# US and Saudi Arabia Near Defense and Nuclear Agreement Amid Middle East Diplomatic Efforts



### US and Saudi Arabia Near Defense and Nuclear Agreement

The United States and Saudi Arabia are close to finalizing a defense and civil nuclear agreement, according to a senior U.S. official. Significant progress has been made in talks, and a near-final set of bilateral agreements is in place. However, the broader diplomatic pact, which includes normalizing ties between Saudi Arabia and Israel, requires a credible path towards establishing a Palestinian state and a resolution of the ongoing conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza.

This development comes after U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan held discussions with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman in Riyadh and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem. The three-way deal, initially dimmed after a deadly Hamas attack on Israel on October 7, has been complicated by Israel's ongoing military operations in Gaza.

In related news, the International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued arrest warrants for Netanyahu and some Hamas leaders for alleged war crimes. The situation in Gaza remains dire, with the United Nations reporting severe shortages of food and humanitarian aid, exacerbated by Israeli military actions in Rafah.

Efforts to secure a grand bargain in the Middle East hinge on these various diplomatic, military, and humanitarian challenges being addressed simultaneously.