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EU adds Saudi Arabia to list of nations considered hotbeds of terrorist financing

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The European Commission has included Saudi Arabia in a list of nations seen as threats because of their unwillingness — or inability — to crack down on terrorism financing and money laundering. The US has condemned the list.

Riyadh is part of a blacklist comprised of 23 nations in total, including Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Panama, and even US territories such as Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

The proposal awaits approval by the European Parliament and the 28 member states, with opposition against the list voiced by France and the UK.

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The Saudis have long been accused of directly and indirectly supporting jihadists and terrorist organizations operating across the globe. In the United States, Riyadh has faced accusations of having ties with the Saudi nationals suspected of carrying out the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

The US Treasury Department has condemned the list. In a [statement](#), the Treasury claimed that the EU included the states on a " *cursory*" basis, and did not give them adequate time to challenge their inclusion. The Treasury said it does not expect US financial institutions to take the list into account when implementing their own anti-money laundering and terrorist financing policies.

EU-Saudi relations have deteriorated following the grisly murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul in October. In recent months, Denmark, Norway, and Germany have suspended arms exports to Riyadh, citing the country's troubling human rights record and its bloody war against the Houthis in Yemen.

Saudi Arabia is one of the world's top military spenders – and the largest buyer of US-made weapons. In contrast to Washington's European allies, US President Donald Trump has remained unapologetic about his country's lucrative relationship with Riyadh.

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However, a CNN report revealed this month that much of the "*beautiful military equipment*" that Trump sold to the Saudis ended up in the hands of Al-Qaeda-linked fighters in Yemen – an eyebrow-raising realization that may have even contributed to the EU's decision to place Saudi Arabia on its blacklist.

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