

# SAUDI CROWN PRINCE HAILS CHINA RELATIONS AT TALKS WITH XI

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

Strengthening ties: Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing. AP

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman hailed relations with China as trouble-free, during talks on Friday with President Xi Jinping in Beijing aimed at strengthening relations in the face of criticism from the West over the kingdom's human rights record and its war in Yemen.

Citing a 33% increase in bilateral trade last year, the Crown Prince said high-level contacts were paying off in areas from commerce to security and defence. "Saudi Arabia's relations with China can be traced back a very long time in the past," Prince Mohammed told President Xi at their meeting in the hulking Great Hall of the People. "Over such a long period of exchanges with China, we have never experienced any problems with China," he said.

The Crown Prince earlier on Friday presided at a China-Saudi cooperation forum that concluded with agreements on cooperation in fields ranging from petroleum and the chemical industry to investment, renewable energy and counter-terrorism. Saudi Arabia is one of China's top crude oil suppliers and an important market for its exports, including military drones.

He also pledged Saudi Arabia's backing for China's gargantuan infrastructure project, the Belt and Road Initiative, saying he was willing to link it with the kingdom's Vision 2030 plan, a blueprint put forth by the crown prince to wean the kingdom off its reliance on oil.

China has refrained from faulting Saudi Arabia over issues such as the war or killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. For its part, Saudi Arabia has avoided criticizing China's authoritarian communist government over its treatment of its Muslim minority groups.

**END**

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](http://crackIAS.com)

© **Zuccess App** by [crackIAS.com](http://crackIAS.com)

