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Saudi and UAE troops go into Bahrain, Kuwaitis on the way

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Saudi Special Forces

Saudi and United Arab Emirates troops crossed into Bahrain Monday, March 14 to support the king against escalating anti-throne demonstrations and Kuwait soldiers are on the way. A Saudi official said the units come from a special force within the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council. **DEBKAfile** reports that the Saudis also sent tanks.

By this action, both Arab kingdoms flouted US President Obama's policy of boosting popular movements against autocratic Arab regimes. Saturday, US Defense Secretary Robert Gates visited Bahrain to hold the ruler's hand against using force to suppress the uprising against him.

The Shiite opposition leading the demonstrations in Bahrain denounced the entry of any foreign troops into the country as an "occupation" and "conspiracy" against unarmed civilians and appealed to the United Nations to take action.

Saudi Arabia and the UA are the second and third Arab regimes to intervene militarily in the uprisings sweeping the Arab world after Syria sent military assistance to Muammar Qaddafi, [as DEBKAfile revealed Sunday, March 13](#).

Rulers regarded as US Middle East allies have turned against President Obama, encouraged by the upper hand Qaddafi has gained against Libya's rebels and Washington's constraints from stepping in militarily to support them.

In Riyadh and Manama, Saudi King Abdullah and Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa have joined forces to put down any popular uprising against their regimes and are no longer listening to advice from Washington to offer their opponents more concessions. The Saudis have stamped down hard not only on minority Shiite disturbances in the oil regions of the east, but in their capital and other cities too. King Abdullah blames Obama's policy for unseating Hosni Mubarak in Egypt and has no intention of following the American line.

The Bahraini King Hamad believes that the unrest in his kingdom was aggravated by the Gates visit Saturday. Although the American visitor was shown Bahraini-Saudi intelligence attesting to Iran's meddling hand stirring up the unrest in order to replace their regimes with Revolutionary Islamic Republics, Gates kept in insisting that they must promise more reforms to the protesters and allow them a role in governance.

The Obama administration has made known to the US media its concern about the prospect of Saudi and other Gulf nations buttressing the Bahraini throne – not just with a grant of at least \$10 billion, but military contingents, lest it start a fire across the entire region.

Our military sources report that these reports have been overtaken by events. Saudi tanks have been in Manama for almost two weeks guarding King Hamad's palace. More Saudi tanks and special forces were kept in a state of preparedness at the Saudi end of the King Fahd Causeway, the 25-kilometer bridge that links the two kingdoms by a 40-minute drive.

These forces, joined by UAR units, rolled into Bahrain Monday after protesters blockaded the financial center.

In Sanaa, Yemeni soldiers still loyal to President Abdullah Ali Saleh are battling protesters turned insurgents. In Amman, too, Jordanian King Abdullah II is casting about for a protector against insurrectionists after finding the American shield full of holes. According to rumors circulating in the Jordanian capital, the king paid a secret visit to Tehran. **DEBKAfile's** sources

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