

Resource Distribution in a New Middle East

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**Abstract:**

This study analyzes the resource distribution of Ralph Peters' map of the New Middle East. Statistics of resource production, population, and land area were gathered for both the current and new borders of the Middle East, as per Peters' map. The production capacity for each country was calculated on a per capita basis, and then compared to one another. It was found that the new boundaries benefited 9 of the 15 countries studied, with only a couple of countries with major capacity losses. These results indicate that the New Middle East borders would be more beneficial to the region.

**Introduction:**

Ethnic conflicts are well rooted in the world's history and perhaps inherent in human nature. This type of conflict is difficult to resolve as is evident in the situation in the Middle East<sup>1</sup>. During the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries, the number of conflicts in the Middle East has dramatically increased, especially since the end of World War I and fall of the Ottoman Empire (1). From the ashes of the war, the Middle East was reshaped into Western style nation-states. The British and the French turned the Middle East into their chessboard, and without considering ethnic, religious, political, or historical realities, they partitioned the region according to their own interests (1-4). With British and French oversight continuing into the 1930s, many began to see the West as imperialists in disguise.

After WWI, the Middle East was reshaped by the victorious European powers, but it was the tides of nationalism that brought the region back to life. Egypt was the first country to officially receive its independence in 1922, though it still had British attachments until 1952 (2-4). Turkey was the next independent nation, as the shrewd nationalist Mustafa Kemal announced the independent Turkish republic in 1923 (3). Iraq became independent in 1932, as well as Saudi Arabia (3-4). Syria and Lebanon finally became independent nations in 1946 after Britain and the United States pressured France to leave the region. That same year, the British mandate of Transjordan was terminated, and Jordan was deemed independent (4). On May 13, 1948, the British gave up the fight for their last administered area, and the mandate of Palestine was terminated. The next day, the independent state of Israel was established, followed hours later by an Arab declaration of war (4).

For more than fifty years this conflict has continued, with each side giving and receiving the sentence of death. Flawed borders have generated these violent conflicts, within the countries and among them. Solving the border disputes could lead to a more peaceful Middle East and ultimately a more peaceful world.

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<sup>1</sup> The Countries included in the term "Middle East" are Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey and United Arab Emirates.

Another essential part of the Middle East peace process is the distribution of resources produced by each country. Ralph Peters'<sup>2</sup> map of the New Middle East was based on the idea of borders for the people (5), so this study analyzed the resource distribution in Ralph Peters' map to see if the new borders provided any possibility for peace.

### **The New Middle East:**

There is no way the borders of the Middle East can be redrawn in a way to accommodate every minority group. The map provided by Ralph Peters "sought to portray the way the Middle East would look if the people, rather than dictators and oppressive states, determined the lines on the maps" (5), which was the original goal of the research. The new Middle East, as per Peters, begins on the west side in Israel where the borders are returned to their pre-1967 delineation.

The next major change is the addition of an independent Kurdish state in the notoriously unjust lands between the Balkan Mountains and the Himalayas, stretching from Diyarbakir through Tabriz. Kurds have been oppressed by every government controlling the hills and mountains where they have lived since Xenophon's day (1). There are between 27 million and 36 million Kurds living in contiguous regions in the Middle East (the figures are imprecise because no state has ever allowed an honest census), which makes the Kurds the world's largest ethnic group without a state of its own (6).

A third set of major revisions to the previous boundaries would leave Iraq's three Sunni-majority provinces as a condensed state that might eventually choose to unify with a Syria that loses its coast to a Mediterranean-oriented Greater Lebanon. The Shia south of old Iraq would form the basis of an Arab Shia State rimming much of the Persian Gulf. Jordan would retain its current territory, with some southward expansion at Saudi Arabia's expense. Iran, a state with the European's madcap boundaries, would lose a great deal of territory to Unified Azerbaijan, Free Kurdistan, the Arab Shia State and Free Baluchistan, but would gain the provinces around Herat in today's Afghanistan.

### **Methods:**

The purpose of this investigation was to determine whether the map of the New Middle East drawn by Ralph Peters took into account the distribution of resource capacity after realigning the borders. Resource data from the Middle East<sup>3</sup> was gathered from the United States Geological Survey (7) database and transferred into a spreadsheet. All

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<sup>2</sup> Ralph Peters served as an intelligence officer in the U.S. Army and retired as a Lieutenant-Colonel. Peters' last post was the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, within the U.S. Defense Department, and has been one of the Pentagon's foremost authors with numerous essays on strategy for military journals and U.S. foreign policy.

<sup>3</sup> Because of the lack of data, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Azerbaijan and Armenia were excluded from the study.

data points were plotted on the mapping program of Microsoft's Encarta Reference Library 2003 (8) and each natural resource was assigned a separate symbol for reference. When all the resources were plotted, the production capacity for every resource was totaled for each country in the current Middle East. In order to total the production capacity for the new countries, the New Middle East map was superimposed on the current map and the resources were re-tallied.

Population data for each country was then gathered from the CIA World Fact Book (6). Because the new countries are fusions of one or more of the current countries, the populations for the countries of the New Middle East were estimated using known populations figures, land area and population density maps. The land area of each new country was ascertained by estimating what percent of the old country it contained and multiplying the total land area by that percentage. After all the new land areas were calculated, the populations for the new countries were estimated by taking the average population density for that area and multiplying it by the new land area totals. The distribution of natural resources was then calculated on a per capita basis by taking the total production capacity for each resource and dividing by the population of the country. With this data, averages for each country were taken to compare the current countries with the new.

### **Results:**

#### **Iran and New Iran:**

With the current borders, Iran has access to six different natural resources, chromite, copper, iron ore, lead, aluminum and gold. The resource with the greatest production capacity per capita is copper, with 20.168 tons/100,000 people<sup>4</sup>, and the resource with the least is aluminum with 0.160 tons/ 100,000 people. The production capacity average for all the resources is 6.912 tons/ 100,000 people. By realigning the borders, new Iran gains production capacity for every resource and the new capacity average increases to 12.563 tons/100,000 people.

#### **Turkey and New Turkey:**

The modern borders of Turkey provide the county with eight different resources chromite, iron ore, aluminum, cement, steel, silver, coal, and chromite ore. Silver has the highest production capacity with 149.118 tons/100,000 people and copper has the least with 0.552 tons/100,000 people. The average production capacity with the current borders is 4.004 tons/ 100,000 people. New Turkey loses production capacity for copper, dropping from 0.552 to 0.40144 tons/100,000 people, and chromite ore from 1.954 to 1.55285 tons/100,000 people. New Turkey did gain in the production of every other resource, raising the average capacity to 4.991 tons/100,000 people.

#### **Iran/Turkey and Free Kurdistan:**

Because Free Kurdistan is a synthesis of more than one country, comparing the averages is more difficult. Within the new borders of Free Kurdistan, the country produces four natural resources including chromite, copper, cement, and chromite ore. The natural resource with the greatest production capacity per capita is cement with

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<sup>4</sup> Averages are on a per year basis.

8.250 tons/100,000 people. Chromite has the lowest production capacity with 0.0149 tons/100,000 people. The average production capacity for Free Kurdistan is 2.719 tons/100,000 people. To compare this average with the original countries' average it is much lower. However, about half of Free Kurdistan is from the original Turkey and half is from the original Iran, thus making the averages close, with Free Kurdistan just under the original countries' average.

#### **Iraq and Sunni Iraq:**

The current country of Iraq produces one natural resource, which is fertilizer, with 3.0990 tons/ 100,000 people. By dividing Iraq into Sunni Iraq and the Arab Shia State, the resources are also divided. Sunni Iraq loses fertilizer resources and only averages 0.945 tons/100,000 people in production capacity.

#### **Iraq/Iran/Saudi Arabia and the Arab Shia State:**

The Arab Shia State is composed of Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia. The majority of the land is taken from Iraq with about equal quarters coming from Saudi Arabia and Iran. The Arab Shia State has only three resources, cement, steel and fertilizer and a majority of these resources came from Saudi Arabia. The average production capacity for the Arab Shia State is 32.726 tons/100,000 people, which is much higher than the average of the current countries from which it was created.

#### **Saudi Arabia and the Saudi Homelands Independent Territories:**

Saudi Arabia loses a large amount of land and resources to the Arab Shia State, Yemen and the Islamic Sacred State. Saudi Arabia currently has five resources including gold, cement, steel, titanium oxide and fertilizer. The current borders grant the greatest production capacity to cement with 61.344 tons/100,000 people. Titanium oxide has the least production capacity with .192 tons/100,000 people. The average production capacity for the country is 24.585 tons/100,000 people. After shifting the borders, the new Saudi Arabia loses a significant number of resources, as well as population. The new Saudi Arabia loses gold, steel and fertilizer production all together and is left with only cement production, averaging lower than the current borders at 20.959 tons/100,000 people.

#### **Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Sacred State:**

The Islamic Sacred State is drawn within the current Saudi Arabia borders. Its position transfers a large number of resources from Saudi Arabia to the Islamic Sacred State. With the new borders, the Islamic Sacred State gains gold, cement, steel, and titanium oxide. The resource with the greatest production capacity per capita is gold with an average of 251.819 tons/100,000 people. The resource with the least capacity is titanium oxide with 1.411 tons/100,000 people. The average for the country's resource capacity is 132.809 tons/100,000 people, which is much higher than the current Saudi Arabia borders.

#### **Syria and new Syria:**

The current Syria produces three resources including cement, phosphate rock and fertilizer. Cement had the highest production capacity at 27.329 tons/100,000 people.

The resource with the lowest production capacity was fertilizer with 0.646 tons/100,000 people. The average production capacity per capita for the current borders of Syria was 10.737 tons/100,000 people. The new Syrian borders eliminated the production of fertilizer and reduced the production capacity for cement. The changes to the borders lead to a lower production capacity average of 9.068 tons/100,000 people.

#### **Jordan and Greater Jordan:**

The current borders of Jordan allow for the production of four resources: cement, steel, phosphate rock and fertilizer. Of these resources, phosphate rock has the highest production capacity at 334.765 tons/100,000 people. The resource with the lowest capacity is steel with 7.434 tons/100,000 people. The average resource capacity for Jordan is 109.009 tons/100,000 people. By realigning the borders, Greater Jordan gains cement production capacity, but loses steel, phosphate rock and fertilizer capacity. Because the country also gains land and so many people, the production capacity average decreases to 67.525 tons/100,000 people.

#### **Lebanon and Greater Lebanon:**

Lebanon currently produces two resources, cement and steel. The production capacity for cement is much higher than that of steel, at 129.064 tons/100,000 people, whereas the production capacity for steel is only 7.74383 tons/100,000 people. Lebanon has an average resource capacity of 68.404 tons/100,000 people. The realignment of borders gives Greater Lebanon more resource capacity. Greater Lebanon increased the production capacity of cement, and gained fertilizer capacity, but decreases the capacity for steel slightly. The new production capacity average for the country was 69.468 tons/100,000 people, a slight increase from the modern borders.

#### **Yemen and New Yemen:**

The modern Yemen has only one resource, which is cement. The average production capacity for Yemen is 5.882 tons/100,000 people. The changing borders of Yemen only added land and population to the country and no increased resource capacity. Because of this, the average production capacity for the new Yemen decreased slightly to 5.408 tons/100,000 people.

#### **United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Israel:**

The borders of U.A.E. and Israel changed very little, and Oman did not change at all, in terms of land area, population and resource distribution. Because of this, the resource production capacity did not change. U.A.E. had a production capacity of 272.900 tons/100,000 people, Israel had 3.528 tons/100,000 people, and Oman had 18.382 tons/100,000 people.

#### **Conclusion:**

In the study of the distribution of resources in the New Middle East, nine of the fifteen countries analyzed either increased their production capacity or stayed constant. The new Iran, Turkey, Arab Shia State, Islamic Sacred State and Greater Lebanon increased their average production capacity, while Qatar, U.A.E., Oman, and Israel remained unchanged. Sunni Iraq, the new Saudi Independent Territories, and Greater

Jordan all had significant drops in the average production capacity when compared to the current country borders. Free Kurdistan, the new Syria, and Yemen all decreased their production capacity, but only slightly. These results could vary if more recent population totals become available and the countries are reanalyzed.

These results suggest that the realigning of the borders to Ralph Peters' New Middle East would benefit sixty percent of the countries from a resource perspective. Although only five of the fifteen countries had significant increases to their production capacity, it is clear that if this map were to be implemented in the current Middle East, the new borders would benefit countries more than they would hinder them. Some researchers may disagree with this conclusion and argue that this is not a high enough percentage to bring economic stability to the Middle East. There has been conflict over resources in the Middle East for a significant amount of time, and there is no way that one can speculate that by realigning the borders, peace or economic prosperity will follow. This study merely shows a hypothetical New Middle East where resources are more equally distributed among the countries than they currently are.

This study of resources in the New Middle East is only a small piece of a much larger puzzle in which peace and economic stability is finally attained. One very important resource not analyzed in this study was the distribution of oil. While a majority of oil lies within the current Saudi Arabian borders, the New Middle East would give a greater part of the control to the Arab Shia State. This is definitely an issue worth studying in further detail. This study also did not analyze how the ethno-religious distribution would affect the new countries. From a preliminary analysis, however, the borders appear to account for conflict among these groups by dividing the countries along cultural boundaries.

Whether the Middle East will ever be at peace again is uncertain, and any positive change for this region will require a great amount of work. However, the fate of the Middle East rests with those who call these lands home.

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Figure 1: Ralph Peters' map of the New Middle East

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Iran</b>	<b>New Iran</b>	<b>Turkey</b>	<b>New Turkey</b>	<b>Free Kurdistan</b>	<b>Iraq</b>	<b>Sunni Iraq</b>	<b>Arab Shia State</b>
<b>Chromite (tons)</b>	0.33630	0.60336	0.00000	0.00000	0.01486	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Copper (tons)</b>	20.16788	36.65937	0.55245	0.40144	0.83685	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Iron Ore (tons)</b>	17.98556	32.69254	7.45591	9.57988	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Lead (tons)</b>	1.36850	2.48753	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Aluminum (tons)</b>	0.16014	0.29109	9.57988	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Gold (tons)</b>	1.45585	2.64631	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Cement (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	43.87198	53.32982	8.24962	0.00000	0.00000	38.29528
<b>Steel (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	17.29771	22.22532	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	28.13530
<b>Phosphate Rock (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Fertilizer (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	3.09894	0.94547	52.74849
<b>Silver (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	149.11816	191.59760	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Titanium Oxide (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Coal (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	9.94121	12.77317	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Chromite Ore (lump ore)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	1.95416	1.55285	1.77273	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Average</b>	6.91237	12.56337	4.00418	4.99066	2.71852	3.09840	0.94547	32.72636

Table 1: Country resource capacity per capita

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Qatar</b>	<b>New Qatar</b>	<b>Saudi Arabia</b>	<b>New Saudi</b>	<b>Islamic Sacred St.</b>	<b>Syria</b>	<b>New Syria</b>	<b>U.A.E.</b>	<b>New U.A.E</b>
<b>Chromite (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Copper (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Iron Ore (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Lead (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Aluminum (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Gold (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	34.3453	0.00000	251.81931	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Cement (tons)</b>	121.1938	121.1938	61.3441	20.9594	198.09062	27.3285	13.8932	530.1942	530.1942
<b>Steel (tons)</b>	172.6983	172.6983	10.8994	0.00000	79.91464	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Phosphate Rock (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	4.23698	4.24219	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Fertilizer (tons)</b>	564.9686	564.9686	16.1438	0.00000	0.00000	0.64614	0.00000	15.60542	15.60542
<b>Silver (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Titanium Oxide (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	1.41106	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Coal (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Chromite Ore (lump ore)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Average</b>	286.2869	286.2869	30.6834	20.9594	132.80890	10.7372	9.06768	272.8998	272.8998

Table 2: Country resource capacity per capita

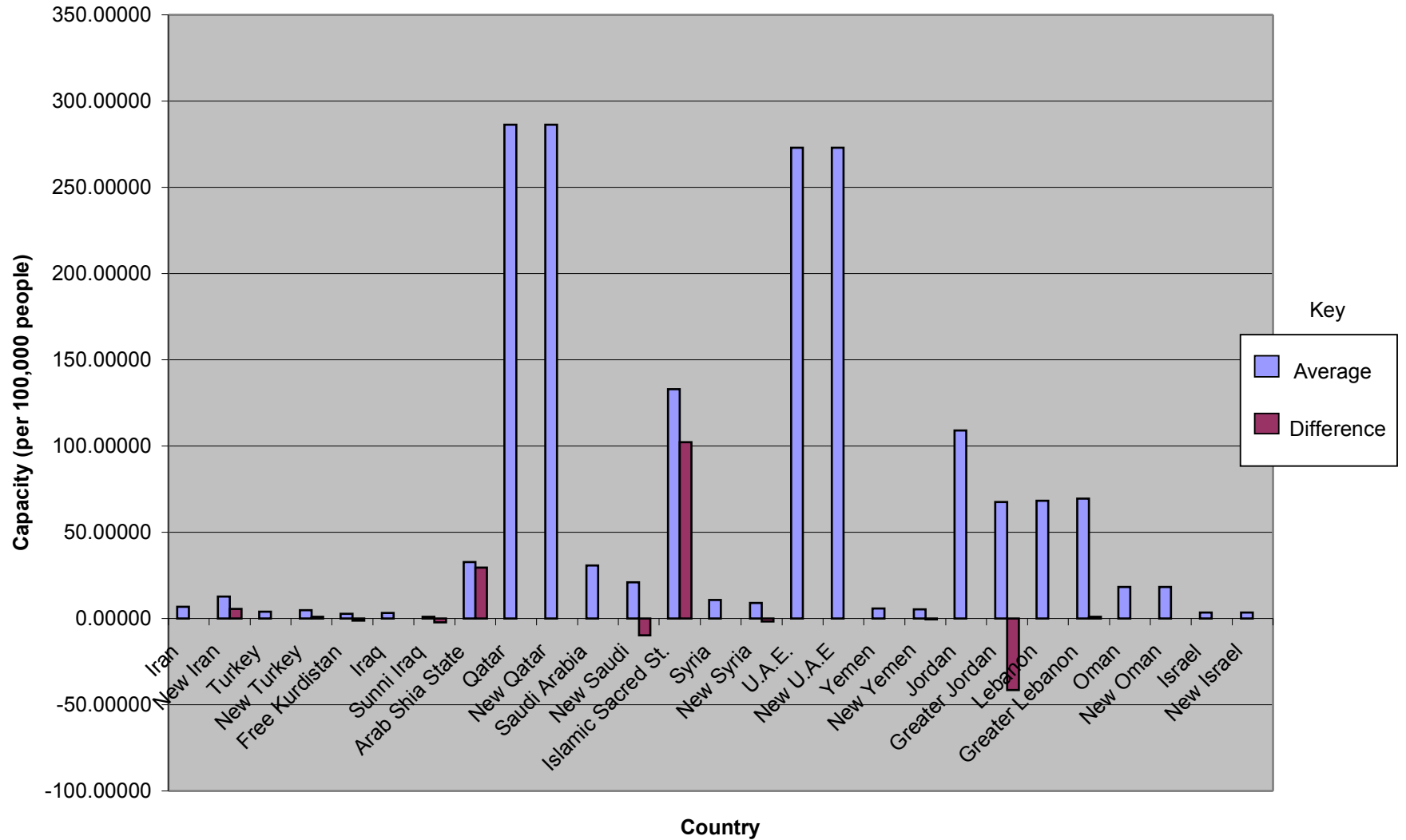
<b>Resource</b>	<b>Jordan</b>	<b>Greater Jordan</b>	<b>Lebanon</b>	<b>Greater Lebanon</b>	<b>Oman</b>	<b>New Oman</b>	<b>Israel</b>	<b>New Israel</b>
<b>Chromite (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.93481	0.93481	0.0000	0.00000
<b>Copper (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000
<b>Iron Ore (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000
<b>Lead (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000
<b>Aluminum (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000
<b>Gold (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.06447	0.06447	0.0000	0.00000
<b>Cement (tons)</b>	76.48856	89.50174	129.0639	197.57643	62.85803	62.85803	6.9153	6.91528
<b>Steel (tons)</b>	7.43409	6.90837	7.74383	7.69778	0.00000	0.00000	1.0045	1.00454
<b>Phosphate Rock (tons)</b>	334.7655	157.5722	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	2.6642	2.66420
<b>Fertilizer (tons)</b>	17.34622	16.11952	0.00000	3.13043	0.00000	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000
<b>Silver (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	9.67047	9.67047	0.0000	0.00000
<b>Titanium Oxide (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000
<b>Coal (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000
<b>Chromite Ore (lump ore)</b>	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000	0.0000	0.00000
<b>Average</b>	109.0086	67.52545	68.40387	69.468213	18.38195	18.38195	3.5280	3.52801

Table 3: Country resource capacity per capita

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Yemen</b>	<b>New Yemen</b>
<b>Chromite (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Copper (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Iron Ore (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Lead (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Aluminum (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Gold (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Cement (tons)</b>	5.88175	5.40768
<b>Steel (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Phosphate Rock (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Fertilizer (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Silver (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Titanium Oxide (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Coal (tons)</b>	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Chromite Ore (lump ore)</b>	0.00000	0.00000
<b>Average</b>	5.88175	5.40768

Table 4: Country resource capacity per capita

### Distribution of Resource Capacity



Graph 1: Country resource capacity averages and differences among new and old borders