.

4 (b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under sub-  
5 section (a) shall include the following elements:

6 (1) An assessment of China’s compliance, in the  
7 previous fiscal year, with its November 2000 com-  
8 mitment to abide by the MTCR and United States  
9 diplomatic efforts to address non-compliance.

10 (2) A description of every foreign person that,  
11 in the previous fiscal year, engaged in the export,  
12 transfer, or trade of MTCR items to a country that  
13 is a non-MTCR adherent, and a description of the  
14 sanctions the President imposed pursuant to section  
15 11B(b) of the Export Administration Act of 1979  
16 (50 U.S.C. 4612(b)).

17 (3) A detailed strategy to prevent the prolifera-  
18 tion of ballistic missile and sensitive nuclear tech-  
19 nology in the Middle East and North Africa from  
20 China and other foreign countries, including the fol-  
21 lowing elements:

22 (A) An assessment of the proliferation  
23 risks associated with concluding or renewing a  
24 civilian nuclear cooperation “123” agreement  
25 with any country in the Middle-East and North

1 Africa and the risks of such if that same equip-  
2 ment and technology is sourced from a foreign  
3 state.

4 (B) An update on United States bilateral  
5 and multilateral diplomatic actions to com-  
6 mence negotiations on a Weapons of Mass De-  
7 struction Free Zone (WMDFZ) since the 2015  
8 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review Con-  
9 ference.

10 (C) A description of United States Govern-  
11 ment efforts to achieve global adherence and  
12 compliance with the Nuclear Suppliers Group,  
13 MTCR, and the 2002 International Code of  
14 Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation  
15 guidelines.

16 (4) An account of the briefings to the appro-  
17 priate committees of Congress in the reporting pe-  
18 riod detailing negotiations on any new or renewed ci-  
19 vilian nuclear cooperation “123” agreement with any  
20 country consistent with the intent of the Atomic En-  
21 ergy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.).

22 (c) FORM OF REPORT.—The report required under  
23 subsection (a) shall be unclassified with a classified annex.

24 **SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.**

25 In this Act:

1           (1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CON-  
2 GRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Con-  
3 gress” means—

4           (A) the Select Committee on Intelligence of  
5 the Senate;

6           (B) the Committee on Foreign Relations of  
7 the Senate;

8           (C) the Select Committee on Intelligence of  
9 the House of Representative; and

10          (D) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of  
11 the House of Representatives.

12          (2) FOREIGN PERSON; PERSON.—The terms  
13 “foreign person” and “‘person’” mean—

14           (A) a natural person that is an alien;

15           (B) a corporation, business association,  
16 partnership, society, trust, or any other non-  
17 governmental entity, organization, or group,  
18 that is organized under the laws of a foreign  
19 country or has its principal place of business in  
20 a foreign country;

21           (C) any foreign governmental entity oper-  
22 ating as a business enterprise; and

23           (D) any successor, subunit, or subsidiary  
24 of any entity described in subparagraph (B) or  
25 (C).

1           (3) MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA.—The  
2           term “Middle East and North Africa” means those  
3           countries that are included in the Area of Responsi-  
4           bility of the Assistant Secretary of State for Near  
5           Eastern Affairs.

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