



Biden Orders Major Reversal Of Trump's Missile Battery Build-Up In Gulf

Description

A major “realignment” of US defense priorities is resulting in a new extended **drawdown of troops, aircraft, and anti-aircraft missiles from the Middle East**, *The Wall Street* journal says in a new report, **especially a prior missile battery build-up under Trump in Saudi Arabia.**

“The Pentagon is pulling approximately **eight Patriot antimissile batteries from countries including Iraq, Kuwait, Jordan and Saudi Arabia**, according to officials,” the [report details](#). “Another antimissile system known as a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense, or Thaad system, is being withdrawn from Saudi Arabia, and jet fighter squadrons assigned to the region are being reduced, those officials said.”



Early this month the Saudi crown prince was informed of the reduction of equipment and personnel on Saudi soil in a phone call by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin – where most of the military hardware is being pulled from. The prior Trump administration had begun sending tons of additional hardware there **following the September 2019 drone and missile attack on the Saudi Aramco oil processing facilities** at Abqaiq and Khurais in eastern Saudi Arabia.

Simultaneously the ongoing drawdown from Afghanistan is said to be well over half complete, also as more troops are expected to depart Iraq.

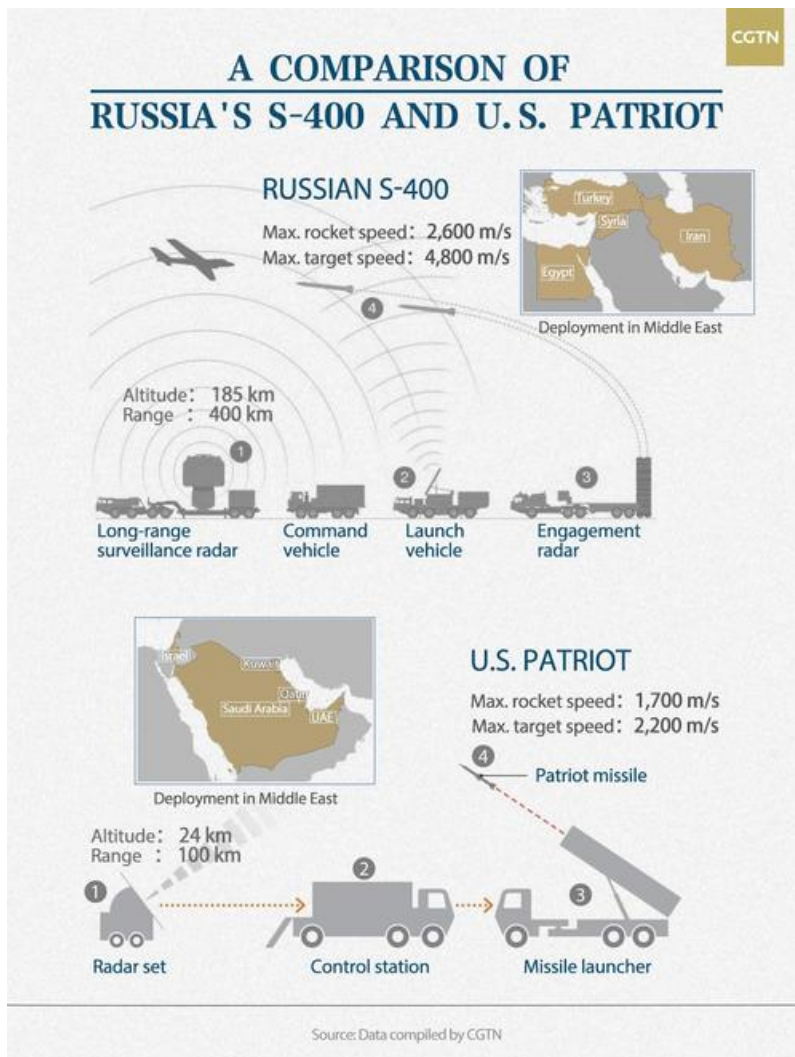
US officials told WSJ that the move reflects a Biden administration belief that **Iran is no longer the dominating major threat** to US security interests in the region:

A senior defense official said the equipment withdrawals amount to a return to a more traditional level of defense for the region. Under former President Donald Trump, the U.S. actively deployed defensive systems as well as troops, jet fighter squadrons and naval warships to support its maximum pressure campaign against Iran.

The hardware hasn't deterred Iran or its proxies from destabilizing actions, officials said. Saudi Arabia also has improved its defensive capabilities, intercepting most rocket attacks on its own, they said.

For Biden's Pentagon, China and Russia have become the top priority with Iran taking a far backseat. This is spelled out in the report [as follows](#): "The Biden administration is sharply reducing the number of U.S. antimissile systems in the Middle East in a major realignment of its military footprint there as it **focuses the armed services on challenges from China and Russia**, administration officials said."

Hawks have long argued, however, that a broader US retreat from the Middle East would cede influence to Russia and its allies, also as proliferation of Russian anti-air systems increases – with the example of Turkey and its receiving S-400s remaining a hot, contentious issue in US-Turkey relations at the moment.



Late this week [Axios](#) revealed that the White House is hoping to push through a restored Iranian nuclear deal in Vienna, now amid the 6th round of talks, before the next Iranian president takes office by August 3rd. A restored JCPOA deal would no doubt put the Islamic Republic further down the list of 'threat priorities' for the US should it go through.

by Tyler Durden

Date Created
06/20/2021