

The Lines That Bind: 100 Years of Sykes-Picot

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A century after diplomats [Mark Sykes](#) of Britain and [François Georges-Picot](#) of France drew up a secret agreement to divide the Ottoman lands of the Middle East, a look at the modern map indicates the resulting states have largely stood the test of time -- at least thus far. Most of these states are now under considerable demographic, economic, and political stress, which has led some analysts to predict eventual collapse of at least some of them.

In this Policy Focus, [Andrew J. Tabler](#) has compiled essays addressing the past, present, and future of the modern countries carved out by Sykes-Picot, including Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey, as well as communities aspiring to statehood such as the Kurds and the Palestinians. Written by Institute scholars and outside experts, the essays are the product of a 2016 workshop that addressed a number of key issues: the sinews of state failure; keys to success of states resulting from Sykes-Picot; the challenges facing these states today; and what the United States and its allies can do to help these countries with problems of governance, control of territory, and human development.

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