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# GULF RESEARCH CENTER

## Newsletter

November 2022

### GRC Events & Activities

#### Germany and the Gulf



GRC Researchers meeting with the German Chancellor, Mr. Olaf Scholz, in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

On the occasion of the visit of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, GRC's Researchers, Layla Ali, Amnah Mosly, Fatma Basunbol, and Noura Alhazmi, met with the Chancellor and discuss their work and recent development in German-Gulf ties. The GRC introduced the Chancellor GRC's recent activities, such as our research papers focusing on Saudi-EU relations, sports diplomacy, and other topics. The GRC also introduced our various research programs and projects, such as 'Tafahum,' and provided an overall update on where the project stands and what has been achieved so far.



The Gulf Research Center places particular focus on the development of GCC-EU ties with an emphasis also on the bi-lateral ties with Germany. Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, published an analysis coinciding with the visit of the German Chancellor entitled 'Saudi-German Cooperation is Essential for Middle East Security.'

In the publication, Dr. Sager argues that that is currently missing in the Gulf is Germany playing of a more active political role that is commensurate with

its economic power and its position as a leading European country. This includes the need for Germany and Saudi Arabia to engage in a substantive extensive political dialogue to dissect and better understand the Middle East's most pressing problems.

Pertinent regional issues include working together to ensure that Iran becomes a responsible member of a Gulf security community, developing a joint approach toward rebuilding Iraq, engaging jointly in Yemen, including supporting the recently established Yemeni Presidential Leadership Council, and coordinating their positions to revitalize the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Broader German involvement in regional issues will undoubtedly, he argues, strengthen the processes of conflict resolution and prevention that the Middle East desperately needs. [Click here to read the full paper.](#)

The GRC has conducted numerous programs related to the German-Gulf ties. This includes close cooperation with German think tanks like the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation, CARPO, the Bertelsmann Foundation, the Berghof Foundation, the Körber Foundation and the German-Arab Chamber of Commerce (Ghorfa).

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November 2022

## تفاهم وتبادل TAFAHUM WA TABADUL



Group photo from the 4th Annual Tafahum Conference in Berlin, Germany

The fourth annual conference of the Tafahum wa Tabadul project brought together forty participants from throughout the Gulf region in Berlin, Germany to identify opportunities and openings where the regional and international community can create spaces for broader regional cooperation can begin to emerge. Within the context of establishing a comprehensive and wide-ranging regional security process, the region of West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula (WAAP) continues to be plagued by three main issues.

The first is how to foster a more structured and regular political dialogue among state actors in which there is a consistent effort to replace the continued zero-sum calculations with constructive conflict management and conflict resolution initiatives.

The second challenge is how to best address questions pertaining to broader regional economic and ecological sustainability that integrates the broader concepts of security into the relevant policy domain. This includes topics such the health security, climate change and environmental degradation, the energy transition, widespread economic uncertainty and a shifting international order.

The third challenge is creating spaces for more inclusive social interaction among the broader population of the WAAP region that would ultimately allow for a more regional mindset to take hold. At this stage, such interaction remains limited and sporadic at best.

The conference highlighted the urgent need for intensified regional approaches, mechanisms, and tools that can be utilized to overcome the prevailing security dilemma faced by the WAAP. The current developing process of regional dialogue must urgently be supported with substantive proposals for more structured and sustainable interaction. Otherwise, the risk for continued instability and even mounting violence remains high.

A key takeaway from the Tafahum fourth annual conference was that a singular approach to the complex security dynamics at play will not be sufficient to move the region towards a more substantive transformation.

One the one hand with the region still in a conflict mind-set, solutions will also have to be modest and focus on promoting more of a regional level of analysis. On the other, there is the need for additional and independent platforms for engagement at the government, expert and people-to-people level.

The Tafahum wa Tabadul project is a joint initiative of the Gulf Research Center Foundation and the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO). The project is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



## Gulf Research Meeting 2023 Call for Workshop Proposal

**GRM 2023 – Call for Workshop Proposals**

**Deadline**

**November 11, 2022**

**13th**  
**Annual Gulf Research Meeting**  
**11-13 July, 2023**



The Gulf Research Center is happy to announce that we will be holding the 13th Gulf Research Meeting (GRM) in 2023 from July 11-13, in Cambridge, UK.

The Call for Workshop Proposals has now been issued and we are keen to receive numerous quality proposals. You can access the [Call here](#).

The GRC seeks to invite scholars and specialists to apply to direct a workshop focusing on the political, economic, security or social issues of the Gulf region. A number of topics for which we

specifically like to receive proposals are listed on the call poster. However, it is important to stress that the Call is open to any topic in the social science and not limited to the topic listed on the poster. More information on the GRM can be found [here](#).

The deadline for the receipt of proposals is **November 11, 2022**.

**Workshop Proposals should be submitted to [grm@grc.net](mailto:grm@grc.net)**

The GRM Team looks forward to receiving your proposals!



## Environment and Sustainability Research Program Updates



The Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has selected Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, GRC's environment and sustainability research program manager, to be among the 35 members of the Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG). In his role, Dr. Raouf will contribute to the production of the seventh edition of UNEP's Global Environment Outlook (GEO-7). The Advisory Group plays a critical role in guiding UNEP's Executive Director, authors, and experts on the policy relevance of their work. It also assists the UN leadership in the preparation of the draft of the Summary for Policymakers.

The GRC Environment Security & Sustainability research program looks at environmental issues in the Gulf region, and seeks to document relevant and related information about specific concerns related to the Gulf, in order to deepen the awareness and understanding of the following key environmental issues:

Trends in the state of environment and natural resources in the Gulf and their natural, social and economic drivers

Major environment and sustainability initiatives

Environmental threats such as water, desertification as well as climate change and C&D debris



**Dr. Abdelraouf's recent participation in participated in the GEO 7 - Global Environment Outlook - 7 inaugural and scoping meetings in Nairobi.**



**Dr. Abelraouf's recent participation in the Hydrogen Diplomacy roundtable in Jeddah.**



The Gulf Research Center produces a wide variety of publications through its research programs, projects, and Gulf Research Meetings. The GRC's publications can be accessed on its website via [this link](#), and the commentary and analysis can be found [here](#).

## GRC Report

## GRC Commentary and Analysis



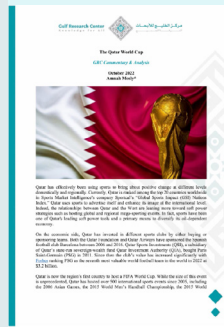
**The Sectors of the Future and their Impact on the Economy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**  
September 2022  
Gulf Research Center



**GCC / Saudi Arabia's Evolving Relationship with Japan on Energy Security**  
October 2022  
Noriko Suzuki



**US-Saudi Relations: Oil & Energy**  
October 2022  
Amnah Mosly



**The Qatar World Cup**  
October 2022  
Amnah Mosly



**Saudi Arabia Developing a Partnership with China**  
October 2022  
Layla Ali

## Araa Magazine



**Education in the GCC: Developments and Trends**  
September 2022  
Amnah Mosly



**Saudi-German Cooperation is Essential for Middle East Security**  
September 2022  
Dr. Abdulaziz Sager



**# 178 (October 2022): The Role of Oil and Gas in Shaping International Relations and the Future of the Gulf Region**



**# 177 (September 2022): The American-Western Containment of China and Russia and its Repercussions on the Gulf Region**

## October 27, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager met with the French Ambassador, Mr. Ludovic Pouille, and discussed the regular partnerships with French research centers on the Ukraine war's impact on global economic and geopolitical balances and cooperation on regional crises.



## October 24 - 28, 2022

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director, participated in the 9th Annual CPR subcommittee of UNEP in Nairobi. Dr. Abdelraouf presented a statement in the plenary opening session on behalf of Seven Major groups. In addition, Dr. Abdelraouf participated in the meeting as co-chair of Major Groups at UNEP representing the Gulf Research Center.



## October 23, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager presented a lecture entitled 'Strategic Security Priorities for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Coming Challenges' organised by the Armed Forces Intelligence and Security Authority. This was held under the patronage and presence of H.E. Commander of the Air Defense Forces, Lieutenant-General Mazyad bin Suleiman Al-Amro.



## October 20, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, received the Irish Ambassador appointed to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Mr. Gerry Cunningham, at GRC's headquarters office in Riyadh. During this meeting, they discussed Saudi-Irish relations and regional and international developments.





# GRC Participations

**October 18, 2022**

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager held an interview with Institut Montaigne and focused on the topics of 'The Ukraine Crisis and the Gulf: A Saudi Perspective.'

[Click here](#) to read the full interview



**October 12, 2022**

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, GRC's Environment Research Program Director, participated in the Hydrogen Diplomacy roundtable in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, that focused on 'Enhancing the energy & hydrogen dialogue between Saudi Arabia and Germany' organized by the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ).



**October 17 - 21, 2022**

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director, participated in the GEO 7 - Global Environment Outlook - 7 inaugural and scoping meetings in Nairobi. In addition, Dr. Abdelraouf participated in the meeting representing the Gulf Research Center as a member of the Intergovernmental Multistakeholder Advisory Group for GEO-7.



**October 11, 2022**

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager spoke at the conference entitled 'Arab Geopolitics 2022' in Rome, Italy. The NATO Defense College Foundation organized the meeting in cooperation with the Department of Political Affairs and Security Policies at NATO. Dr. Abdulaziz presented at the first session focused on 'A region looking forward.'



November 2022

## October 6 - 9, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager participated in the annual meeting of the Global Strategic Advisory Group in Italy and presented on the topic “Old Dependencies and New Prospects - Geopolitics of Security, Energy, and Climate Change.”



## October 4, 2022

Dr. Christian Koch met with Anna-Maria Pangiotakopoulou, Head of the Division for the Arabian Peninsula and Iraq Division, at the European External Action Service in Brussels. They discussed the recent Joint Communication on a Strategic Partnership with the Gulf released by the European Commission in May 2022 and how to best move forward with implementing aspects of the strategy.

## October 1 - 2, 2022

The GRC organized the scientific content activities of the International Forum for the Sustainability of Saudi Coffee, organized by the Ministry of Culture, in Jazan, Saudi Arabia. It hosted a group of Saudi and international experts to discuss the value chain of Saudi coffee.



## October 6 – 7, 2022

Dr. Christian Koch, Director of Research, spoke at the meeting of the Heads of Political Components Affairs of UN Peace Operations in the MENA region in Vienna on October 6 and 7, 2022. Dr. Koch's presentation focused on the Gulf region's local, regional, and global dynamics and ramifications. The meeting was attended and chaired by Darko Mocibob, Director of the Middle East Division in the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations at UN Headquarters in New York, and included UN field personnel stationed in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Palestine, and Yemen.



## September 30 – October 1, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager spoke at the workshop “The Middle East: Reset, Great Power Competition, and Regional Order,” organized by the Middle East Council on Global Affairs, held in Doha, Qatar. Dr. Abdulaziz's remarks focused on the visions of the regional powers and the change of regional order. Dr. Christian Koch, Director of Research at the GRC, spoke at the same workshop on the topic of how the change in regional alliances is being seen from a GCC perspective. The event brought together 40 regional experts and specialists.





## September 27, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager participated in a panel discussion entitled “The Kingdom’s International Image... Stereotyping the Image and Means of Improvement,” organized by the Salam Project for Cultural Communication in Abha, Saudi Arabia.



## September 18, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager and Dr. Ahmed Sager received Mr. Cengiz Özgencil, the President of the Bosphorus Forum, and his companions at the GRC headquarters in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. During the meeting, the sessions of the 13th Bosphorus Summit were discussed, one of which revolves around Gulf-Turkish relations.



## September 13, 2022

Noriko Suzuki, Senior Advisor of the Gulf Research Center Japan Branch, participated in an event to discuss the Abraham Accords and its impact on regional developments. The event featured H.E. Dr. Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Undersecretary for Political Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain.



## September 21, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager participated in the second security forum entitled “Creating a New Security Architecture in the Middle East: Achieving Common Security for the Region,” organized by the China Institute of International Studies. The forum’s purpose is to strengthen security and stability in the Middle East.



## September 13, 2022

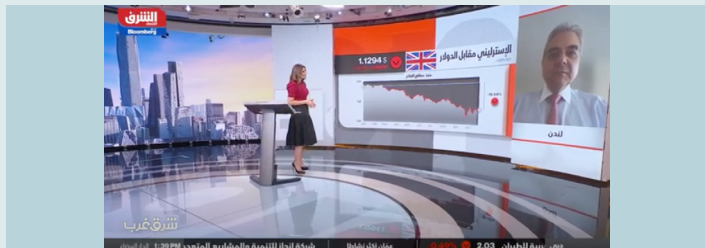
Dr. Abdulaziz Sager participated in the Medinah Endowment Conference ‘Awqaf’ held in Medinah, Saudi Arabia.





GRC media participation can be accessed at [the following link](#), which leads to the GRC official YouTube channel.

## Recent Media Participations



Dr. John Sfakianakis participated on the Al Sharq program (Bloomberg) in an episode entitled 'The British Conservative Party...the decisive hour is approaching'.



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager participated in the 'Panorama' program on Al-Arabiya on an episode entitled 'Saudi - US Relations Escalating Statements'.



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager participated in the 'Ya Hala' program and discussed the OPEC+ decision to reduce oil production.



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager participated on France 24 on a program called 'Today's Happening' that discussed the new royal orders with the recent appointment of the Crown Prince as Prime Minister.



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager participated on Al Sharq TV in an episode entitled: "Germany... Options for the Russian Test".



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager on Al Arabiya channel entitled "The Arab Peace Initiative..a historic deal". The intervention dealt with the meeting held to discuss the Arab Peace Initiative hosted by the European Union.





## **Abdullah Al Mutabagani**

**Researcher**

Abdullah Almutabagani is a researcher at the Gulf Research Center. His areas of focus are economics, energy, and defense. He completed his Bachelor's degree at Boston College in Economics and Political Science. He later obtained his Masters's Degree at Harvard University in Middle Eastern Studies, focusing on public policy.



## **Robert Mason**

**Non-Resident Research Fellow**

Robert Mason joined the Gulf Research Center as a non-resident fellow as of October 2022. He will focus on research topics such as regional security, UK-GCC relations, and nuclear issues related to Ukraine and the Gulf. He specializes in Gulf politics and the international relations of the Middle East. He is also a non-resident fellow at the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington and has served as Associate Professor and Director of the Middle East Studies Center at the American University in Cairo (AUC).



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