

Mohammed bin Salman

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Mohammed bin Salman

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ سَلْمَانَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْعَظِيزِ آلِ سَعُودٍ

[A photograph of Mohammed bin Salman aged 34](#)

Mohammed in 2019

[Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia](#)

Tenure 21 June 2017 – present
Predecessor Muhammad bin Nayef
Monarch [Salman bin Abdulaziz](#)

[Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia](#)

Tenure 27 September 2022 – present
Predecessor Salman bin Abdulaziz
Monarch Salman bin Abdulaziz

[First Deputy Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia](#)

Tenure 21 June 2017 – 27 September 2022
Predecessor Muhammad bin Nayef
Successor *Vacant*
Monarch Salman bin Abdulaziz

[Deputy Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia](#)

Second Deputy Prime Minister

Tenure 29 April 2015 – 21 June 2017
Predecessor Muhammad bin Nayef
Successor *Vacant*
Monarch Salman bin Abdulaziz

Minister of Defense

Tenure 23 January 2015 – 27 September 2022
Predecessor Salman bin Abdulaziz
Successor Khalid bin Salman
Prime Minister Salman bin Abdulaziz

Born 31 August 1985 (age 39)
[Riyadh](#), Saudi Arabia

Spouse Sara bint Mashour Al Saud
(m. 2008)

Issue Prince Salman
Prince Mashour
Princess Fahda
Princess Noura

Prince Abdulaziz

Full name

Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz bin Abdul Rahman

House

[Saud](#)

Father

[Salman of Saudi Arabia](#)

Mother

Fahda bint Falah Al Hithlain

Signature

[Mohammed bin Salman](#) [مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ سَلْمَانَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ آلِ سَعُودٍ](#)
's signature

Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud ([Arabic](#): مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ سَلْمَانَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ آلِ سَعُودٍ; born 31 August 1985) is the [Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia](#), First Deputy Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia^[1] and the youngest minister of defense in the world.^[2] In September 2022, he was named the [Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia](#).^[3] Mohammed is also chief of the [House of Saud](#) royal court, and chairman of the Council for Economic and Development Affairs. He has been described as the power behind the throne of his father, King [Salman](#).^[4]

Mohammed was appointed [Crown Prince](#) in June 2017, following the decision from Muhammad bin Nayef to remove himself from all positions, making Mohammad the [heir apparent](#) to the throne.^{[5][6][7]} Since his appointment as crown prince in 2017, Mohammed has introduced a series of social and economic reforms. These include: curtailing the influence of the [Wahhabi](#) religious establishment by restricting the powers of the religious police and improving women's rights, the removal of the ban on female drivers in 2018 and weakening the male-guardianship system in 2019. His Saudi Vision 2030 program aims to reduce the Saudi economy's reliance on oil through investment in non-oil sectors including technology and tourism; however, the economy remains heavily dependent on oil.^[8]

Mohammed's international image is complex. Some in the [Western world](#) sees him as a hope for the modernization of [Saudi Arabia](#), with ambitious plans for the kingdom, such as 2030 Vision, but at the same time as a human rights violator. On the foreign politics, Mohammed led the Saudi participation on [the war in Yemen](#), and made closer relations with [Russia](#), [China](#) and [Iran](#).

Local politics

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2030 vision

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On [April 25, 2016](#), bin Salman announced the launch of Vision 2030.^[9] The vision is a main part of [Saudi Arabia's](#) plan to ensure its economic growth for the upcoming decades, specifically reducing the [oil](#) as a main source of

income, and encourage economic developments on diverse sectors. ^[10] The vision was built around three primary aspects: a vibrant [society](#), a thriving [economy](#) and an ambitious [nation](#). ^[11]

As for a vibrant society, the 2030 Vision is about creating a [society](#) where the citizens are enjoying a good [quality of life](#). Practically, to achieve this goal, the plan aims to improve the [healthcare](#), [education](#), and [social services](#).

As for a thriving economy, the 2030 vision is willing to create a strong and growing [economy](#) for the kingdom. The plan aims to achieve this goal by diverse the economic sectors, investing in industries like [tourism](#) and [technology](#).

As for an ambitious nation, the 2030 vision is about making Saudi Arabia an influences country on the world arena. The plan aims to achieve this by promoting Saudi Arabia as a global leader in areas like [energy](#), [finance](#), and [culture](#), and by working with other countries to address global challenges.

Modernization

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Mohammad bin Salman believes Saudi Arabia should adopt a moderate version of the [Islam](#). ^[12] During a television speech on [Ramadan](#), bin Salman justified his views towards the Islam saying the strict views of [Islam in Saudi Arabia](#) is a major obstacle to his plans for the modernization of Saudi Arabia, such as 2030 vision. ^[13] bin Salman also supports holding events that were previously considered unacceptable, for example, live music performances, [festival](#) and sports competitions, such as [Saudi Arabian Grand Prix](#), first held on [2021](#). ^[14]

Human Rights

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Since [2017](#), hundreds of citizens have been arrested in the kingdom, including social networks influencers, journalists, clerics, and tycoons. In addition, few of bin Salman's cousins were arrested as well. ^[15]

In [May 2018](#), seven activists was arrested, including [Eman al-Nafjan](#) and [Loujain al-Hathloul](#). [Human Rights Watch](#) claimed bin Salman is responsible for the arrests, and the target is spreading fear among those who criticizes bin Salman agendas. ^[16]

In [October 2018](#), bin Salman received global outcry for being accused of having a role in the killing of [The Washington Post](#) journalist [Jamal Khashoggi](#). ^[17] bin Salman later interviewed to the [American Television program 60 Minutes](#) and denied the accusations. ^[1]

Foreign politics

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War in Yemen

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Background

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Mohammad bin Salman wants the Kingdom to play a bigger role in the [region](#) against the influence of [Iran](#), [the war in Yemen](#) he started to show this power of Saudi Arabia.^[18] In September 2014 the Houthis conquered the Yemeni capital [Sana'a](#), which led to [President Hadi](#) fleeing the country.^[18] The Saudis led the group of [Arab](#) states to bring Hadi back to power, as he had asked for help basing it on [article 51 of the UN Charter](#) and because the [Houthis](#) are close with Iran Saudi Arabia's regional rival.^[18] The Arab group was led by Saudi Arabia and had as participants [Egypt](#), [Bahrain](#), [Kuwait](#), [Qatar](#), the [United Arab Emirates](#), [Jordan](#), [Sudan](#) and [Morocco](#), but only Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are still very actively involved in the conflict.^[19]

Course of the war

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The Saudis hoped that it would be a quick [invasion](#) but deeper into the land of the Houthis it showed that a quick victory for the coalition would not be the case.^[19] Under [President Obama](#) the [US](#) did support but not help the Arab states, under [President Trump](#) the US became more involved.^[18] While the ties between the Houthis and Iran was weak at the start of the invasion it became very strong as the war went on, and as Iran is the regional rival of Saudi Arabia stopping the conflict would mean an increase of power for Iran therefore the Saudis stay involved even though it is very costly.^[19] The group of nations is now divided with the Saudis bombing in the north of Yemen and the United Arab Emirates supporting group in the south of Yemen.^[20] As of 2023 peace talks between the Saudis and Houthis are happening and making progress.^[21]

Relations with great/regional powers

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Russia

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President Putin and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in 2018

Under bin Salman rule Saudi Arabia and [Russia](#) are allies in the [OPEC+](#), Saudi Arabia is also [investing](#) in Russia, this also leads to better relations between the two.^[22] This relation has not changed since the [2022 conflict in Ukraine](#), with \$500 million being invested in [Gazprom](#), [Rosneft](#) and [Lukoil](#) after the conflict had already started even though western countries put [sanctions](#) on these companies.^[23]

United States of America

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Under President Trump

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President Trump and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in 2017

When President Trump got to power the relations between the US and Saudi Arabia were bad, President Obama had pressured Saudi Arabia for diplomacy with Iran and to rely less on the US for defense.^[24] President Trump was just like bin Salman in its view of Iran as the greatest danger in the Middle East, and also disagreed with Obama's policy in the Middle East.^[25] President Trump let other countries do their internal affairs without pressuring on human rights for example, which is convenient for bin Salman as human rights or not very good in Saudi Arabia.^[24] As President Trump saw Iran as the biggest danger in the Middle East he saw the Houthis as Iranian puppets and thus supported and assisted the Saudi invasion.^[18] President Trump also spread confusion about the [CIA](#) report on the killing of Kashoggi about him doubting if bin Salman really gave the order to kill and sold [weapons](#) to Saudi Arabia.^[26]

Under President Biden

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When [President Biden](#) was still campaigning for president he said he would treat the bin Salman as the pariah Biden called bin Salman because of the poor [human rights](#) situation, and the killing of journalist Kashoggi.^[26] One of President Biden's first acts as president was releasing the CIA report that blamed bin Salman of giving the order to kill Kashoggi, and before the report was published, President Biden called with King Salman saying he is the [King](#) and official leader of the country and not bin Salman, the Saudis rejected the report.^[26] Biden also paused the sale of [ammunition](#) to the Saudi Arabia further lowering relations with Saudi Arabia.^[26] In 2022 and

2023 the [OPEC](#) started producing less oil leading to negative reactions from the Biden administration.^[27]

China

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The relations between Saudi Arabia and [China](#) are good as China is Saudi Arabia's largest [trading](#) partner and with large investments such as an [Aramco](#) joint venture of \$10 billion dollar and 35 other investments worth \$28 billion in total.^[28] China did not blame Mohammed bin Salman for the murder of Khashoggi and for the [human suffering](#) in [Yemen](#) and Saudi Arabia stays silent or says China has the right to defend itself or to fight 'terrorism' as the way China [treats its Muslim Uighur minority](#).^[28] That Saudi Arabia's relation with China is good was also visible in the diplomatic deal that Saudi Arabia made with [Iran](#) in talks in China.^[29]

Iran

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After the [Iranian revolution in 1979](#), a rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran over the leadership over the [Islamic world](#) emerged, and after Iran tried to export revolution over the region Saudi Arabia feared a revolution.^[30] It led to a rivalry but in 2011 this rivalry became much harder as [uprising in the region](#) led to the two supporting opposite sides in conflicts.^[30] In 2016 after a [Shi'ite](#) cleric [Sheik Nimr al-Nimr](#) was executed by Saudi Arabia after demonstrations and the storming of the Saudi [Embassy](#) in Tehran by protesters, this led to the cut of diplomatic ties between the two.^[31] In 2023 an unexpected deal between the two was signed after diplomatic talks hosted by China, in which they would again open their embassies, bin Salman likely made this deal to support his Vision 2030 and the relation with Iran was an obstacle for foreign investment.^[32]

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