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Saudi Arabia, the 10th Nuclear power?

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The question mark depends on the conclusions of the investigative journalists who will explore the matter.

So it has happened. Allegedly, at least. What had to happen has happened. Or someone says it has. What we feared as sure to happen if international policies did not change has come to pass. If the information is confirmed, of course.

Until recently the planet had 9 nuclear-armed states. The most recent (2002-3) is North Korea, which has given us cold sweats ever since. Now there are ten. Number ten has just declared itself. Perhaps Iran? No, Saudi Arabia. The Saudi kingdom has had its bomb for more than two years. But nobody knew... except the « superpowers », according to the author of this revelation.

The announcement was made on the Russian network *Russia-Today*, during an interview conducted in Arabic. So says MEMRI TV, the Israeli private chain, which broadcast an extract lasting 1' 32". The interviewee's name is given: Daham al-Anzi.

Later the Italian journalist Manlio Dinucci took it up on 18 February for *il Manifesto*, in a video he made himself with his own comments.

Then on 26 February the Réseau Voltaire published the two videos and proposed a French translation of the Manlio Dinucci's comments. According to Dinucci, the man interviewed is « a Saudi political analyst, *de facto* spokesman of Riyadh. »

Here is what Daham al-Anzi said, according to the English subtitles:

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is acting as a responsible country.
"Therefore the Saudi leadership, represented by the Ministry of Defense
"took steps to minimize the Iranian threat in Yemen,
"And it has now turned to minimize the Iranian threat in the Levant and in Syria.

"Russia wants to support Bashar Al-Asad
"-one man and the group of regime loyalists around him-
"while the Syrian is slaughtered. No !

"The Saudi army will not stand idly by.
"This army represent us, Saudis.

"Why are we buying all those missiles and airplanes ?
"**We have had a nuclear bomb for over two years now.**
"**A nuclear test may be made within weeks .**

"Why are we obtaining ll these weapons,
"if not for the defense of Arab and Muslim rights ?

"My dear brother, Saudi Arabia does not wish to engage in war...

Then the journalist interrupted him (in Arabic):

"-So Saudi Arabia has obtained a nuclear bomb now ?

"-Yes, we have a nuclear bomb.

"To put it simply, yes.

The journalist:

"This is breaking news.

"I'm hearing this for the first time.

"-Sir, this is not breaking news.

"The superpowers know about this.

"We said before that if Iran were to impudently announce a nuclear test, Saudi Arabia would announce one too. No problem."

The extract stops there.

We must of course wonder about the veracity of those statements. It could be a mere piece of disinformation. That would satisfy the Saudis - by giving them an advantage over their Shiite enemies in Iran, a strategic and political advantage made stronger and more durable by Iran's recent international commitment (with strict control) to not acquire nuclear weapons. At the same time it might satisfy the Israelis, who will be able to replace the Iranian scarecrow with a new Saudi one, a real Arab one. It might also satisfy the Russians, who could at least castigate the Saudis, who are adversaries for their Syrian ally Bashar al-Assad.

However, the fact that several authors of this scoop have an interest in divulging the information, for different motives which are contradictory and yet convergent, is not itself sufficient reason to dismiss it, since there are strong reasons to argue that it is authentic. One is that it could be an unprogrammed leak, due solely to the man's enthusiasm.

So we will hold onto the hypothesis that it is true, until contrary proof is brought by reputed independent investigative journalists - such people must exist and must be interested in this burning question.

If we follow the hypothesis that the interviewee was telling the truth:

- ▶ Saudi Arabia has for over two years at least one atom bomb, which in all probability (and in Manlio Dinucci's view) it bought from Pakistan (or simply received in exchange for the considerable finance it provided to Pakistan's nuclear programme).
- ▶ Since the Iranians have renounced the bomb, it will be a long time before they have the « impudence » to brandish the threat by announcing a nuclear test. So Saudi Arabia has lost this pretext for saying that it « has one too ». Yet it does say so. Not without impudence.
- ▶ Given the enormous aeronautical arsenal it has bought, Saudi Arabia has the means to deliver its bomb to many targets. At least as many as De Gaulle had at the time of his Mirage IV aircraft...
- ▶

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It probably has at least one other bomb, even more (and can use those of Pakistan, which cannot say no) ; otherwise it would not propose to conduct a nuclear test soon (as Daham al-Anzi says) : for when you have exploded a bomb you no longer have that one in your arsenal.

- ▶ If the Saudis' allies, notably the USA, do not dissuade them from testing, the test would scarcely have the function of testing something (at most the ability of the operators), its purpose would rather be to show Saudi Arabia's military and political power to the whole world, and notably to Iran.
 - ▶ Such an objective cannot fail to make others in the region envious. And must infuriate the Iranians, who could legitimately feel betrayed. So it is good luck for the « reformist » camp in Iran that the Iranian election took place before Daham al-Anzi's announcement was disseminated. But for how long ?
 - ▶ Even if it's hard to predict the detail, the consequences of this change of status for Saudi Arabia will be considerable, and not just in the Middle East.
 - ▶ And even if Saudi Arabia doesn't have a bomb - or not yet - one thing is certain : there is only one way to end the proliferation of nuclear weapons - by proceeding to abolish them. After the last North Korean test, it would be time for the nuclear « superpowers » (whether that means the big two or the P5) to assess the urgency of the moment.
 - ▶ Israel too should be drawing lessons. In the long term the only chance for Israel's survival is to gain acceptance by negotiating a Middle East freed from weapons of mass destruction. If Israel wants to guarantee its survival, it needs to recognize that all the people in the region have the same right to survival.
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[Vidéo](#)

[Article de Manlio Dinucci](#) (Translated into French by Marie-Ange Patrizio for the Réseau Voltaire)

Warning. The video at the bottom of the article, showing Manlio Dinucci, contains also scenes of horror.

PS:

ADDENDUM, 1st March 2016

The MEMRI TV video:

#5327 - Saudi Political Analyst Dahham Al-'Anzi: KSA Has Obtained Nuclear Bomb. Test May Be Held Soon
Russia Today TV (Russia) - February 15, 2016 - 01:46

has been enlarged to 1' 46" by adding at its beginning the following sentences from Dahham Al-'Anzi:

"My dear brother, the Syrian people is being killed and slaughtered
"They demand the removal of this president, against whom they rebelled.
"There are UN Security Council resolutions in this regard, okay?

"The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia... etc.

Doing so, MEMRI TV insists on the reality of the fact: KSA Has Obtained Nuclear Bomb. Test May Be Held Soon.