

# Saudis Discuss Defense Ties With Iran in Further Sign of Detente

By Patrick Sykes | November 30, 2023 5:44AM ET

Senior defense officials from Iran and Saudi Arabia discussed military cooperation in a rare call, the latest sign that the war between Israel and Hamas is bringing the former rivals closer together.

Saudi Defense Minister Khalid bin Salman told Iranian Armed Forces Chief of Staff Mohammad Bagheri he “welcomed the increase in the level of cooperation of the armed forces of the two countries,” the semi-official Iranian Students’ News Agency reported, without elaborating.

□

Source: Getty Images  
Khalid bin Salman

There was no immediate comment from Saudi Arabia.

Tehran and Riyadh have previously clashed on defense issues including the presence of the US military in the Middle East, the civil war in Yemen, and Iran’s support for armed groups across the region who are hostile to Saudi interests.

They [normalized relations](#) in March, after years of tension over competing bids for regional influence. Contacts have increased further since the start of the Israel-Hamas war, with Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman meeting earlier this month to express support for the Palestinians.

Read More: [Saudi Arabia Offers Iran Investment to Blunt Gaza War](#)

--With assistance from Sam Dagher.

To contact the reporter on this story:

Patrick Sykes in London at [psykes5@bloomberg.net](mailto:psykes5@bloomberg.net)

To contact the editors responsible for this story:

Dana Khraiche at [dkhraiche@bloomberg.net](mailto:dkhraiche@bloomberg.net)

Paul Richardson, Monique Vanek