



STEVEN ERLANGER

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Hello ladies and gentlemen. First of all, I just want to thank you for staying. Thank you for your patience, we're pulling our panel together. I am Steven Erlanger with the New York Times. We are here to talk about the Middle East. We no longer have much time, we have an hour and so I want to get right to it. There is quite a lot to talk about. I just wanted to begin by saying, as much as we have talked about Donald Trump, to me, he has done two things, there are two coherent policies, whether we agree with them or not. One is about China and one is about the Middle East, where he has thrown the power of the United States very clearly on the side of the Sunnis against Iran. He has done that in a big change from the Obama period, embraced Bibi Netanyahu, but also embraced, as we know, Mohammed bin Salman and Jared Kushner's special friend. We will see what will happen after the despicable murder of my colleague, Jamal Khashoggi, but I think as we all know, the Middle East is pretty muddled these days and so there is quite a lot to talk about.