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Obama Faces Chilly Reception on Arrival in Saudi Arabia

By Jason Ditz
April 20, 2016

With the Saudi Foreign Ministry openly threatening to collapse the US dollar just days ago, President Obama's visit to Riyadh today wasn't exactly met with a warm welcome. Saudi state TV always hypes visits by foreign heads of state. Obama's arrival was conspicuously not mentioned.

Saudi King Salman had been at the airport, broadcast on state TV greeting other arriving leaders for the GCC summit, by the time Obama got there, he and the TV crew were long gone, and only the local governor was there to meet with him.

The Saudis have been pretty public about their displeasure about Obama's presidency, and were pressing Obama on their ongoing desire for hostilities with Iran, as Obama pressed them to accept a "cold peace" that would end the sectarian tensions in the region.

Obama was said to have mentioned “concerns” about Saudi human rights violations, but publicly praised the kingdom for its pledges to eventually provide humanitarian aid to Yemen, which they attacked last year and have imposed a naval blockade on.

Unlikely to be acknowledged are any conversations related to Foreign Minister Jubeir’s threat to sell \$750 billion in treasury securities to punish the US for a law that would expose them to legal action for their involvement in 9/11.

Obama has not directly commented on the situation regarding the treasury assets at all, but White House press secretary Josh Earnest said Monday that Obama would almost certainly veto the legislation to protect “taxpayers.”