

Saudi Arabia agrees to join Shanghai Co-operation Organisation as 'dialogue partner'

Decision seen to tighten ties to Beijing and strengthen Riyadh's pivot east

Saudi Arabia has agreed to join the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) as a "dialogue partner," the kingdom's state media announced. This decision is seen as strengthening Riyadh's pivot east and tightening ties to Beijing.

Regarded as a neutral actor in Middle East disputes, China has cultivated relations with key players on the regional stage to ease tensions and reduce long-standing dependence on the US.

In a phone conversation with Saudi crown prince Mohammed bin Salman, Chinese president Xi Jinping pledged to promote dialogue and "play a major role in strengthening regional unity and co-operation".

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Source:

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