

He Lives! Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman's First Foreign Trip Since His Disappearance Will be to Moscow

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Exposing the rumors about his supposed "death" as nothing more than fake news spread by his fearful enemies in the region, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman's first foreign trip since emerging from his suspicious disappearance will be to Moscow, where President Putin is keen to strengthen his country's partnership with the Wahhabi Kingdom as he "balances" Iran in the Mideast and seeks to guarantee Saudi support for the Russian peace plan in Syria.

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman, popularly known simply by his initials as MBS, [will attend the World Cup opening ceremony in Moscow](#) next Thursday on 14 June, representing his first foreign trip since emerging from his suspicious disappearance. His country's regional state and non-state enemies had a field day spreading loads of fake news over the past month imagining that MBS was killed in a failed coup attempt in late April, with a fabricated "death" notice even emerging on social media last week purporting that the Kingdom's de-facto ruler was already buried. To the disdain of his many regional critics and the utter embarrassment of everyone who participated in the fake news campaign about his death, MBS is clearly very much alive and dedicated to advancing the [fast-moving and full-spectrum Russian-Saudi rapprochement](#) as soon as he foreseeably can.

From Surviving A Failed Coup To Flying To The Kremlin

It might never be known exactly what happened to the Crown Prince over the last five or so weeks, but chances are that some of his enemies' reports about his status were actually correct, in that he may have indeed been injured during a failed coup attempt and has spent the interim period recovering from his critical injuries. The author himself immediately suspected that something of the sort transpired and publicly wrote as much in his analysis at the time speculating whether "[Saudi Arabia's Drone Scare Might Have Really Been A Coup Attempt](#)", conjecturing that this was the most likely explanation for the unusual gunfire in the Saudi capital that went viral on social media. Remarking that both the US and Iran want MBS out of power for their own separate reasons, it's now proven in hindsight that Tehran was much more eager to see this happen than Washington given that it was the [Resistance-affiliated online community and related media outlets](#), and not the Mainstream Media, which contributed to the fake news campaign about his death.

Whether complicit in the likely failed coup attempt or not, Iran has very solid reasons for wanting to see the Crown Prince dead since the Islamic Republic fears his [Vision 2030 socio-economic reform agenda](#) and [heavy regional geopolitical weight](#), silently acknowledging

that MBS is the only hope for saving Saudi Arabia from an imminent “Arab Spring”-like domestic crisis, much to their consternation. In addition, Iran dislikes that its Russian partner in Syria is now accelerating its rapprochement with Tehran’s hated Wahhabi enemy and even [outright “balancing” against the Islamic Republic](#) in the Mideast’s premier proxy war, passively facilitating countless “Israeli” strikes against the IRGC and Hezbollah in the past two and a half years that have only gained in intensity coincidentally or not during the period of MBS’ absence from the public sphere.

While MBS’ forthcoming trip to Moscow is being billed as an apolitical event to support the Saudi national team in its opening game against Russia next Friday, that’s nothing more than a media cover story for masking the strategic purpose of his visit in learning more about the details of [President Putin’s peace plan for Syria](#). MBS will actually be the fourth regional leader to come to Russia after [Netanyahu](#), [President Assad](#), and Emirati Crown Prince (and MBS’ mentor) [Mohammed Bin Zayed](#) (MBZ), all of whom were presumably treated to a personal briefing about Russia’s post-war vision for a “political solution” in Syria by none other than President Putin himself. Furthermore, it could be inferred that Russia may have discussed the War on Yemen with MBZ because of his country’s leading role in hostilities there, as will probably also be the case when MBS visits too. Just like in Syria, Russia is trying to work behind the scenes in Yemen to [craft a peace plan](#) there that also incorporates a fair degree of “decentralization” and “balancing”.

Squeezing Iran Out Of Syria

From Iran’s geostrategic vantage point as viewed through the Hyper-Realist paradigm of the “19th-Century Great Power Chessboard”, Russia is veritably “balancing” against it in both conflict theaters, though in a [peaceful and pragmatic manner](#) intended to make Moscow the supreme arbiter of Mideast affairs. In any case, Iran certainly won’t assess this as a positive development so long as it stubbornly refuses to “compromise” on its “maximalist” approach to ensuring the post-war military presence of the IRGC and Hezbollah in Syria, something that almost the entire world is opposed to despite it being Damascus’ sovereign right to invite whoever it wants into the country for however long it likes. The fact of the matter is that Iran will inevitably have to concede on this point otherwise Russia will continue passively facilitating “Israel’s” punitive strikes against it until these two enemies’ proxy war turns into a conventional one or Iran is driven out of the Arab Republic completely, which is why it’s in its interests to initiate a “phased withdrawal” sooner than later.

Russia recognizes Iran’s recalcitrance to adhere to this crucial element of President Putin’s unofficial peace plan, and that’s why it’s been coordinating so much with the country’s Zionist enemy and its two Gulf ones of the UAE and Saudi Arabia in order to ensure that enough pressure is put upon it that Tehran is ultimately left with no practical choice other than to comply with this peacemaking move. In view of this, MBS’ visit to Moscow next week takes on a relevantly urgent significance because of Saudi Arabia’s patronage of the last remaining “armed opposition” groups in southern Syria that the Syrian Arab Army (SAA) is preparing to destroy. It was reported that an “Israeli”-Russian-Syrian “gentlemen’s deal” had been struck through Moscow’s mediating efforts whereby Tel Aviv wouldn’t militarily respond to the SAA’s liberation of the country’s territory near the “Israeli”-occupied Golan Heights so long as no IRGC or Hezbollah units participated in this campaign, and Saudi Arabia is presumably the fourth “silent partner” to this agreement because of its influence over these very same “armed opposition” groups.

A Deficit Of Trust

It's therefore natural for President Putin to court MBS in a week's time and explain to him the ins and outs of his peace plan for Syria now that the Crown Prince has evidently recovered from his speculative injuries during what may have likely been a failed coup attempt in late April, but there's also a chance that Iran might throw a monkey wrench in Moscow's plans by unilaterally going against the world's will and taking part in the SAA's liberation operation in order to deliberately obstruct this perquisite step of the peace process. Iran's present leadership - or rather, whoever in its "deep state" is planning its strategies and responsible for executing them - doesn't trust Russia's role in Syria anymore, so it can be expected that they'll react negatively (whether in public or more likely at least in private) to MBS being feted next week.

After all, in the span of only one month, Iranian observers watched in horror as President Putin hosted Netanyahu as his guest of honor on Victory Day, stood side-by-side with President Assad while calling for the withdrawal of all foreign forces (a euphemism that the President's Special Envoy for Syria Alexander Lavrentiev later [confirmed](#) includes "Hezbollah, and of course, the Iranians") from Syria, and then invited MBZ to the Kremlin, so there's a reason why they'll be extremely unhappy and uncomfortable with MBS' upcoming visit. Not only do they suspect (somewhat rightly) that this is aimed against their interests in Syria, but the symbolism of the Crown Prince "rising from the dead" in disproving the Resistance's fake news "wishful thinking" conspiracy about his "death" is embarrassing for everyone who promoted this debunked narrative, and the "cherry on top" is that he's immediately setting out for Moscow to "catch up" on the bilateral coordination that's been going on between his country and Russia during his absence.

Concluding Thoughts

With Trump's [Hybrid War pressure](#) on the Islamic Republic building by the day in marshalling an ever-widening military and economic coalition against it full of willing partners and coerced vassals (i.e. the Europeans), and Russia playing "hardball" in Syria by "balancing" against Iran's interests there, Tehran might conclude that the "least bad" option available would be for it to comply with Moscow's peacemaking "compromises" on the IRGC and Hezbollah's post-war "phased withdrawal" from Syria in order to keep its northern "pressure valve" open as it [pivots east](#) towards the "[Golden Ring](#)" in response.

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Andrew Korybko is an American Moscow-based political analyst specializing in the relationship between the US strategy in Afro-Eurasia, China's One Belt One Road global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, and Hybrid Warfare. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.

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