



مركز الخليج للأبحاث
المعرفة للجميع

Gulf Research Center
Knowledge for All

THE GULF RESEARCH CENTER

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

2025

ANNUAL

REPORT

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



Marking 25 Years of the Gulf Research Center

As we reflect on the work of the Gulf Research Center (GRC) in 2025, this year carries a particular significance. It marks the 25th anniversary of the GRC since its establishment, a milestone that invites both reflection and renewed commitment. Over a quarter of a century, the GRC has grown from a regional research initiative into an internationally recognized think tank, dedicated to advancing independent analysis, informed dialogue, and policy-relevant research on Gulf and Middle Eastern affairs.

Since its founding, the GRC has sought to provide a credible and balanced Gulf perspective at a time when the region has undergone profound political, economic, and social transformation. From shifts in regional security dynamics to the evolution of global energy markets and the changing nature of international governance, the GRC has consistently aimed to anticipate emerging trends and contribute constructively to policy debates. The breadth of our research programs, global partnerships, and convening power today reflects the steady expansion of this mission.

Looking ahead, the challenges facing the Gulf and the wider international system are becoming more complex and interconnected. As the GRC enters its next phase, we remain committed to strengthening our role as a platform for dialogue, deepening our research excellence, and supporting informed policymaking. The 25th anniversary is not only a moment to celebrate past achievements, but also a reaffirmation of our responsibility to contribute thoughtfully and constructively to the future of the region.

The year 2025 has unfolded against the backdrop of an increasingly complex regional and international environment. Global governance structures continue to face mounting pressures, and shifting geopolitical alignments have heightened uncertainty across many parts of the world. For the Gulf region in particular, covering the six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, as well as Iran, Iraq, and Yemen, these shifting dynamics have underscored the need for informed analysis, sustained dialogue, and a deeper understanding of rapidly evolving political, economic, and security trends.

In this context, the GRC has remained firmly committed to its founding mission: advancing knowledge, encouraging constructive engagement, and contributing to a more stable regional order. Throughout 2025, the GRC expanded its efforts across a broad range of programs, initiatives, and partnerships. Research and analysis remained at the heart of our work, with the Foreign Relations Research Program continuing to produce rigorous studies on Gulf-Asia, Gulf-Europe, Gulf-Latin America, and Gulf-Nordic-Baltic relations. The program's growing body of work on the evolving global governance

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

landscape, great-power competition, and its implications for the GCC further strengthened the GRC's role as a trusted source of insight for policymakers and academic communities alike.

A key highlight of the year was the GRC's role as a crucial platform for international diplomacy and high-level intellectual exchange. We were honored to host several high-level roundtables, including the visit of H.E. Mr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, President of the Federal Republic of Germany, and a meeting with H.E. Mr. David van Weel, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. In parallel, the GRC convened the 15th Annual Gulf Research Meeting (GRM), which remains the largest annual gathering of scholars and experts dedicated to the study of the Gulf. Through our Executive Learning & Training Programs, we continued to invest in the next generation of leaders, equipping them with the knowledge to navigate a complex world. These efforts were complemented by the continued excellence of our core research programs, including the Gulf Labour Markets and Migration Programme (GLMM), the Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program, and the Cultural and Media Program.

Our commitment to environmental security and sustainability continued through active participation in global forums and region-specific dialogues. The GRC's engagement on issues such as climate adaptation, energy transition, and food and water security contributed to broader policy conversations at a time when environmental challenges are becoming increasingly central to national and regional agendas.

The GRC also continued to support platforms for regional dialogue, with the Tafahum wa Tabadul Project serving as a key pillar of this work. Policy workshops held throughout the year brought together experts and officials from the GCC, Yemen, Iraq, and Iran to explore practical avenues to build confidence and advance regional cooperation. The project's focus on actionable recommendations reflects the GRC's commitment to producing tangible outcomes that contribute to long-term stability.

The GRC Foundation Brussels office continued to strengthen the GRC's engagement with European partners. Serving as a hub for research and dialogue on Gulf-Europe relations, GRCF-B played an important role in deepening understanding of shared policy priorities and exploring areas of cooperation at a time of considerable transformation across both regions.

None of these achievements would be possible without the unwavering dedication of the GRC's global team. Their commitment to academic rigor and our mission is the foundation of our success. As we look forward, the GRC remains steadfast in its belief that advancing knowledge and fostering dialogue are the most effective means to address the challenges facing our region. We are committed to building on the momentum of 2025 and continuing to provide the regional Gulf perspective that is so vital to global understanding and cooperation.

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager
Founder & Chairman
Gulf Research Center (GRC)

GRc OFFICES



The Gulf Research Center (GRC)

The Gulf Research Center (GRC) was founded in July 2000 by Saudi businessman Dr. Abdulaziz Sager. Dr. Sager's vision was to fill a significant void and conduct scholarly, high-quality research on all aspects of the broader strategic Gulf region, including the six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) as well as Iran, Iraq, and Yemen. The GRC operates on an independent, non-profit basis.

The Gulf Research Center has been consistently ranked among the top think tanks in the Middle East and worldwide in the University of Pennsylvania's Global Go-To Think Tank Index Report, especially in foreign policy research and public engagement. The GRC believes everyone has the right of access to knowledge, so it has made all its research available to the public through publications, workshops, seminars, and conferences. In addition, as a non-profit organization, GRC injects all income into new programs and activities. The GRC established its headquarters in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia with offices in Jeddah, Brussels, Geneva, Cambridge, and a support office in Dubai.

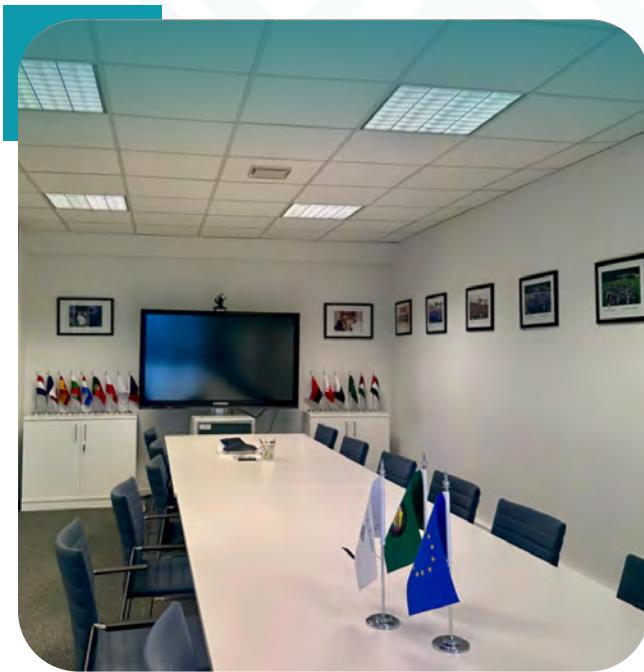


The Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels (GRCF-B)

The Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels (GRC Foundation Brussels or GRCF-B) was established in 2024 as an International Non-Profit Association in Brussels, Belgium, under the Belgian Civil Code relating to companies and associations. It is, by definition, a not-for-profit institution and an umbrella organization that develops and implements research, training, and educational programs relating to the Gulf and European regions.

The GRC Foundation Brussels conducts research on Gulf-Europe issues, and plays a key role in promoting academic excellence both in and about the Gulf region. It ensures objective and comprehensive analysis and information about this vital part of the world in relation to Europe. This is accomplished through numerous projects that the GRCF-B carries out, often in partnership with other research organizations and the European Union. The GRCF-B is situated in the capital of the European Union, the heart of Europe, and is of great benefit to its work.

GRCA OFFICES



The objectives of the GRCF Brussels office are:

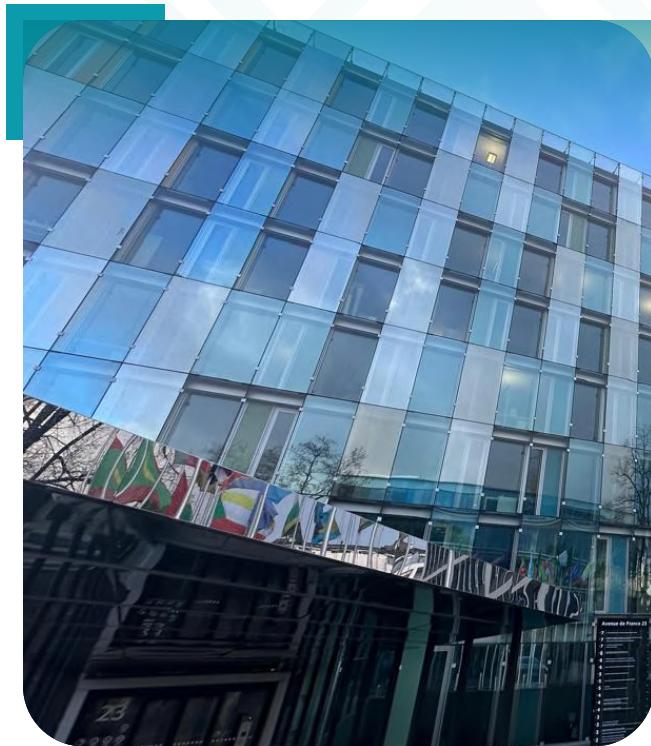
- Enhance Gulf-Europe relations through a world-class facility providing research and analysis.
- Establish a wide-ranging strategic dialogue that underpins the ties between Europe and the Gulf region.
- Provide a framework for constructive dialogue to enhance institutional capabilities in bilateral relations.
- Build a network of relevant stakeholders from politics, business, media, and academia in a holistic effort to contribute to mutually beneficial ties.
- Promote economic partnerships and enhance business-to-business ties with new initiatives and dialogues.
- Identify and propose new areas of cooperation outside the current scope.
- Support a widening cultural dialogue between Europe and the Gulf region.
- Promote youth and research exchanges.



Cooperation with renowned research institutions and other organizations in Europe is an essential part of the Foundation's work. The GRCF Brussels works to build networks across all official and unofficial channels, thus broadening and enhancing relations between the Gulf region and Europe.

The Foundation qualifies to receive funding and participate in programs supported by international organizations, the European Union, and various independent international foundations. Under the laws of the constituent states of the European Union, donors based in the European Union are eligible to receive tax benefits for supporting the work of the GRC Foundation Brussels.

GRCA OFFICES

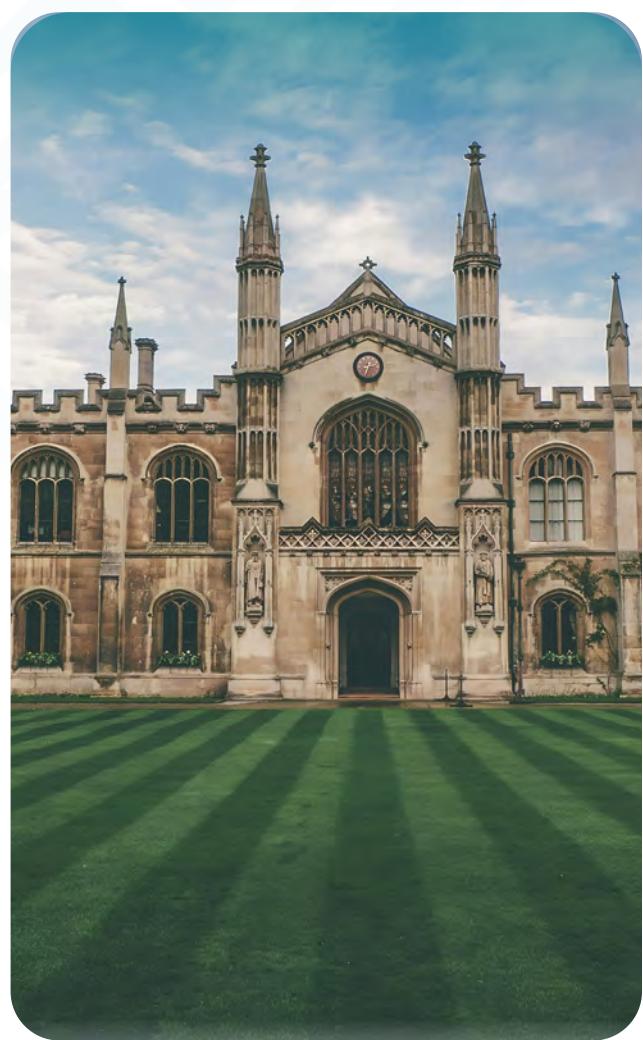


About the Gulf Research Center Foundation (GRCF)

The Gulf Research Center Foundation (GRC Foundation or GRCF) was established in 2007 in Geneva, Switzerland. It is, by definition, a non-profit institution and an umbrella organization under which research, training, and educational programs about the Gulf region are developed and implemented. The GRC Foundation conducts research on Gulf issues, promotes academic excellence in and about the Gulf region, and ensures objective and comprehensive analysis and information about this vital part of the world. This is accomplished through numerous projects that GRCF carries out, often in partnership with other research organizations. The location of the GRCF in Geneva, a place where exchanges of ideas on global governance and security regularly take place, has been crucial for its success. Cooperation with renowned research institutions, universities, and other organizations is essential to the Foundation's work.

In 2011, the Foundation was awarded special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. The GRCF is also accredited by the governing council of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). In 2012, the GRCF, together with the Migration Policy Centre (MPC) of the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence, established the Gulf Labour Markets and Migration (GLMM) Programme, promoting better understanding and policies in the critical domain of labor migration to the Gulf and to the countries of origin of the migrants. The Foundation qualifies to receive funding from and participate in programs supported by international organizations, the European Union, the United States, and various independent international foundations. Under the laws of Switzerland and the Canton of Geneva, donors based in Switzerland are eligible to receive tax benefits for supporting the work of the GRC Foundation.

GRCS OFFICES



About GRC Cambridge (GRCC)

The Gulf Research Centre Cambridge (GRCC) was established in August 2009 through a cooperative effort between the Gulf Research Center Foundation in Geneva and the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre of Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge. The primary goal of the GRCC is to advance education and research on political, economic, social, environmental, security, and energy issues related to the Gulf region. One of the critical aspects of the work of the GRCC is organizing the annual Gulf Research Meeting at the University of Cambridge. More information about the Gulf Research Meeting is available [here](#).

The Gulf Research Centre Cambridge is a non-profit, registered charity organization under the Charity Commission for England and Wales and can therefore receive tax-deductible donations.

About the GRC Support Office: Knowledge Corporation (K-Corp)

The GRC's support office is based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Knowledge Corporation is a solution provider specializing in event management, knowledge and consultancy, ICT, publishing, media production, and training.



GRC IN 25 YEARS

Celebrating 25 Years of the Gulf Research Center

A Quarter Century of Knowledge, Dialogue, and Impact

In 2025, the Gulf Research Center (GRC) proudly celebrated its 25th anniversary, marking a quarter century of thought leadership, dialogue, and research excellence in the service of the Gulf region and the wider international community.

Since its founding in 2000 by Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, the GRC has grown from a pioneering Gulf-based think tank into a globally recognized institution that bridges research, policy, and strategic engagement. For twenty-five years, the Center has served as a catalyst for knowledge production, policy analysis, and international cooperation, contributing to a deeper understanding of the Gulf's evolving role in global affairs.

Looking Ahead: The Next 25 Years

As the Gulf region continues to assert a central role in global affairs, the GRC stands ready to build upon its 25-year legacy. The coming years will see the Center expand its research horizons, strengthen partnerships, and launch new initiatives addressing emerging priorities, from energy transition and climate diplomacy to regional security, maritime cooperation, and global governance.

With an unwavering commitment to independence, quality, and impact, the Gulf Research Center remains dedicated to its mission: Bridging the Gulf and the world through knowledge, dialogue, and collaboration.



GRC IN 25 YEARS

Milestones and Achievements

Over the past two and a half decades, the GRC has achieved an impressive record of institutional and intellectual accomplishments that reflect its regional leadership and global outreach:



53 Research Programs and 30 Research Projects, addressing critical regional and international policy themes.



240 Staff Members (Cumulative) representing **23 nationalities**, reflecting the Center's international diversity.



12 Accreditations and Recognitions, attesting to the Center's academic and policy impact.



500+ Conferences, Forums, Workshops, and Lectures, bringing together decision-makers, diplomats, scholars, and experts.



320+ Publications, including books, policy papers, and specialized reports.



115+ Cooperation and Partnership Agreements with think tanks, universities, and institutions worldwide.



37,000+ Event Participants from across the Gulf and the world.



100,000+ Pages Translated, ensuring accessibility and cross-cultural dialogue between Arabic and international audiences.



18 Training and Executive Learning Programs attended by over **1,200 participants**, supporting professional and policy capacity building.



180+ Visiting Scholars and Interns, contributing to academic exchange and research collaboration.



1,200+ External Research Contributors, enhancing the breadth and depth of GRC's output.



6 Scholarships Granted, fostering academic excellence and the development of young Gulf researchers.

These achievements highlight the GRC's unique role as a hub for **policy dialogue, knowledge exchange, and regional cooperation**.

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GRC MAIN HIGHLIGHTS

GRC Main Highlights

Roundtable: Visit of H.E. Mr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, President of the Federal Republic of Germany

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

February 3, 2025



The Gulf Research Center (GRC) had the distinct honor of hosting a high-level roundtable on February 3, 2025, in Riyadh, marking the official visit of **His Excellency Mr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, President of the Federal Republic of Germany**, to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This gathering provided an invaluable platform for in-depth discussions on the evolving relationship between Saudi Arabia and Germany, highlighting key areas of cooperation and mutual interest.

The roundtable was moderated by **Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center**, and was attended by high-level personalities including **His Royal Highness Prince Turki Al-Faisal, Chairman of the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies**, and **His Excellency Dr. Majid Al Qasabi, Minister of Commerce of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**. Bringing together leading policymakers, scholars, and experts, the

discussion delved into the strategic, economic, and cultural dimensions of Saudi-German relations, aiming to strengthen bilateral ties and foster greater collaboration.



Among the distinguished speakers was **Mrs. Hoda Al-Holaisi, former member of the Shura Council**, who offered valuable insights on pressing global issues. Addressing the topic of Islamophobia, she underscored its growing significance for the West and the urgent need for proactive engagement to counter misconceptions. She emphasized the importance of fostering mutual understanding through dialogue, advocating for inclusivity, and encouraging fair media representation to challenge stereotypes and promote a more accurate and balanced perception of Islam and Muslim communities worldwide.



GRC Main Highlights

The roundtable served as an important milestone in reinforcing the longstanding relationship between Saudi Arabia and Germany, paving the way for enhanced cooperation across various sectors. Through open and constructive discussions, the event underscored the shared commitment to deepening diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties between the two nations.

Roundtable Meeting with H.E. Mr. David van Weel, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

October 21, 2025



On October 21, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), hosted H.E. Mr. David van Weel,

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and his accompanying delegation at the GRC office in Riyadh during his official visit to the Kingdom. The meeting served as an important platform for a constructive exchange on areas of mutual interest and recent regional developments. Discussions focused on strengthening Gulf-Netherlands relations, exploring avenues for enhanced research and academic cooperation, and identifying new opportunities in economic and investment partnership. Both sides underscored the importance of dialogue and knowledge exchange in advancing shared priorities and fostering deeper understanding between the Gulf region and Europe.



Central Asia - GCC Think Tank Forum

Strengthening Strategic Partnership Between Central Asia and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC): From Historical Connections to Comprehensive Cooperation

Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan

April 28-29, 2025

Organized by the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies (ISRS) under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Gulf Research Center (GRC)

GRC Main Highlights



The **Gulf Research Center (GRC)**, in collaboration with the **Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies (ISRS) under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan**, organized the first Think Tank Forum between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states and the Central Asian countries, under the theme “Strengthening the Strategic Partnership between the GCC and Central Asian Countries: From Historical Ties to Comprehensive Cooperation,” on April 28-29, 2025, in Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan. The forum was organized in preparation for the GCC-Central Asia Heads of State Summit, held in Samarkand in May 2025.

The forum brought together numerous research centers from both sides, as well as Gulf ambassadors and diplomats accredited to Central Asian countries, along with the participation of the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan, researchers, interested experts, and media representatives. The opening session, held on April 28, 2025, featured remarks from the organizers. **Dr. Abdulaziz Sager**, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), delivered a speech welcoming the participants and attendees, highlighting the key areas of cooperation between the two sides in the political, economic, security, and cultural fields. He also expressed his appreciation to the Secretariat General of the GCC and the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of

the GCC member states, acknowledging their efforts to advance relations between the GCC and Central Asian countries across all domains.



The opening session also included speeches by **Dr. Eldor Aripov**, Former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan and Director of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies; **Dr. Bahrom Aloev**, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan; and **Dr. Wejdan Fahad**, Head of the Arab and Islamic Organizations Department, Political Affairs Sector at the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).



The forum's sessions focused on:

1. Political and Security Dialogue
2. Economic Cooperation and Investment Opportunities
3. Cultural and Humanitarian Cooperation and Development

GRC Main Highlights

There was a shared recognition of the need to build on this legacy by expanding collaboration across a range of sectors, including political dialogue, economic integration, energy, and cultural exchange.



A strong focus was placed on enhancing regional and international security cooperation. Delegates expressed a united commitment to jointly address shared threats such as terrorism, extremism, cyber insecurity, and organized crime, through closer political



coordination and intelligence exchange. On the economic front, the Forum underlined the vast potential to increase trade volumes, diversify investment flows, and pursue joint projects in key sectors like infrastructure, agriculture, technology, and logistics. The development of new transport corridors linking Central Asia and

the Gulf was highlighted as a strategic priority to enhance both regions' roles in global supply chains.

The participants also prioritized energy cooperation, especially in renewable energy, green hydrogen, and sustainable development. There was strong support for accelerating the green transition and adopting innovative technologies. Equally important was the affirmation of cultural and humanitarian ties, with calls to expand educational and scientific exchanges, promote tourism, and invest in preserving shared cultural heritage. Empowering youth and fostering innovation were identified as central to the long-term partnership.

Participants welcomed the Second Central Asia-GCC Summit in Samarkand and proposed including in its outcomes a recommendation to formalize the Forum of Analytical Centers as a regular fixture. The creation of a permanent platform for policy dialogue and joint initiatives among think tanks was endorsed, and it was announced that Saudi Arabia will host the next edition of the Forum. The Tashkent gathering thus laid the groundwork for a more structured and forward-looking strategic partnership between Central Asia and the GCC.



GRC Main Highlights

Gulf Research Meeting 2025

Annual 15th Gulf Research Meeting 2025

Organized by the **Gulf Research Center Cambridge**, United Kingdom

July 22-24, 2025



Participants of the 15th Gulf Research Meeting

The 15th Annual Gulf Research Meeting (GRM), organized by the Gulf Research Center, took place at the University of Cambridge from July 22-24, 2025. Held over two and a half days, the meeting featured 12 thematic workshops and brought together more than 400 participants from a wide range of academic, research, and policy institutions. For the 15th GRM, 44 workshop proposals were received, of which 12 were selected. In total, over 600 abstracts were submitted, resulting in 240 accepted papers, demonstrating the continued global relevance

of Gulf-focused scholarship and dialogue. The GRM Opening Ceremony was held on July 22 and was moderated by GRC Director of Research and Executive Director of the GRC Foundation Brussels office, Dr. Christian Koch and included welcoming remarks by **Dr. Abdulaziz Sager**, Founder and Chairman of the GRC. This was followed by recorded speeches from **H.H. Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud**, Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and **H.E. Mr. Jasem Mohamed Albudaiwi**, Secretary General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf.

GRC Main Highlights



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC)



Dr. Christian Koch, GRC Director of Research and Executive Director of the GRC Foundation Brussels Office

H.H. Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud highlighted today's growing global uncertainty and stressed the need to preserve a rules-based international order as a cornerstone for preventing conflict and fostering meaningful international cooperation. In his remarks, he underscored the importance of platforms such as the Gulf Research Meeting (GRM) in cultivating regional and cross-sectoral trust, promoting informed dialogue, and bridging policy and academic communities. He also reaffirmed the Kingdom's position that the establishment of a viable, sovereign Palestinian state remains essential for achieving lasting peace and justice not only in the region but globally. **You can watch the full video of the remarks [here](#).**

GRC Main Highlights



H.E. Jasem Mohamed Albudaiwi, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), highlighted the Council's evolving role as a pragmatic mediator and a stabilizing force amid an increasingly complex and volatile global landscape. He emphasized the GCC's growing contributions across multiple domains, including regional security, proactive diplomacy, humanitarian assistance, and climate action, demonstrating the Council's commitment to addressing both traditional and emerging challenges. In his remarks, H.E. Albudaiwi praised the Gulf Research Meeting (GRM) as a vital and timely platform that brings together diverse voices to deepen collective understanding of the region's most pressing issues. He underscored the importance of knowledge-based engagement in shaping effective policy responses and expressed confidence that the GRM will continue to support informed decision-making at both regional and international levels. **You can watch the full video of the remarks [here](#).**



Among the attendees of the Opening Ceremony was **H.E. Prof. Einas Al Eissa**, Vice Minister of Education of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, whose presence underscored the importance of education and knowledge exchange in shaping regional and global discourse. The Opening Ceremony brought together a diverse group that included policy experts, GRM participants, academics, practitioners, and government officials reflecting the interdisciplinary and international nature of the Gulf Research Meeting.

As part of the Opening Ceremony, a panel discussion was held featuring **Dr. Comfort Ero**, President & CEO, International Crisis Group; **H.E. Luigi Di Maio**, European Union Special Representative (EUSR) for the Gulf region, European External Action Service (EEAS); **H.E. Dr. Abdelaziz Aluwaiesq**, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs & Negotiation, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC); and **H.E. Dr. Majed Al-Ansari**, Advisor to the Prime Minister and Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, President of the Center for International Policy Research (CIPR). The panel addressed key challenges in the Gulf and wider region, from ongoing conflicts to humanitarian crises, and assessed international responses to a global order in transition. Panelists offered a sober assessment of how the international

GRC Main Highlights

system, marked by fragmentation, multipolar competition, and weakened multilateral institutions, has struggled to deliver coherent responses to these crises.

The discussion also highlighted the EU's evolving role in the Middle East and the GCC's increasing global engagement amid rising regional tensions. A central theme throughout the discussion was the unresolved Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Panelists stressed the urgency of realizing the two-state solution, with the Gulf asserting that lasting security hinges on a just resolution for a sovereign Palestinian state. The discussion also explored the European Union's evolving posture in the Middle East. Speakers acknowledged the EU's growing diplomatic outreach and development assistance, but called for a more assertive, coordinated role that moves beyond statements of concern to tangible political action. The panel further recognized the Gulf Cooperation Council's increasing global engagement, noting that Gulf states are no longer passive actors but active contributors to international diplomacy, conflict mediation, climate negotiations, and humanitarian aid. As regional tensions intensify, whether in Gaza, the Red Sea, or beyond, panelists agreed that platforms like the Gulf Research Meeting are essential in shaping cross-regional understanding and advancing cooperative solutions to shared challenges. **You can watch the full panel session [here](#).**



GRM 2025 Opening Ceremony Panelist Speakers

GRM 2025 Opening Ceremony & Photo Gallery



H.E. Prof. Einas Al Eissa, Vice Minister for Education, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



H.E. Dr. Abdelaziz Aluwaisheq, GCC Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs & Negotiation



H.E. Dr. Majed Al-Ansari, Advisor to the Prime Minister and Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, President of the Center for International Policy Research (CIPR)

GRC Main Highlights



H.E. Luigi Di Maio, H.E. Dr. Majed Al-Ansari, and H.E. Dr. Abdulaziz Aluwaiesheq



GRM 2025 participants at the Opening Ceremony



Hana Jalloul Muro, Vice-Chair of the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs (S&D Group) and the Parliament's Rapporteur for Saudi Arabia



GRM 2025 participants at the Opening Ceremony



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, GRC Chairman, Itonde Kakoma, President of Interpeace, Hannan Alghamdi, GRC Researcher



Dr. Comfort Ero, President & CEO, International Crisis Group

GRC Main Highlights



H.E. Dr. Abdelaziz Aluwaisheq, GCC Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs & Negotiation



H.E. Luigi Di Maio, European Union Special Representative (EUSR) for the Gulf region, European External Action Service (EEAS)



H.E. Dr. Majed Al-Ansari, Advisor to the Prime Minister and Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, President of the Center for International Policy Research (CIPR)



GRM 2025 Opening Ceremony participants: Sahar El Mizairi, Bloomberg Asharq News, Saudi Arabia



GRM 2025 Opening Ceremony participants: Rawana AlDajani, Bahrain Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies "Derasat," Assistant Analyst



GRM 2025 participants at the Opening Ceremony



GRM 2025 participants at the Opening Ceremony

GRC Main Highlights



H.E. Prof. Einas Al-Eissa, Vice Minister of Education, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Hana Jalloul Muro, Member of the European Parliament



Over two days, the Gulf Research Meeting conducted the following 12 parallel workshops:

GRM 2025 Workshops



Workshop 1: GCC 2030 and Beyond: National Visions, Fintech, and the Future of Finance



Workshop 2: Sustainable and Regenerative Tourism Strategies in the Gulf after COVID-19

GRC Main Highlights



Workshop 3: Nature-Based Solutions for a Circular Economy Transformation in the GCC Countries



Workshop 8: Digital and Social Media Influencers Impact on Developing Country Image in Light of GCC National Visions



Workshop 4: Net Zero Gulf Cities: Innovations and Sustainable Strategies



Workshop 9: GCC Futurescapes: Past and Present



Workshop 5: Great Power Competition in the Asia-Pacific: Challenges for Gulf Economic and Political Interests



Workshop 10: Internationalization of Higher Education in the Gulf: Reality or Fantasy?



Workshop 6: GCC States and Non-Arab Regional Middle Powers: Opportunities and Challenges Amidst Shifting Regional Balances



Workshop 11: Highly Skilled Migrants and the GCC Countries Drivers, Perceptions, Policies, and New Dynamics



Workshop 7: Power Relations Between the GCC and the Horn of Africa in an Uncertain World



Workshop 12: Enhancing the Gulf States Security against Hybrid Threats: Building Resilience and Regional Cooperation within GCC

GRC Main Highlights

The Gulf Research Center Participation as a Partner Organization at the Doha Forum 2025

Doha, Qatar

December 6-8, 2025

A maroon rectangular graphic containing information about GRC sessions at the Doha Forum 2025. It includes the Doha Forum logo, the GRC logo, and a list of four sessions with their dates, times, and locations. It also mentions partners and is in partnership with several organizations.

The Gulf Research Center (GRC) was proud to participate as a **Partner Organization** in the **23rd Doha Forum**, held from 6-8 December 2025 under the theme “Justice in Action: Beyond Promises to Progress.” The Forum brought together senior policymakers, diplomats, academics, and civil society leaders from around the world to engage in forward-looking discussions on governance, security, and international cooperation at a time of heightened global uncertainty.

As part of its contribution to the Forum, the GRC convened four high-level sessions in collaboration with leading international research and policy institutions: **the Center for International Policy Research (CIPR)**, **New Ground Research**, the **Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI)**, and the **Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS)**. Held over the three days of the Forum, these sessions provided a platform for cross-regional dialogue and in-depth analysis of key political, economic, and security developments shaping the global landscape. Through its active engagement at the Doha Forum 2025, the GRC reaffirmed its commitment to fostering inclusive dialogue, bridging regional perspectives, and contributing rigorous policy analysis to support constructive international cooperation.

The GRC-led sessions addressed the following themes:

- Gulf-EU Relations in the Age of Strategic Isolation
- GCC-Latin America Relations: New Pathways for Economic Growth and Strategic Cooperation
- Shifting Power Balances: Navigating Security in the Gulf
- Promoting Dialogues on Global Co-Existence

GRC Main Highlights

Collectively, these discussions brought together policymakers, experts, and thought leaders from the Gulf, Europe, Latin America, and beyond, with the aim of identifying practical avenues for cooperation, enhancing mutual understanding, and contributing policy-relevant insights to ongoing regional and global debates.

The first GRC session at the Doha Forum 2025, organized in partnership with CIPR, KAS, and ISPI, focused on “Gulf-EU Relations in the Age of Strategic Isolation” and took place on 6 December 2025. The session examined the evolving dynamics of Gulf-European relations against the backdrop of increasing geopolitical fragmentation, shifting power centers, and uncertainty in transatlantic decision-making.

- **Dr. Abdulaziz Sager**, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated as a speaker alongside a distinguished panel comprising:
- **H.E. Dr. Majed Al Ansari**, Advisor to the Prime Minister and Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State of Qatar
- **Dr. Norbert Röttgen**, MP, Deputy Head of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group, German Bundestag
- **Dr. Paolo Magri**, President of the Advisory Board, ISPI

The session was moderated by Ms. Caroline Kanter, Deputy Head of Division for European and International Cooperation at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS).

Discussions focused on the strategic implications of an increasingly unpredictable global environment, including uncertainties surrounding U.S. foreign policy, the recalibration of European strategic autonomy, and the

growing role of the Gulf states as diplomatic and economic actors beyond their immediate region. Panelists explored concrete pathways to deepen Gulf-EU cooperation, particularly in the areas of political dialogue, mediation and conflict resolution, economic diversification, and multilateral engagement. The session underscored the importance of sustained Gulf-European partnerships in navigating the challenges of a shifting global order and advancing shared interests in stability, development, and global governance.



The second session organized by the Gulf Research Center (GRC) at the 23rd Doha Forum took place on 6 December 2025 and focused on “**GCC-Latin America Relations: New Pathways for Economic Growth and Strategic Cooperation**.” The panel examined the growing strategic relevance of Gulf-Latin American engagement amid shifting global supply chains, heightened geopolitical competition, and the search for diversified and resilient economic partnerships.

The session brought together senior policymakers and regional experts, reflecting both governmental and institutional perspectives. Speakers included:

GRC Main Highlights

- **H.E. Alejandro Darío Sánchez Pereira**, Secretary of the Presidency, Republic of Uruguay
- **Mr. Adel Alsanad**, Director of the Americas Department, GCC Secretariat
- **H.E. Carlos Arturo Hoyos**, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Panama
- **Dr. Abdulaziz Sager**, Founder and Chairman, Gulf Research Center

The discussion was moderated by Ms. Eleni Giokos, CNN Correspondent, who guided the conversation toward practical policy insights and forward-looking cooperation frameworks.

Panelists highlighted that Gulf-Latin American relations are entering a new phase, moving beyond traditional commercial exchanges toward more comprehensive strategic partnerships. Particular emphasis was placed on expanding trade and investment flows, strengthening logistics and transport connectivity, and leveraging Gulf capital and Latin American production capacity to support long-term economic diversification on both sides.

Key areas of cooperation discussed included **energy and energy transition**, where participants underscored opportunities for collaboration in renewables, green hydrogen, and transitional fuels, as well as the role of Latin America as a reliable partner in supporting global energy security. The panel also addressed **food security and agriculture**, noting the complementary nature of Gulf investment capacity and Latin America's agricultural resources, and the importance of sustainable farming practices and resilient supply chains in an era of climate stress.

In addition, the discussion explored cooperation in **critical minerals and mining**, recognizing Latin America's growing importance in global supply chains for lithium, copper, and other strategic resources essential for clean energy technologies and digital infrastructure. Panelists emphasized the need for responsible investment frameworks, technology transfer, and regulatory cooperation to ensure that such partnerships support sustainable development and local value creation.

Infrastructure development and financing were also central themes, with speakers pointing to opportunities for Gulf sovereign wealth funds and private-sector actors to support transport corridors, ports, and logistics hubs across Latin America. These investments, participants noted, could enhance regional connectivity while integrating Latin American economies more closely into global trade networks linking the Middle East, Africa, and Asia.

Throughout the session, speakers stressed the importance of institutional dialogue, political trust, and people-to-people engagement as foundations for durable cooperation. The panel concluded that deeper GCC-Latin America partnerships, anchored in sustainability, diversification, and strategic complementarity, have the potential to contribute not only to mutual economic growth, but also to broader global stability in an increasingly fragmented international system.



GRC Main Highlights

On the second day of the Doha Forum, the Gulf Research Center (GRC) continued its engagement with a closed, invitation-only roundtable titled “**Shifting Power Balances: Navigating Security in the Gulf**.” The session was organized in collaboration with New Ground Research and brought together a select group of senior policymakers, regional experts, and security practitioners for an in-depth and candid exchange.

Held under Chatham House Rules, the closed format enabled participants to engage openly on sensitive security dynamics affecting the Gulf, including evolving threat perceptions, changing regional alignments, and the implications of great-power competition for Gulf security architectures. Discussions also examined the recalibration of U.S. engagement in the region, the expanding roles of regional actors, and the growing importance of strategic autonomy and multilateral cooperation for Gulf states.

Participants explored both short-term risks and longer-term structural shifts shaping the Gulf security environment, with particular attention to maritime security, regional de-escalation efforts, and emerging non-traditional threats.



The Gulf Research Center (GRC) concluded its participation at the Doha Forum 2025 with a high-level public panel titled “**Dialogues on Global Coexistence**,” organized in partnership with the **Center for International Policy Research (CIPR)**. The session served as a fitting culmination of GRC’s engagement at the Forum, bringing together senior policymakers and peacebuilding leaders to reflect on the growing urgency of coexistence, dialogue, and preventive diplomacy in an increasingly fragmented global environment.

The panel featured a distinguished group of speakers:

- **Dr. Abdulaziz Sager**, Founder and Chairman, Gulf Research Center (GRC)
- **Dr. Comfort Ero**, President and CEO, International Crisis Group
- **Mr. Itonde Kakoma**, President, Interpeace
- **H.E. Dr. Majed Al Ansari**, Advisor to the Prime Minister and Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, State of Qatar

The discussion was moderated by Dr. Christian Koch, Director of Research and Executive Manager of the GRC Foundation Brussels, who guided the conversation toward both strategic and human dimensions of peacebuilding and coexistence.

This session formally launched the joint initiative between the Gulf Research Center and Interpeace on “**Dialogues on Global Peaceful Co-Existence**.” The initiative aims to create a sustained platform for exploring innovative and inclusive approaches to peace, focusing on building shared principles, strengthening collective action, and identifying “islands of cooperation” that can endure beyond traditional geopolitical and ideological divides.

GRC Main Highlights

Panelists reflected on the limitations of crisis-driven responses and underscored the importance of preventive diplomacy, early engagement, and investment in institutions capable of sustaining peace over the long term. Drawing on experiences from conflict-affected regions, speakers emphasized the need to elevate local voices, support mediation efforts, and reinforce multilateral and regional mechanisms that promote dialogue and trust.

The conversation moved beyond policy prescriptions to address the human dimension of coexistence, highlighting the moral

responsibility of leaders, institutions, and societies to uphold dignity, inclusion, and dialogue in the face of polarization and protracted conflict. The panel resonated strongly with the audience, offering a powerful reminder that peace is not only a strategic necessity but also a shared human endeavor.

By concluding its Doha Forum 2025 engagement with this session, the GRC reaffirmed its commitment to advancing thoughtful, values-based dialogue and to supporting practical initiatives that contribute to peaceful coexistence and sustainable global cooperation.



GRC Main Highlights

Official Launch of the Arab Think Tank and Research Network (ARTTN)

Manama, Bahrain

December 22, 2025



The **Gulf Research Center (GRC)**, in partnership with the **Bibliotheca Alexandrina**, was pleased to officially launch the **Arab Think Tank and Research Network (ARTTN)** on **22 December 2025**, marking the establishment of a new institutional platform dedicated to strengthening research collaboration and advancing policy-relevant knowledge production across the Arab world.

The launch was formally announced during the **7th Annual Forum of the Bahrain Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (Derasat)**, held in the Kingdom of Bahrain under the title "**Arab Research Consortium for Sustainability and Development**," with the participation of senior officials, leading Arab think tanks, diplomats, and experts. The initiative is fully aligned with Item Twelve of the Jeddah Declaration, adopted at the 32nd Arab Summit held in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 19 May 2023, which called for the establishment of an Arab intellectual incubator for research and studies in sustainability and economic development.

ARTTN aims to serve as a structured and inclusive framework that brings together Arab think tanks, research centers, and scholars to

promote cooperation, knowledge exchange, and joint research initiatives. The Network seeks to strengthen the role of research institutions in supporting evidence-based policymaking and addressing key regional challenges related to development, governance, and sustainability.

The **First Annual Forum of the Arab Think Tank and Research Network** will be held on **1-2 April 2026** at the **Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Arab Republic of Egypt**. Think tanks, research centers, and scholars from across the Arab world are invited to join ARTTN and contribute to building a shared Arab knowledge space that supports informed decision-making and sustainable development.



GRC Main Highlights



Click [here](#) to access the ARTTN introductory presentation:

To register with the Network:

For Think Tanks, click [here](#).

For Researchers, click [here](#).



2025

ANNUAL REPORT

GRC RESEARCH PROGRAMS

GRC Research Programs

GRC Foreign Relations Program



Director of Program: Dr. Christian Koch

The Gulf Research Center's mission is to advance information and knowledge relating to the Gulf by providing a comprehensive, independent, and credible platform for advanced research on GCC politics, economics, defense, security, and social issues, and their implications and relevance. The scope of the research programs is defined in coordination with the GRC Academic Board and is continuously updated to ensure that the research aligns with current issues of concern.

The GRC undertakes research on all elements impacting policymaking in the Gulf, including: political systems and development, foreign relations of the Gulf, defense and security issues, and the economy, as well as environmental issues and the role of energy in its regional and worldwide dimensions. In each of its research programs, it is the objective of the GRC and its extensive community of researchers and contributors to shed light on unexplored issues and relationships that are and will be of increased importance both for the Gulf region and the rest of the world.

The Foreign Relations Program at the Gulf Research Center (GRC) serves as a cornerstone for advancing the study of the Gulf's evolving relationships with various territorial regions across the globe. Through rigorous research and analysis, the program explores key areas

of cooperation and challenges in **Gulf-Asia**, **Gulf-Latin America**, **Gulf-Sub-Saharan Africa**, **Gulf-Nordic-Baltic**, and **Gulf-Europe** relations. By fostering a deeper understanding of these interconnected dynamics, the program aims to contribute to policy-making and strengthen the Gulf's role as a pivotal player in global affairs.

Structure of the Research Programs:

Each of the research areas is structured to encourage the dissemination of original research and to serve as an information resource base where all materials necessary for a solid understanding of an area of interest come together. Each research program involves:

- **Research and analysis:** The core of each program is substantive academic research with a particular emphasis on policy issues, and their implications and relevance. A series of research projects look in-depth at some of the issues defining the region, with the aim of putting forward policy prescriptions and analysis within a proper context.
- **Conferences and workshops:** The GRC is active in organizing conferences and workshops that complement its various research programs, with the aim of creating more clarity within and

GRC Research Programs

interaction between policy and academic communities. In addition, GRC events also reflect current discussions and concerns in the region and are meant to highlight those debates. Click [here](#) to see our upcoming and past events.

- **Executive Learning:** One important component of the research programs is to conduct executive learning programs that disseminate knowledge to key individuals, keeping GRC research relevant to key stakeholders.

GRC Foreign Relations Program Activities:

GCC Diplomats Roundtable

January 23, 2025

The Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels (GRCF-B) hosted an informal discussion with diplomats of the GCC states stationed in Brussels. The session focused on presenting the work of the GRC and the GRCF-B as well as an overview of the status of GCC-EU relations and its future outlook.

The participants agreed that GCC-EU relations have been improving and continue to be on a positive trajectory. In recent years, the two sides' points of communication have significantly increased at the institutional and governmental levels, guided by the "Strategic Partnership Document" put forward by the EU in May 2022. However, the fact that the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations have not been restarted and the issue of visa liberalization have been identified as two specific issues of concern.



Looking Forward: Outlines for Developing GCC-Latin America Cooperation Webinar

January 29, 2025

MODERATOR
Dr. Christian Koch
Director of Research & Executive
Education, Gulf Research Center
Foundation Brussels

OPENING REMARKS

Dr. Abdellatif Alowaisi
Assistant Secretary General for
Negotiations & Strategic Dialogue, Gulf
Cooperation Council

HE Dr. Hicham Caidane
Ambassador of Mexico to
Saudi Arabia

Prof. Cecilia Porta de Oliveira
Professor of International
Relations, Federal University of
São Paulo, Brazil

Prof. Alejandro Galindo Marinos
Professor of Social Sciences,
University of Monterrey, Mexico

Dr. Paola Belli
Director of the Middle East
Committee of the Argentine Council
for International Relations (CARI),
Argentina

January 29, 2025
7:30 PM to 9:00 PM KSA | 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM CST | 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM ART/BRT

zoom

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The Gulf Research Center (GRC) in collaboration with the Mexican Council on Foreign Relations (COMEXI) and the Argentine Council on International Relations (CARI), hosted a webinar discussing key areas of cooperation between the GCC and Latin America. The session, moderated by Dr. Christian Koch, Director of Research at the GRC, aimed to explore trade and investment opportunities, geopolitical dynamics, and sustainable development initiatives.

A recurring theme throughout the webinar was the potential for expanding economic collaboration between the GCC and Latin America. The discussion underscored the importance of strengthening trade agreements and the potential for investment in key sectors—including mining, food security, renewable energy, and infrastructure.

Energy and infrastructure emerged as critical areas of shared interest. The GCC states have expressed keen interest in Latin America's expertise in nuclear energy, exemplified by Saudi Arabia's operation of a small nuclear reactor supplied by Argentina. Renewable energy cooperation was also discussed as both regions prioritize climate resilience and sustainable urbanization. The conversation extended beyond economic cooperation to address the geopolitical landscape shaping GCC-Latin America relations. Participants acknowledged the challenges posed by a shifting global order, including the evolving roles of major powers such as the United States and China. Latin America's growing engagement with BRICS+, which now includes the UAE, presents new opportunities for multilateral cooperation. Strengthening diplomatic and security dialogues between the two regions was deemed essential to advancing mutual interests in global governance and regional stability.

Cultural and educational exchanges were also recognized as pivotal to deepening bilateral relations. The speakers advocated for fostering greater people-to-people connectivity through student exchange programs, academic collaborations, and language-learning initiatives. Additionally, the role of the Arab diaspora in Latin America was acknowledged as a valuable bridge for facilitating cultural understanding and business interactions. Tourism was identified as another potential growth area, with improved visa policies and direct flight connections seen as means to bolster engagement.

One key proposal emerging from the webinar was the establishment of a biennial GCC-Latin America Summit to institutionalize diplomatic and economic dialogues. The creation of a permanent Latin American trade exhibition in Riyadh was also suggested as a way to showcase regional products and services. Furthermore, the importance of strengthening think tank collaborations and institutional frameworks was emphasized.

The discussions highlighted the necessity of sustained engagement in trade, investment, education, and political diplomacy. Moving forward, concrete policy actions and institutional commitments will be vital to transforming dialogue into tangible results.

To access the full webinar summary [here](#).



GRC Research Programs

EU-GCC Partnership Discussion with Members of the Middle East Working Group in the European Council

March 28, 2025



The Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels together with the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) and the Gulf Peninsula and Iraq and Regional Affairs Divisions of the European External Action Service (EEAS) held an informal thematic discussion on the EU-GCC Partnership at the EEAS headquarters in Brussels.

The session brought forward numerous substantive ideas on how to strengthen EU-GCC ties and cooperation in light of the widening institutional ties between the two sides. Participants included representatives of the GCC delegation office in Brussels, the GCC embassies, delegates from the Middle East/Gulf Working Party (MOG) of the European Council, the Directorate General MENA at the European Commission, the EEAS and the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union.

Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the GRC Foundation Brussels office, provided an opening presentation and then moderated the discussion of one of the breakout groups.

Promoting MENA Stability and Prosperity in the Context of EU-GCC Relations

Dinner Discussion: EU-GCC MENA Political Directors Preparatory Meeting

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

May 14, 2025

The Gulf Research Center (GRC) successfully concluded its week-long Executive Training Program in Geneva, Switzerland, held under the theme “Strengthening Global Partnerships: Gulf and Regional Cooperation.” The program brought together a distinguished group of participants from the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other key governmental institutions, offering an immersive learning experience designed to enhance diplomatic skills, deepen policy knowledge, and strengthen international engagement.



As part of the program, participants had the distinct honor of meeting with H.E. Mr. Abdulmohsen Majed A. bin Khothaila, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations (UN) in Geneva, and H.E. Mr. Safer bin Abdullah Al-Moqbel, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of

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Saudi Arabia to the World Trade Organization (WTO). Both ambassadors shared valuable insights into Saudi Arabia's role in multilateral diplomacy, the priorities guiding its foreign policy, and the importance of building strategic partnerships through international institutions.

The Gulf Research Center (GRC), in partnership with the Bertelsmann Foundation, hosted a high-level dinner on May 14 in Riyadh titled "Promoting MENA Stability and Prosperity in the Context of EU-GCC Relations." The event served as a strategic platform to present and discuss the preliminary findings of a joint initiative exploring opportunities to strengthen cooperation between the European Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council in support of stability, development, and prosperity in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

The evening opened with welcoming remarks by Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center; Hélène Le Gal, Managing Director for the Middle East and North Africa at the European External Action Service; and Michael Karnitschnig, Deputy Director-General for the MENA region at the European Commission. Each speaker underscored the growing importance of a more structured and forward-looking EU-GCC partnership to address shared regional challenges and harness economic and political synergies.



The dinner brought together a select group of senior EU officials from both the European External Action Service and the European Commission, alongside ambassadors from several EU member states accredited to Riyadh, as well as high-level representatives from the Gulf Cooperation Council and regional experts. The setting provided an informal yet substantive environment for an in-depth exchange of views on the evolving geopolitical landscape and the role of interregional cooperation in fostering peace, resilience, and sustainable growth in the broader MENA region.

As part of this collaborative effort, the GRC and the Bertelsmann Stiftung conducted a comprehensive survey of approximately 70 experts and policymakers from across the GCC, EU, and MENA regions. The survey aimed to identify key areas of mutual interest and emerging priorities for deeper cooperation across sectors such as trade, climate and energy transition, security, and people-to-people engagement. The insights derived from the survey formed the basis of the evening's discussion, offering a snapshot of current policy thinking and highlighting converging interests between the two regions.



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The event emphasized the increasing strategic weight of EU-GCC relations, particularly as both sides seek to recalibrate their foreign policy priorities in a shifting global order. Participants reaffirmed the need for more coordinated dialogue, stronger institutional mechanisms, and collaborative initiatives to address cross-border challenges ranging from conflict mediation and economic diversification to climate resilience and digital transformation.

This dinner discussion formed part of a broader initiative by the GRC and the Bertelsmann Foundation to facilitate sustained policy dialogue between the Gulf and European partners, and to promote a more coherent and inclusive regional order in the MENA region.

Strengthening GCC-Qatar-European Relations: Roundtable Discussion on Geopolitics of the Region and Mediation

Brussels, Belgium

May 21, 2025



Gulf Research Center Foundation
Brussels
Knowledge for All



The Gulf Research Center Foundation's Office in Brussels hosted a roundtable discussion on May 21, 2025, during which Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), welcomed H.E. Dr. Majid Al-Ansari, Advisor to the Prime Minister of the State of Qatar and Official Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to the GRC's Office in Brussels. The discussion focused on five key areas:

The Changing Global Order and Nature of Conflict

The current international environment is characterized by unprecedented instability and unpredictability. Rather than moving toward a new, stable multipolar order, the world is witnessing the erosion, if not complete collapse, of central states, resulting in a plethora of overlapping and interrelated conflicts. These disputes are rarely resolved comprehensively; instead, they persist, freeze, or subside briefly as a result of internal dynamics among local actors, rather than decisive global involvement. This reality necessitates a fundamental reassessment of conflict management approaches and strategies, since traditional tools and frameworks are increasingly inadequate to address the multifaceted and dynamic character of today's crises.

New Actors and Approaches in Mediation

The landscape and framework of conflict mediation have significantly evolved, with conventional great powers and veteran mediators departing from their roles as custodians of international order. Their priorities have shifted to upholding spheres of influence instead of direct conflict resolution, frequently at the expense of reassessing conflict management channels, since traditional tools and frameworks are increasingly inadequate to address the multifaceted and dynamic character of today's crises. In this vacuum, the GCC governments and a range of local NGOs have emerged as new

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actors, stepping in to fill the void created by the international community. The GCC's expanding power is supported by competent leadership that is not restricted by political posturing, significant financial resources, or tactical neutrality. However, the complexity of modern conflicts implies that no single actor or approach can provide results; instead, specialized, multi-actor coalitions must be formed, drawing on various skills and capacities to address the unique problems of each circumstance.

The Future of Regional Conflict Mediation and the Limits of Traditional Institutional Frameworks

The GCC is increasingly expected to play a prominent role in resolving some of the region's greatest conflicts. However, the viability of these initiatives is contingent on the ability to successfully and effectively coordinate with international partners, particularly the EU. In the case of Gaza and the larger Israeli-Palestinian conflict, any meaningful peace offer must include specific provisions from the Israelis, the establishment of a Palestinian state, and Palestinian-led government. Without these aspects, efforts risk devolving into conflict management rather than to the establishment of long-term peace.

Qatar-EU Cooperation - Challenges and Opportunities

Despite common goals and complementary strengths, collaboration between Qatar (and the wider GCC) and the EU remains underdeveloped and fragmented. Although both parties pursue parallel initiatives, they lack comprehensive collaboration, resulting in missed possibilities and inefficiencies for more impactful outcomes. While the EU is still widely regarded as a model for peaceful conflict resolution, there is rising concern about its lack of engagement and understanding of regional dynamics, particularly in light of

the Gaza issue. To realize the full potential of this partnership, both parties must invest in mutual understanding, institutional reform, and the development of more responsive, layered frameworks for collaboration. This will necessitate not only political will, but also a readiness to reconsider existing approaches and embrace new forms of engagement. At the same time, traditional global governing institutions, such as the UN, are experiencing a crisis of relevance and efficacy, necessitating the development of innovative new tactics to capitalize on what capability remains.

Rethinking Conflict Classification and Resource Allocation

Modern conflicts are complex and overlapping, making it increasingly challenging to categorize crises and deploy resources effectively. Stakeholders often have competing priorities—some focus on immediate crisis response, others on political solutions or long-term reconstruction—which hampers coordinated action. To make real progress, the international community must prioritize the most challenging conflicts and collaborate to achieve at least sustainable freezing, with stable countries providing crucial support and coverage. The idea that regional hegemons may wield obvious authority over their neighbors has been proven illusory, as even the most powerful governments typically lack trusted partners and interlocutors in adjacent countries.



GRC Research Programs

Gulf-EU Policy Roundtable Program: EU-Gulf Cooperation: Connectivity, Security, and Peacebuilding

Cambridge, United Kingdom

July 23, 2025



On the sidelines of the 15th Annual Gulf Research Meeting in Cambridge, the Gulf Research Center (GRC) convened a high-level Gulf-EU Policy Roundtable to assess pathways for advancing cooperation between the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the European Union (EU). The roundtable brought together senior officials, diplomats, and experts from leading institutions across the Gulf and Europe to address pressing regional challenges and opportunities for enhanced collaboration.

Opening remarks were delivered by **Dr. Abdulaziz Sager**, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC); **H.E. Abdelaziz Aluweisheq**, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Negotiations at the GCC; and **H.E. Luigi Di Maio**, EU Special Representative for the Gulf. All three emphasized the urgency of revitalizing the EU-Gulf relationship, particularly in light of the growing complexities in the global order, rising regional instability, and the need for a more structured and mutually beneficial partnership.



Panel I: Connectivity and Trade – Reinforcing EU-Gulf Relations and Regional Stability

Participants explored how regional connectivity can serve as a foundation for economic diversification and strategic resilience. Infrastructure initiatives like the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) were seen as transformative for supply chain security and trade route diversification. Recommendations included enhancing port infrastructure, expanding rail connectivity, digitizing customs procedures, and implementing 'single window' systems to streamline trade documentation.

There was a strong call to embed sustainability into connectivity strategies. Green infrastructure, renewable energy corridors, and cross-border hydrogen pipelines were highlighted as critical components of future EU-GCC infrastructure cooperation. Public-private partnerships and foreign direct investment (FDI) incentives were viewed as essential tools for financing these large-scale projects.

The conversation also touched on trade diplomacy. Experts underscored the importance of moving beyond traditional bilateral trade

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models toward more flexible, multi-aligned strategies that engage emerging markets in Africa and Asia. While discussions around the long-standing EU-GCC Free Trade Agreement (FTA) remain unresolved, participants emphasized the need to overcome regulatory barriers, reduce protectionist tendencies, and build more inclusive and rules-based frameworks for trade and investment.

Developing secure and harmonized digital infrastructure was seen as a strategic priority. Establishing joint cybersecurity protocols, protecting intellectual property rights, and promoting shared digital standards were seen as essential to protecting supply chains and reducing compliance costs.



Panel II: Conflict Resolution, Security, and Defense Cooperation – Aligning EU–GCC Tools and Priorities

The second panel focused on the evolving security landscape across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and the Red Sea corridor. Participants discussed the growing complexity of regional threats, from

conventional military risks to cyberattacks, and highlighted the limitations of relying solely on U.S. security guarantees. In this context, they called for building a more autonomous and issue-specific EU-GCC security partnership.

Maritime security cooperation, early warning systems, and crisis response mechanisms were identified as practical entry points for deepening strategic collaboration. The panel emphasized the need to enhance institutional innovation, including the creation of EU-GCC intelligence-sharing platforms and joint operational centers capable of responding swiftly to hybrid and conventional threats.

One of the key challenges identified was the EU's limited understanding of GCC institutional structures and regional priorities. This knowledge gap has often hindered the effectiveness of EU engagement in the region. Greater efforts are needed to build mutual awareness and tailor policy tools accordingly.

Finally, the panel underlined the importance of investing in coordinated mediation and peacebuilding strategies. Drawing on frameworks like the Arab Peace Initiative and EU diplomatic mechanisms, participants stressed the need to develop flexible, legally sound mediation models that support peace efforts in regional flashpoints such as Yemen, Lebanon, Iraq, and Syria. Building practical mediation skills and professional training programs was seen as essential to ensuring that diplomatic ambitions translate into durable outcomes.



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Exploring Steps to Strengthen GCC-EU Relations: Roundtable Discussion with H.E. Dr. Abdel Aziz Abu Hamad Aluwaieseq, Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs and Negotiations, Gulf Cooperation Council

Brussels, Belgium

September 4, 2025

The Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels hosted a roundtable discussion with H.E. Dr. Abdel Aziz Abu Hamad Aluwaieseq, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Negotiations to the GCC, on September 4, 2025. The discussion highlighted both the progress and persistent lacunae of the EU-GCC strategic partnership. While the establishment of a strategic partnership was regarded as a significant achievement, progress has been uneven across the seven pillars of the cooperation. *Politically*, cooperation has improved, but it has been insufficient to bridge divergent perspectives, particularly on subjects like Gaza. On the *security* aspect, cooperation is structured but has not been materialized, while commitments to *connectivity and trade*, particularly the FTA, have yielded little actual progress. *Investment flows, digital transformation, and AI collaboration* have been prospective sectors in which the GCC looks to be keener than the EU.



There is a growing recognition that both the EU and the GCC need to adapt their cooperation framework and mechanisms to the fast-evolving regional and global dynamics. Priority sectors would include joint efforts and initiatives in humanitarian aid, disaster management, and connectivity, with institutions such as the EU's Global Gateway and IMEC serving as potential vehicles for collaboration. Moreover, triangular cooperation—between the EU, the GCC, and the wider MENA region—has the potential to complement efforts in post-conflict reconstruction and investment. Concurrently, challenges remain in the form of fragmented mediation initiatives, persisting coordination gaps, and underdeveloped parliamentary mechanisms. Nonetheless, the EU-GCC partnership is critical in view of common challenges in global trade, energy security, and technological innovation. Moving forward, development will be dependent on pragmatic, investment-focused engagement and procedures that build confidence and complementarity between the two sides.



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GCC-EU Relations Webinar: Regional Security, Trade, and Future Prospects

September 29, 2025



On September 29, 2025, the Gulf Research Center (GRC) convened a high-level webinar titled “GCC-EU Relations: Regional Security, Trade, and Future Prospects.” The session brought together senior policymakers, diplomats, and experts to assess Gulf-European ties ahead of a pivotal period in bilateral relations. The webinar featured opening interventions by Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman and Founder of the GRC; Ms. Hana Jalloul Muro, Member of the European Parliament (MEP), First Vice-Chair of the European Parliament’s Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET), and Rapporteur for Saudi Arabia; Prof. Nourah Shuaibi, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Kuwait University; and Dr. Máté Szalai, Research Fellow at Clingendael. This was followed by a guided discussion moderated by Dr. Christian Koch, Director of Research at the GRC and Executive Manager of the GRC Foundation Brussels, and concluded with an engaging Q&A session with the audience.

In their opening remarks, the panelists emphasized the growing strategic significance of the GCC-EU relationship. However, as participants emphasized, the relationship is now entering a more dynamic phase shaped by global uncertainties and regional instability. Speakers highlighted the importance of building on the GCC-EU Joint Communication, which established a framework for closer cooperation across security, trade, energy, and people-to-people engagement. The upcoming 29th EU-GCC Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting and High-Level Forum in Kuwait in October 2025 and the EU-GCC Summit to be held in Riyadh in 2026 were highlighted as critical milestones to translate political will into actionable initiatives.

Security issues dominated much of the discussion, reflecting the urgency of crises that continue to destabilize the wider Middle East. Particular attention was given to the ongoing war in Gaza. Several participants emphasized that sustainable peace in the region cannot be achieved without addressing the Palestinian issue, and that the EU must assume a more active diplomatic role in advancing a just and lasting solution. The role of the newly appointed EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process, H.E. Ambassador Christophe Bigot, was singled out as an opportunity to reinvigorate European engagement. Panelists noted that cooperation with the GCC on this front could provide new momentum, primarily as both blocs advocate for a two-state solution and humanitarian relief in Gaza.

Beyond Palestine, participants also discussed a range of regional security challenges. The tensions with Iran and their impact on Gulf stability, the continuing conflicts in Yemen and Syria, and the deteriorating situation in Sudan were all cited as pressing issues where greater EU-GCC alignment could yield results. Maritime

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security in the Red Sea and the Gulf was also raised, with calls for more robust joint efforts to ensure freedom of navigation and protect critical energy and trade flows. Counterterrorism and addressing extremism were noted as long-standing pillars of cooperation that remain relevant today.

Economic ties between the GCC and the EU are substantial yet remain below their full potential. The EU is one of the Gulf's most significant trading partners; however, participants acknowledged that negotiations on a free trade agreement have long been stalled due to various political and regulatory hurdles. Several speakers addressed this reality directly, noting that while the Gulf states are keen to advance trade liberalization, the EU's insistence on linking economic agreements with broader political and social conditionalities has complicated progress. Nevertheless, there was consensus that both sides stand to benefit from renewed dialogue, particularly in areas such as investment facilitation, financial services, and digital economy cooperation.

The discussion also highlighted the importance of GCC investment flows into Europe, which have grown substantially in recent years, particularly in the energy, infrastructure, and technology sectors. Participants noted that Europe's expertise in green and digital transitions complements Gulf efforts to diversify their economies beyond oil and gas. There was widespread agreement that identifying concrete, mutually beneficial projects could serve as a building block toward broader economic integration.

Beyond security and trade, panelists emphasized the importance of fostering people-to-people exchanges. Visa facilitation and mobility were raised as long-standing priorities for the GCC, with the hope that the EU will advance discussions

on Schengen access for all GCC nationals. Such steps, it was argued, would strengthen trust and foster closer ties at the societal level. Educational and cultural cooperation was also identified as an area of untapped potential. The Gulf states have invested heavily in higher education and are eager to expand academic partnerships with European institutions. At the same time, cultural exchanges and joint initiatives in the creative industries were seen as tools to build greater mutual understanding.

Energy and climate cooperation formed another major strand of the discussion. The EU and GCC share common interests in advancing the global energy transition. Speakers highlighted promising areas of collaboration, including hydrogen development, carbon capture and storage, and renewable energy projects. Europe's experience in regulatory frameworks and technology transfer was seen as complementary to Gulf ambitions under their respective national visions. The India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) was proposed as a potential framework for integrating infrastructure and energy networks across the regions. Participants agreed that both blocs must seize such opportunities to anchor cooperation in forward-looking projects that contribute to global sustainability goals.

However, participants also acknowledged the challenges in GCC-EU relations. Divergent political approaches, particularly regarding human rights and governance, continue to complicate economic negotiations. Similarly, differing threat perceptions can sometimes make it challenging to align on regional security issues fully. Despite these hurdles, the consensus was that the risks of inaction are far greater, and that both blocs must find ways to work pragmatically where interests converge.

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In concluding remarks, speakers emphasized that the relationship between the Gulf and Europe is no longer optional, but strategic. In a world marked by shifting global power balances and multiplying regional crises, the GCC and EU must leverage their partnership to promote stability, prosperity, and mutual understanding. The webinar reaffirmed that while much work lies ahead, there is significant scope for cooperation across multiple domains. As attention turns to the Kuwait ministerial meeting and Riyadh summit, expectations are high that the coming year will mark a turning point in the evolution of GCC-EU ties.

Strengthening Future Cooperation between the Gulf and Korea Joint Seminar

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

November 19, 2025



The Gulf Research Center (GRC) in cooperation with the Embassy of the Republic of Korea to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, concluded the joint seminar on Strengthening Future Cooperation between the Gulf and Korea. The seminar provided a valuable platform for policymakers, business leaders, and researchers to exchange insights, identify areas for joint projects, and reinforce the strategic partnership between Korea and the GCC in addressing both current and emerging challenges.

Discussions explored ways to deepen mutual understanding of the opportunities and constraints faced by both regions amid rapidly evolving technological and energy landscapes. The overall objective was to create a roadmap for joint initiatives, policy recommendations, and long-term cooperation mechanisms that enhance economic resilience and support sustainable growth. The seminar featured two thematic sessions dedicated to Cooperation in Advanced Technology and Cooperation in Energy.



The opening remarks were delivered by:

- **Dr. Abdulaziz Sager**, Founder and Chairman, Gulf Research Center (GRC)
- **H.E. Dr. Ahmed Alzawawi**, Assistant Deputy Minister for Localization and Advanced Manufacturing, Ministry of Industry and Mineral Resources, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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- **Mr. Albara Alaskandarani**, Executive Advisor to the Minister of Economy and Planning, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
- **H.E. Mr. Moon Byung-Jun**, Acting Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



The first session of the seminar was on 'Cooperation in Advanced Technology' and included presentations by:

- **Dr. Abdulaziz M. AlJodai**, Board Member, Energy Media Association, Saudi Arabia
- **Dr. Noh Da-Sol**, Associate Researcher, GCC Institute, Dankook University, Republic of Korea

This session explored how the Gulf and Korea can jointly harness emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, smart manufacturing, and digital transformation, to drive innovation and accelerate economic diversification. Speakers emphasized the importance of establishing joint research pathways, enhancing knowledge exchange, and strengthening institutional frameworks to support advanced technology adoption across both regions. The session was moderated by **Dr. Ali AlQarni**, Director, Asian Studies Center, Prince Saud Al Faisal Institute for Diplomatic Studies.

The second session on Cooperation in Energy included presentations by:

- **H.E. Dr. Khalid AlSulaiman**, Former Deputy Minister of Industry and Former Vice President for Renewable Energy, KACARE, Saudi Arabia
- **Dr. Song Sang-Hyun**, Director, GCC Institute, Dankook University, Republic of Korea.

This session focused on identifying practical avenues for collaboration in clean energy, hydrogen, and broader energy-transition strategies.



The session also focused on expanding collaboration in clean energy, hydrogen, and broader energy-transition strategies essential to meeting future regional needs. The discussion highlighted the importance of long-term investment, technology transfer, and integrated policy approaches to support the development of sustainable and resilient energy systems. The session was moderated by **Mr. Abdulaziz Alakeel**, Senior Advisor at the Gulf Research Center (GRC).



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Roundtable Discussion with Parliamentary Delegation from the Kingdom of Bahrain

Brussels, Belgium

December 3, 2025

On December 3, 2025, the Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels (GRCF-B) hosted a roundtable session with a parliamentary delegation from the Kingdom of Bahrain. Bringing together a wide range of European Union stakeholders, the roundtable provided an in-depth exchange on Bahrain's role on the international stage, with particular focus on

coexistence, regional and maritime security, and the evolving dynamics of EU-GCC relations.

The discussions examined the current geopolitical environment and underscored the importance of sustaining and strengthening the momentum generated by ongoing initiatives between the two blocs. Participants highlighted key priorities and practical avenues for advancing cooperation, including political dialogue, security coordination, and confidence-building measures. The roundtable also reaffirmed the role of GRCFB as a trusted platform for inclusive and forward-looking exchanges, enabling comprehensive analysis and open dialogue on the full spectrum of EU-GCC relations.



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Contribution for GRC Annual Report 2025

GLMM Mission

The Gulf Labour Markets, Migration, and Population (GLMM) Programme is an international independent, non-partisan, non-profit programme established in 2010. It is hosted and supported by the Gulf Research Center (GRC). The programme provides data, analyses, and recommendations contributing to the improvement of understanding and management of Gulf labour migration, population, and labour markets, engaging with and respecting the viewpoints of all stakeholders. Access the GLMM website [here](#).

The Year 2025

Thanks to fundamental financial and organizational support from GRC and building upon 15 years of experience, GLMM in 2025 has continued and significantly increased its



SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR:
Nasra M. Shah



MANAGING DIRECTOR:
Imco Brouwer



SENIOR FELLOW:
Françoise De Bel-Air

activities on and in Saudi Arabia from the GRC's Riyadh office and has developed and implemented two major research projects with Saudi Arabia, the GCC, and other international experts; organized multiple workshops; continued its webinar series; increased its data and publication output; and further expanded its networks and strategic cooperation with key partners including in Saudi Arabia and the wider GCC, as well as with Asian and African countries of origin of migrant workers.

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GLMM Accomplishments in 2025

- The year 2025 has been GLMM's most productive year in terms of the number of publications – a total of 86 papers have been written/finalised/published.
- GLMM published: 1 factsheet; 17 policy briefs; 9 articles in a special issue of an academic journal; 17 chapters in an edited volume; 1 contribution to the GRC Annual Survey 2025.
- GLMM produced: 16 papers for the GRM workshop (for the list see GRM Workshop below); 14 papers for the second phase of the GCC Highly Skilled Migration project (for the list see Projects below).
- GLMM finalised for publication: 2 volumes with a total of 14 chapters and 360 pages (each volume 7 chapters - 180 pages).
- GLMM continued two research projects: “Vision 2030 and the Socio-Economic Reform Process: The Future of Labour and Migration in Saudi Arabia” and “Highly Skilled Migration to the Gulf States: How Do GCC Countries Fare in the Global Competition for Talent?”
- GLMM launched a new research project on Africa-GCC migration with the publication of a Call for Papers for a workshop on Africa-GCC migration to take place in Nairobi, 10-11 September 2025.
- GLMM renewed its partnership with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) – Regional Program for the Gulf (RPG) in 2025 (started in 2024).
- GLMM organized a highly successful workshop at the 15th GRM, Cambridge, 22-24 July 2025.

- GLMM organized two workshops in the framework of the Highly Skilled Migration to the Gulf States project, one in Cambridge on 22 July 2025 and one in Riyadh on 2 December 2025.
- GLMM welcomed Froilan Malit Jr. as Fellow and Dr. Gennaro Errichiello as Non-Resident Fellow.
- GLMM continued to gather, analyse, and republish GCC official data (statistics) and legal documents in the GLMM databases.
- GLMM organised two webinars.
- GLMM reinforced strategic cooperation with existing partners and established cooperation with new partners in Saudi Arabia and the GCC, as well as in Asian and African countries of origin of migrant workers and elsewhere.
- GLMM reinforced its networks of GCC data producers, GCC data users, and GCC and global researchers.
- Members of GLMM participated in advisory boards, workshops, and seminars of other organizations.
- GLMM participated in the second Global Labor Markets Conference (GLMC) in Riyadh 29-30 January 2025.

Advisory Board

The GLMM International Advisory Board discussed the GLMM's activities for 2024 and its plans for 2025-2026. The board is comprised of:

- Prof. Mouawiya Al Awad, Professor at Zayed University/Director of the Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER), Dubai

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- Prof. Lubna Al Kazi, Professor at the Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Kuwait University, Kuwait City
- Dr. Fahad Al Sharif, Senior Researcher at the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies (KFCRIS), Riyadh
- Dr. Marla Asis, Director of the Scalabrinii Migration Center (SMC)/Editor of the Asian Pacific Migration Journal (APMJ), Manila
- Prof. Ibrahim Awad, Director of the Center for Migration and Refugee Studies (CMRS), Cairo
- Dr. Khalil Bohazza, Director of the Labour Affairs GCC Executive Bureau, Manama
- Dr. Ryszard Cholewinski, Senior Migration Specialist at the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS), Beirut
- Dr. Jean-Christophe Dumont, Head of the International Migration Division in the Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, Organisation for Economic Development (OECD), Paris
- Prof. Ray Jureidini, Former Professor at the Hamid Bin Khalifa University (HBKU), Doha
- Dr. Nader Kabbani, Director of Research at the Middle East Council for Global Affairs (MECGA), Doha
- Prof. Gerasimos Tsourapas, Professor of International Relations, University of Birmingham
- Prof. Anna Triandafillydou, Canada Excellence Research Chair on Migration and Integration at Toronto Metropolitan University

For more information on the advisory board members click [here](#).

GLMM Fellow



Froilan Malit, Jr., was appointed as GLMM Fellow in 2025. Froilan has been working with GLMM for a decade, previously as a GLMM research associate. Froilan specializes in

the linkages between foreign policy, migration, and labour rights in the Asia-Gulf corridor. For over a decade, he has worked as a Middle East migration policy consultant for regional and international organizations, including the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, ILO, IOM, World Bank, other global think tanks, business, and academic and migrant civil society institutions. He has published over 50 academic and public policy publications on Gulf migration-related issues. He has published in various top-ranking academic journals (both in print and forthcoming), including in the *Third World Quarterly*, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, *Global Labor Journal*, *Middle East Critique*, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *Global Studies Quarterly*, *Arabian Humanities*, *Asian Pacific and Migration Journal*, *International Migration*, *Migration Letters*, *Remittance Review*, and among others. He holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Cornell University, the University of Oxford, and the University of Cambridge. He is also currently a Ph.D. candidate in Politics and International Studies at the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), focusing on South-South migration issues.

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Non-Resident Fellows

- Dr. Magdalena Karolak, Associate Professor of Humanities and Social Sciences at Zayed University, Dubai, February 2023-present
- Dr. Georges Naufal, Associate Research Scientist at the Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) at Texas A&M University, a visiting Scientist at the Center for Health Data Science and Analytics at Houston Methodist Research Institute, formerly American University of Sharjah, March 2023-present
- Dr. Mehmet Soytas, Senior Advisor, National Labour Organization, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, December 2024 – present



In 2025, GLMM welcomed a new non-resident fellow, **Dr. Gennaro Errichiello**. He is a Global Fellow at Habib University in Karachi. He is a sociologist whose research focuses on international migration, with expertise in South-South migration and the Asia-Gulf migration corridor. His work critically engages with the experiences of the Pakistani diaspora and other migrant communities in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. His research interests include migration, everyday integration, belonging, highly skilled and middle-class migrants, migrant organizations, and the intersections of race, gender, and class in transnational mobility. His work contributes to broader debates on urban diversity, civil society, and the lived experiences of migrants in the Global South. Dr. Errichiello has held academic positions at SOAS University of London, Loughborough

University, and Webster University in Tashkent. He has published peer-reviewed articles in leading journals such as *International Migration Review*, *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, and the *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*. He is also the author of chapters in the *Routledge Handbook on Middle East Diasporas and Social Change in the Gulf Region*.

Non-Resident Intern

- Sharique Umar, graduate student, Gulf Studies Center, Qatar University, April 2023-present

For more information on the Non-Resident Fellows [here](#) and Non-Resident Interns, click [here](#).

Publications

The year 2025 has been GLMM's most productive year in terms of the number of publications – a total of **86 papers** have been written/finalised/published:

- Published: **1 factsheet; 17 policy briefs; 9 articles** in a **special issue** of a reputed **academic journal**; **17 chapters** in an **edited volume**; **1 contribution** to the GRC Annual Survey.
- Written: **16 papers** for the GRM workshop (for the list see *GRM Workshop below*); **14 papers** for the second phase of the GCC Highly Skilled Migration project (for the list see *Projects below*).
- Finalised for publication: **2 additional volumes** - each volume contains 7 chapters and counts 180 pages - **14 chapters** of the first phase of the GCC Highly Skilled Migration (for the list see *Projects below*); and **7 articles** for a **special issue** of an **academic journal** (based on GRM 2025 papers).

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Factsheet

1. [Françoise de Bel-Air, National and Foreign Populations in GCC Countries, GLMM Factsheet No. 13.](#)

For all GLMM factsheets, access the webpage [here](#).

Policy Briefs

Eight policy briefs have been published from the project entitled “Highly Skilled Migration to the Gulf States: How Do GCC Countries Fare in the Global Competition for Talent?” GLMM/GRC with the Regional Programme Gulf States (RPG) of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS). Click [here](#) for more information on the project.

1. [Misba Bhatti, Ameena Almeer, Zahra Babar: Qatar’s Policy Landscape and its Impact on Highly Skilled Migration.](#)
2. [Froilan T. Malit, Jr.: From Laissez Faire to a Centralized State Approach? A Critical Policy Analysis of the UAE’s Attraction and Retention Approach Towards High-Skilled Migration in the Post-COVID-19 Era.](#)
3. [Yusra Al Shangiti: Trends and Dynamics of Highly Skilled Migration in Saudi Arabia: A Report.](#)
4. [Ali Belhaj: Trends, Dynamics and Policies regarding Highly Skilled Migration from Tunisia to Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE.](#)
5. [Dina Abdelfattah: Trends, Dynamics and Policies Regarding Highly Skilled Migration from Egypt to Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE.](#)
6. [Nasra M. Shah, Memoona Qazi: Trends, Patterns, and Policies Regarding Highly Skilled Migrant Workers from Pakistan to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE.](#)

7. [Binod Khadria: India as a Prime Country of Origin for Highly Skilled Migration to the Gulf: Perspectives of a Paradigm Shift in Indian Immigration of Talent to UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar.](#)
8. [Jorge Tigno, Geoffrey Ducanes: Assets on the Move: Highly Skilled Migration from the Philippines to the Gulf.](#)

Six policy briefs have been published from the project entitled “Vision 2030 and the Socio-Economic Reform Process: The Future of Labour and Migration in Saudi Arabia?” GLMM/GRC with the Regional Programme Gulf States (RPG) of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS).

For more information on the project, click [here](#).

9. [Mehmet Ali Soytas: Future Skills Needed and Profiles of Workers: Ways to Maximize Productivity of Labour.](#)
10. [Sylvain Côté: Adapting to Change: Demographics and Technology in the Saudi Labour Market.](#)
11. [Monera Al Mahmoud: High-Skilled Employment and Vision 2030- Education and Training for Saudi Youth Alignment with Saudi Labour Market Demands.](#)
12. [Justin Alexander: The Global Competition for Talent: How Does Saudi Arabia Compare with Gulf and Global Peers?.](#)
13. [Anju Mary Paul, Kurt Kuehne, Kareem El-Rafei, Bedoor AlShebli: International Science Faculty in Saudi Arabia: Research Experiences and Challenges.](#)
14. [Bilesha Weeraratne: Changing Contexts, Perceptions and Policies towards Migrating to Saudi Arabia: A View from South Asia Countries of Origin.](#)

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Three policy briefs were written by the GLMM Non-Resident Fellows.

15. [Magdalena Karolak, “Real estate market boom in the UAE and migration flows,” Policy Brief No. 23, June 2025.](#)
16. [Georges Naufal, “Navigating the AI Revolution: Impacts and Policy Responses for Expatriate Populations in the GCC,” Policy Brief No. 24, September 2025.](#)
17. [Magdalena Karolak, “Developments in Arts and Culture in the GCC and Migratory Flows,” Policy Brief No. 25, September 2025.](#)

For all GLMM policy briefs, access the webpage [here](#).

Special Issue of the Asian and Pacific Migration Journal: “Recent Labor and Migration Policy Reforms in the Gulf States: Winners and Losers”

Nine articles have been published in a special issue entitled: **Recent Labor and Migration Policy Reforms in the Gulf States: Winners and Losers** of the reputed Asian and Pacific Migration Journal (APMJ) (impact factor 1.1) Volume 34, Issue 1, March 2025. These articles were initially presented at the 13th Gulf Research Meeting (GRM) in Cambridge, 11-13 July 2023, in a workshop entitled “[Recent Labour and Migration Reforms and Policies in the Gulf: Impact on Economies and Societies](#)”

1. [The socio-political background of Gulf migration and labor policy reforms by Françoise de Bel-Air and Nasra M. Shah](#)
2. [The economic visions of the Gulf states and their approaches to migrants by Justin Alexander](#)
3. [Migrant labor and citizens in Kuwait: \(Mis\) managing Kuwaitization and the demographic imbalance by Dalia Abdelnabi](#)

4. [Assessing skills gaps in a post-pandemic landscape: Insights from Oman and Kuwait by Nejla Ben Mimoune and Nader Kabbani](#)
5. [Saudization in a “Saudi First” Kingdom by Andrew Leber –](#)
6. [Migrant worker policies and the spillover effects on educational outcomes and employment aspirations of national children in the Gulf by Bilesha Weeraratne](#)
7. [Neoliberal migration states in the Gulf: High-skilled migrants, domestic socio-legal reforms and the centralized migration management in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates by Froilan Malit, Jr. and Yusra Al Shangiti](#)
8. [The middle-class Pakistanis’ experience of everyday integration in Dubai: Beyond the Western-centric approach by Gennaro Errichiello](#)
9. [Reforms or deforms: The rise and decline of the rentier middle class in the United Arab Emirates by Mira Al Hussein](#)

[Link](#) to the special issue.

Edited Volume: The Future of Migration to GCC Countries: Migrants’ Aspirations, Labour Reforms, and Politics

Françoise de Bel-Air, Nasra M. Shah (editors), *The Future of Migration to GCC Countries: Migrants’ Aspirations, Labour Reforms, and Politics*

Migrants’ Aspirations, Labour Reforms, and Politics, Springer, South-South Migration Series, 22 November 2025. It includes 16 chapters originally presented as papers for the GLMM workshop at the 14th Gulf Research Meeting (GRM), Cambridge, 9-11 July 2024

1. Françoise de Bel-Air (GLMM/Gulf Research Center) and Nasra M. Shah (GLMM/Lahore School of Economics): Introduction to the volume

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2. Lubna Alkazi (Kuwait University, Kuwait): Challenges to Kuwaiti Women's Integration in the Private Sector: Implications for the Future
3. Nawafel A. Shehab (University of Exeter): Khaleeji Entrepreneurial Ecosystems: Development Visions, the Platform Economy, and Precarity in the Neoliberal Gulf
4. Nejla Ben Mimoune (Middle East Council on Global Affairs, Doha, Qatar): Beyond Oil and Gas: Migration Trends in the Era of High-Skilled Labour and Technological Revolution
5. Gokuladas VK (Indian Schools in Oman, Muscat, Oman): Influence of the Presence of Educational Institutions in the Host Country on Migration Decisions of the Skilled Migrants: An Empirical Study on Indian Skilled Expatriates in the Sultanate of Oman
6. Sabnam Sarmin Luna (Jagannath University, Dhaka, Bangladesh) and Md Mizanur Rahman (Gulf Studies Center, Qatar University, Doha, Qatar): Feminized Migration in the GCC States: The Future of Asian Female Labour Migration to the Gulf
7. Mayada Medhat (Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University, Egypt): Future Migration Trends from Egypt to Saudi Arabia in a Context of Transnational Socio-Economic Transformation
8. Burak Yalim (Kocaeli University; International Relations Studies Association – TUIC, Türkiye): Evolving Patterns of Turkish Migration to the UAE: Dynamics, Policies, and Future Prospects
9. Bilesha Weeraratne (Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka, Colombo, Sri Lanka): Changes in UAE Visa Regulations and the Dynamics in Informal Migration Networks: Evidence from Sri Lanka
10. Anu Abraham (Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Norway): Determinants of the Decision to Migrate and Destination: Choices of Labour Migrants from South Asia to the GCC
11. Nasra M. Shah (GLMM/Lahore School of Economics, Lahore, Pakistan) and Memoona Qazi (Lahore School of Economics, Lahore, Pakistan): Future Labor Migration from Pakistan to the Gulf Countries: An Overview
12. Kailash C. Das, Mukesh Kumar, Tushar Dakua (International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai, India) and Kumudini Das (Pillai College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Navi Mumbai, India): Dynamics and Future Prospects of Migration from India to the GCC Countries: An Overview
13. Hessam Habibi Doroh (FH Campus Wien, Austria) and Javad Heiran-Nia (Center for Scientific Research and Middle East Strategic Studies, Iran): Iranian Baluch Migration to the Gulf. Deciphering the Baluch Mindset on Migration to the GCC
14. Mohammad Amaan Siddiqui, Manal Nadeem, and Neha Vora (Department of International Studies, American University of Sharjah, UAE): Deconstructing Dichotomies: Explaining Contemporary South Asian Emigration to the UAE Beyond Economics
15. Maria Dolores Picot (Independent Researcher): Transformative Labour Reforms in Qatar: An In-Depth Examination of their Efficacy and Implications for Future Patterns in Labour Migration
16. Noosha Uddin (University of California, Santa Barbara, United States): Agency and Migration Governance in Sending States: Examining Incentives for Advocacy, Refusal, and Reluctance in the Bangladesh-Qatar Corridor

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17. Froilan Malit, Jr (American University of Dubai, UAE): Multilateral Migration Institutions in the Asia-Gulf Corridor.

For all GLMM volumes, access the webpage [here](#).

GRC Annual Strategic Survey

GLMM staff and collaborators wrote “Beyond Labour Nationalization: Building a Skilled, Inclusive, and Sustainable GCC Workforce,” by Françoise de Bel-Air (Senior Fellow), Gennaro Errichiello (Non-Resident Fellow), Froilan Malit, Jr. (Senior Associate Researcher), Georges Naufal (Non-Resident Fellow), Mehmet Soytas (Non-Resident Fellow), and Sharique Umar (Non-Resident Intern) for the [Gulf Research Center Annual Strategic Survey 2025](#), GRC, July 2025, pp. 71-78.

Policy Research Projects

Project: Vision 2030 and the Socio-Economic Reform Process: The Future of Labour and Migration in Saudi Arabia

Webpage: <https://gulfmigration.grc.net/vision-2030-socio-economic-reform-process/>.

GLMM, in cooperation with the International Migration Division in the Direction for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), seeks to enhance the understanding of the Saudi labour market, migration, and population policies and dynamics and their impact on Saudi Arabia’s socioeconomic future in the project entitled “Vision 2030 and the Socio-Economic Reform Process: The Future of Labour and Migration in Saudi Arabia.” The project gathers key Saudi and international experts to engage in knowledge exchange and discussions, to produce research reports and policy briefs, and to ensure ample dissemination of the outcomes to Saudi policymakers, researchers, economic actors, and the wider public.

Objectives

- Enhance understanding of the Saudi labour market, migration dynamics at all skill levels, and population policies and their impact on Saudi Arabia.
- Provide sound background information on the above, and policy advice for Saudi policymakers and economic actors, within the framework of Saudi Vision 2030.
- Foster a network of key Saudi experts, academics, and institutions, as well as international experts on the Saudi labour market, migration dynamics, and population policies and their impact.
- Create the conditions for continued research on the Saudi labour market, migration dynamics, and population policies and their impact on Saudi Arabia’s socioeconomic future.

Process

A foundational element of the project is the active involvement of experts from Saudi institutions, international organizations, academia, and think tanks who exchange knowledge and views on key issues relating to the future of labour markets and migration within the framework of Saudi Vision 2030 in an informal setting operating under the Chatham House Rules. These experts have been and will continue to be fundamental in identifying the most important topics to be researched, reviewing and discussing draft papers, participating in public events and webinars, and using the acquired knowledge in the definition and implementation of their policies and further research.

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Focus

- Saudi citizens' socio-economic characteristics and their possible future trends
- Future labour needs and migration in and to Saudi Arabia
- Challenges and opportunities created by the reforms
- Transversal issue: Data for evidence-based policy making and enhanced knowledge

Phases

The project is divided into 3 phases of approximately 10-12 months.

- Focus on highly skilled labour
- Focus on Saudi citizens
- Global changes in the Saudi labour market

Activities and output

The project produced:

- Statistical data, laws, bilateral agreements, and policy documents
- Research papers, Policy briefs and Factsheets
- Workshops
- Outreach meetings for selected stakeholders and the wider public

A volume was finalised and submitted to the publisher in **November 2025**, containing the following seven chapters (180 pages):

1. Mehmet Ali Soytas: Future Skills Needed and Profiles of Workers: Ways to Maximize Productivity of Labour

2. Sylvain Côté: Adapting to Change: Demographics and Technology in the Saudi Labour Market
3. Monera Al Mahmoud: High-Skilled Employment and Vision 2030- Education and Training for Saudi Youth Alignment with Saudi Labour Market Demands
4. Justin Alexander: The Global Competition for Talent: How Does Saudi Arabia Compare with Gulf and Global Peers?
5. Anju Mary Paul, Kurt Kuehne, Kareem El-Rafei, Bedoor AlShebli: International Science Faculty in Saudi Arabia: Research Experiences and Challenges
6. Yusra Al Shanqiti: Trends and Dynamics of Highly Skilled Migration in Saudi Arabia: A Report
7. Bilesha Weeraratne: Changing Contexts, Perceptions and Policies towards Migrating to Saudi Arabia: A View from South Asia Countries of Origin

Project: Highly Skilled Migration to the Gulf States: How Do GCC Countries Fare in the Global Competition for Talent?" - Joint Project with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS)

Webpage: <https://gulfmigration.grc.net/projects-highly-skilled-migration/>.

GLMM, in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), has been engaged in a project titled "Highly Skilled Migration to the Gulf States: How Do GCC Countries Fare in the Global Competition for Talent?" The general aim of the multi-year project is to explore the various dimensions of Gulf states' attractivity to highly skilled migrants and assess the position of Gulf

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states in the global competition for talent. The project analyses highly skilled migration in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region, focusing on policies, dynamics, and outcomes related to attracting and retaining talent, with a focus on highly skilled professionals from Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, India, Pakistan, and the Philippines in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar.

Activities and output

The project produced:

- Statistical data, laws, bilateral agreements, and policy documents
- Research papers, Policy briefs and Factsheets
- Workshops
- Outreach meetings for selected stakeholders and the wider public

In 2024 - Phase 1 - The project focused on GCC: Attracting and Retaining Global Talents.

A volume was finalised and submitted to the publisher in **November 2025**, containing 7 chapters (180 pages) of Phase 1:

1. Misba Bhatti, Ameena Almeer, Zahra Babar: Qatar's Policy Landscape and its Impact on Highly Skilled Migration
2. Froilan T. Malit, Jr.: From Laissez Faire to A Centralized State Approach? A Critical Policy Analysis of the UAE's Attraction and Retention Approach Towards High-Skilled Migration in the Post-COVID-19 Era
3. Ali Belhaj: Trends, Dynamics and Policies regarding Highly Skilled Migration from Tunisia to Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE

4. Dina Abdelfattah: Trends, Dynamics and Policies regarding Highly Skilled Migration from Egypt to Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE
5. Nasra M. Shah, Memoona Qazi: Trends, Patterns, and Policies Regarding Highly Skilled Migrant Workers from Pakistan to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the UAE
6. Jorge Tigno, Geoffrey Ducanes: Assets on the Move: Highly Skilled Migration from the Philippines to the Gulf
7. Binod Khadria: India as a Prime Country of Origin for Highly Skilled Migration to the Gulf: Perspectives of a Paradigm Shift in Indian Immigration of Talent to UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar

In 2025 - Phase 2 - The project focused on Stepwise and Return Migration between the Gulf, Europe, and North America. This phase examined the drivers and patterns of the onward mobility of highly skilled migrants from the GCC to Europe and North America, and their motivations for returning to the Gulf either permanently or through cyclical pathways, in order to assess the position of Gulf states in the global competition for talent vis-à-vis other migrant-receiving regions.

The project focuses on transnational migration patterns of non-Gulf highly skilled workers from the GCC (Saudi Arabia, as well as the UAE and Qatar) to third countries in Europe (Germany, France, and the UK) and North America (Canada, the US), and back. Taking stock of the multiple types (repeated, secondary, serial, onward, stepwise, etc.) and trajectories (linear, circular, lateral, hierarchical, etc.) characterizing such migration, the project seeks to estimate the scale of the phenomenon, analyse the

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processes, characteristics, and drivers of these movements, and pinpoint whether patterns exist in these movements and their possible differentials according to specific variables, as well as highlight their outcomes on Gulf states and selected destination or transit countries in Europe and North America.

Tackling this issue increases information available to academics, as well as policymakers in the countries concerned, on a still under-researched phenomenon. Moreover, the project usefully assesses whether recent shifts in migration policies fulfilled their aim of attracting, as well as retaining, highly skilled migrants in Gulf states. The project also assesses the outcomes of recent changes in the political contexts of the Global North, as well as those of migrants' countries of origin, on onward migration intentions, destination choices, return, or stay in Gulf states. Finally, the projects' results add insights into the Gulf states' position in the global competition for talent between the three major immigration hubs worldwide (GCC, EU, and North America).

Under the second phase, the following papers were produced in **December 2025** (will be available on the GLMM website in January 2026):

1. Mouawiya AlAwad and Froilan Malit Jr: Beyond the Gulf: Rethinking Stepwise Migration, Citizenship Penalty, and Filipino Nurses in the UAE – Policy Brief
2. Gennaro Errichiello: Second Generation Highly Skilled Pakistanis in Dubai Drivers of Secondary Migration – Policy Brief
3. Sharique Umar: Migration Policy Reforms and Mobility Decision-Making High-Skilled Second-Generation Residents in Qatar, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia – Policy Brief
4. Areej Jamal, Nasra M. Shah, Richa Shivakoti: Strategic Pathways for Highly Skilled South Asian Migrants in Saudi Arabia's Knowledge Economy – Policy Brief
5. Anurag Devkota: Regulating Stepwise Migration in the Nepal-Gulf-Europe Migration Corridor Challenges and Recommendations – Policy Brief
6. Anushka Bose: Hierarchies of Citizenship and Wage Differentials in the Gulf: A Driver for Onward Migration to North America and the EU – Policy Brief
7. Ayat Nashwan and Sadia Khan: The Impact of Long-Term Residency Policies on the Migration and Retention of Healthcare Professionals: A Case Study of the UAE's Golden Visa Program in the Gulf Context – Policy Brief
8. Froilan Malit Jr.: Outmigration of Highly Skilled Workers as a National Security Issue? Analyzing Gulf States' Perception and Coping Strategies – Policy Brief
9. Asma Atique: Comparative Legal Frameworks for Highly Skilled Migration: A Post-COVID Analysis of Canada, France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States – Legal Report
10. Françoise De Bel-Air: Highly Skilled Immigration Pathways and Trends, 2015-2024 - Canada, Germany, United Kingdom, United States - Statistical Report
11. Nasra M. Shah and Areej Jamal: Stepwise and Return Migration Between the Gulf, Europe, and North America – Report on Pilot Survey
12. Michael Ewers: The Gulf Talent Retention Paradox: Drivers, Dynamics, and the Rise of Circularity – Synthesis Paper

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13. Mohammad Amaan Siddiqui: Challenges to the GCC's Economic Diversification Agenda: Understanding the Structural Drivers of High-Skilled Emigration from the Gulf – Synthesis Paper
14. Chaïmaa Benkermi: Attracting and Retaining Highly Skilled Migrants in the GCC - Bibliography

Project workshops

Two workshops were organized under the second phase of the Highly Skilled Migration project.



The first one was held for the authors of the project to discuss their draft papers ahead of the Gulf Research Meeting in Cambridge, 22-24 July 2025.



The second one – entitled “The Future of Migration to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf: Retaining Foreign Talents and Skills” – took place at the Gulf Research Center office in Riyadh on 2 December 2025.

To address the crucial issue of talent retention in Gulf states, the workshop was convened by the Gulf Research Center (GRC) in cooperation with the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) Regional Programme Gulf States, as part of the multi-year GLMM-KAS project “Highly Skilled Migration to the Gulf States: How do GCC Countries Fare in the Global Competition for Talent?”

The meeting aimed to assess the retention of foreign talents in Saudi Arabia and the wider Gulf, drawing on findings from the project’s second phase, “Stepwise and Return Migration between the Gulf, Europe, and North America.”

Eight presentations by contributors to the GLMM-GRC/KAS-RPG project highlighted and illustrated the “talent retention paradox” characterizing Gulf states: Despite the reliance of the regions’ economies on skilled expatriates for diversification agendas, immigration policies nurture a high turnover of foreign professionals, which undermines knowledge retention and imposes socio-economic costs. During a panel session entitled “The View from the Gulf States: How to Improve the Retention of Highly Skilled, Foreign Talents in Saudi Arabia and the Rest of the Gulf?” seven Saudi and Gulf-based experts highlighted Gulf policy makers’ views on foreign talent turnover, an issue of “national security,” and measured subsequent economic costs for Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. Participants discussed current and further policy changes aiming to better retain highly skilled professionals for Saudi Arabia’s Vision 2030 and broader Gulf reforms.

The workshop report is available in the GLMM website: <https://gulfmigration.grc.net/publications/#workshops>

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Webinars

In 2025, GLMM organized **two webinars**.

1. The **first** webinar was held on 22 January 2025, entitled “Highly Skilled Migration to Saudi Arabia: Labour Policy Reforms and the Global Competition for Talents” and was organized jointly with the Regional Programme Gulf States (RPG) at the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS).



The webinar featured five distinguished experts:

- Justin Alexander - Economist, Khalij Economics, USA
- Badr Al Sharif - Managing Director of Smart Policy Lab, Saudi Arabia
- Mehmet Ali Soytas - Senior Advisor, National Labor Observatory, Saudi Arabia
- Sylvain Côté - Economist and public policy analyst, Saudi Arabia
- Froilan Malit, Jr. - Visiting Fellow, American University in Dubai, UAE

The webinar was moderated by Imco Brouwer, Managing Director GLMM.

The webinar focused on the major reforms in Saudi Arabia's labour and migration policies over the last decade and assessed the outcomes of these changes on prospects for increased highly skilled migration to the Kingdom. A comparative insight with the UAE was proposed. access the webinar summary [here](#).

2. The **second** webinar was held on 9 December 2025, entitled “Stepwise Migration to the Gulf States and Onwards: Highly Skilled Workers in the Global Competition for Talents” and was organized jointly with the Regional Programme Gulf States (RPG) at the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS).



The webinar featured four distinguished experts:

- Dr. Areej Jamal - University of Alberta
- Anushka Bose - School of International Service at American University in Washington, D.C.
- Dr. Ayat Jebril Nashwan - University of Sharjah and Yarmouk University
- Mohammad Amaan Siddiqui - University of California, Irvine

Moderator: Dr. Richa Shivakoti - Toronto Metropolitan University

The webinar explored the Gulf states' success in attracting highly skilled workers while examining the drivers of onward migration from, and patterns of circular migration back to the region. Presentations identified step migration of highly skilled workers—who use the region as a gateway to North America and Europe—as a major challenge for Gulf states seeking to retain talent amid their socioeconomic transition efforts. Presentations underlined foreign talents' perceptions of insecurity due to the

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lack of long-term residency and naturalization pathways available to them, and on passport-based wage differentials. Initiatives such as the UAE's Golden Visa program were considered a promising step. However, emphasizing economics as a mediator rather than the primary motivator for migration to the Gulf, participants suggested a development of such initiatives to better retain the skills needed in the region and strengthen the GCC's position as a key player in the global competition for talent. access the webinar summary [here](#).

Click [here](#) for more details on all 7 GLMM webinars.

Gulf Research Meeting 2025 Workshop

GLMM organized a workshop in the framework of the 15th Gulf Research Meeting, which took place in Cambridge from 23 to 24 July 2025, entitled "Highly Skilled Migrants and the GCC countries Drivers, Perceptions, Policies, and New Dynamics" and was directed by Dr. Françoise de Bel-Air and Prof. Anju Paul. From the 55 paper proposals received by 6 January 2025, a total of 20 were selected. Eventually, 16 papers were submitted by the paper deadline of 31 May 2025 and were presented and discussed in the workshop in July 2025. It was the GLMM's 12th workshop at GRM. The [workshop description](#).



Participants:

- Anushka Bose: Nationality, Racialized: Imperial Legacies and High-Skilled Migration Policy Reform in the GCC

- Ameena Almeer: Step-Migration Trajectories of Female Pakistani Migrants in Qatar
- Mohammad Al-Mailam: Who Comes and Who Goes? Explaining Citizens' Migration Preferences in the Gulf
- Hee Eun Kwon: Transnational Ties and Temporary Lives: Korean MNCs and Skilled Migration to the Gulf
- Shroug Alotaibi: Navigating the Workforce of Vision 2030: Highly Skilled Migrants in Saudi Arabia
- Mohammad Siddiqui and Manal Nadeem: Roots and Routes: South Asian Immigrants in the UAE and Emergent Public Opinion and Policy Themes
- Michael Ewers, Bethany Shockley, and Salma Thani: Social Networks and Skilled Migration: Navigating Belonging, Career Mobility, and Community in the UAE
- Sanaa Ashour: Comparative Perspectives on Reforms to Long-Term Residency and Citizenship Policies in GCC States
- Sebastian Rajan and Varsha Joshi: Evolving Migration Patterns: The Rise of Highly Skilled Migrants in the India-GCC Corridor
- Sharique Umar: Intermediary Spaces in Global Migration: Second-Generation Migrants in Saudi Arabia and the UAE
- Yuree Noh, Bethany Shockley, and Simone Marsilio: Fostering Acceptance of Skilled Migrants in the GCC: Insights from the UAE

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- Gennaro Errichiello: Second-generation highly skilled Pakistanis in Dubai. Everyday integration and future trajectories
- Areej Jamal, Nasra Shah, and Richa Shivakoti: Factors influencing future mobility: A case study of South Asian Migrants in Saudi Arabia
- Froilan Malit. Jr. and Mouawiya Alawad: Citizenship Penalty in the Global South: Highly Skilled (Non-Western) Migrants, Mobility Pathways, and 'Forced' Stepwise Labor Migration
- Musaab Othman Alkhtib: Experiences of Highly Skilled Residents born in Qatar on the Permanent Residency Law
- Anurag Devkota and Froilan Malit, Jr.: From Serial to Stepwise Corridor Migration? The Nepali State and Its Shifting Regional 'Brokering' Migration Management from the Gulf to Europe
- A selection of the papers will be published in a special issue of an academic journal, while other papers will be published individually in academic journals or elsewhere.

GLMM 2026 Workshop



In December 2025, GLMM launched the Call for Papers for its 13th annual workshop to be

held in Nairobi on 10 and 11 September 2026, entitled "Africa-Gulf Migration, Mobility and Trade Past and Present, Policy and Prospects." The workshop will be directed by Dr. Faisal Garba, Associate Professor of Sociology, Migration, and Mobility at The Africa Institute, Sharjah, UAE, and Dr. Linda Oucho - Executive Director, African Migration and Development Policy Centre, Nairobi, Kenya. Paper proposals can be submitted through the GLMM website - workshop description: <https://gulfmigration.grc.net/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/GLMM-Workshop-Africa-GCC-Migration-Description-Published-2026-01-05.pdf>. Online application form this [link](#).

The proposal submission deadline is 26 February 2026, and the paper submission deadline is 31 July 2026. Travel and accommodation funds may be available.

Data and Documents Databases

For more than a decade, GLMM has gathered, analysed, and republished official data related to labour and migration from multiple sources of all six GCC states, especially statistics and legal documents. The statistical database contains more than 1,200 tables and graphs. Every week, new tables are added. Some estimates of the UAE and Qatar population disaggregated by nationality were also calculated by GLMM staff, based on data published by the countries' statistical authorities. The precise methodology followed and these estimates are available in the database.

Highlights of national data of GCC countries added in 2025 include:

- **Saudi Arabia:** population employed in the private sector, by nationality (Saudi/non-Saudi) and sex (Q1 2021-Q1 2025)

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- **Saudi Arabia:** population employed in the private sector, by nationality (Saudi/non-Saudi) (Q2 2018-Q2 2025)
- **Saudi Arabia:** non-Arab Asian population by region, country of citizenship, and sex (census 2022)
- **Saudi Arabia:** European population by region, country of citizenship, and sex (census 2022)
- **Saudi Arabia:** Total employed population by main group of economic activities (Q1 2021-Q1 2025)
- **Saudi Arabia:** Saudi employed population by main group of economic activities (Q1 2021-Q1 2025)
- **Saudi Arabia:** Non-Saudi employed population by main group of economic activities (Q1 2021-Q1 2025)
- **SA-EMP 1.2 Saudi Arabia:** Total employed population by occupation category (Q1 2021-Q1 2025)
- **Saudi Arabia:** Non-Saudi workers newly registered with the General Organisation for Social Insurance, by occupation category (Q3 2021-Q1 2025)
- **Saudi Arabia:** Saudi workers newly registered with the General Organisation for Social Insurance, by occupation category (Q3 2021-Q1 2025)
- **Saudi Arabia:** Non-Saudi employed population by occupation category (Q1 2021-Q1 2025)
- **Saudi Arabia:** Saudi employed population by occupation category (Q1 2021-Q2 2024)
- **Saudi Arabia:** Population by nationality (Saudi/non-Saudi) and sex (2010-2024)
- **Qatar:** Economically active population (15 years and above) by nationality (Qatari/non-Qatari), sex, and employment status (2023)
- **Qatar:** Average weekly work hours of the employed population (aged 15 and above) by workers' nationality (Qatari/non-Qatari), sex, and occupation (2023)
- **Qatar:** Employed population (15 years and above) by nationality (Qatari/non-Qatari), sex, and occupation (2023)
- **Qatar:** Labour force participation rates by nationality (Qatari/ non-Qatari) and sex (%, 2012-2023)
- **Qatar:** Employed population (15 years and above) by nationality (Qatari/non-Qatari) (Q1 2015-Q4 2024)
- **Qatar:** Employed population (15 years and above) by nationality (Qatari/non-Qatari) and sex (Q1 2015-Q4 2024)
- **Kuwait:** Population employed in the domestic sector by nationality (Kuwaiti/ non-Kuwaiti) and sex (Q4 2014-Q1 2025)
- **Kuwait:** Total employed population (public, private, domestic sectors), by nationality (Kuwaiti/ non-Kuwaiti) and sex (Q4 2014-Q1 2025)
- **Kuwait:** Population employed in the private sector by nationality (Kuwaiti/non-Kuwaiti) and sex (Q4 2014-Q1 2025)
- **Kuwait:** Population employed in the government sector by nationality (Kuwaiti/ non-Kuwaiti) and sex (Q4 2014-Q1 2025)

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- **Kuwait:** Population employed in the domestic work sector, by sex and country of citizenship (top 10 countries, Q2 2015-Q1 2025)
- **Kuwait:** Population employed in the domestic work sector, by country of citizenship (top 10 countries, Q2 2015-Q1 2025)
- **Oman:** Total employed population by sex and sector of employment (public, private, domestic) (2010-2024)
- **Oman:** Employed Omani population by sex and sector of employment (public, private, domestic) (2010-2024)
- **Oman:** Employed non-Omani population by sex and sector of employment (public, private, domestic) (2010-2024)
- **UAE:** Crude birth rates and Emirati women's total fertility rates (2016-2022)
- **UAE:** Number of births by mother's nationality (Emirati/ non-Emirati) and gender of child (1977-2022)
- **UAE:** Number of births by parents' nationality (Emirati/non-Emirati) and gender of child (2022)
- **UAE:** Number of births by nationality (Emirati/non-Emirati) and gender of child, and Emirate (2022)
- **UAE:** Number of births by nationality (Emirati/non-Emirati) and gender of child, and mother's age group (2022)

For all national tables:

- **Bahrain:** <https://gulfmigration.grc.net/glmm-database/demographic-and-economic-module/?search=1&cmct=Bahrain>
- **Kuwait:** <https://gulfmigration.grc.net/glmm-database/demographic-and-economic-module/?search=1&cmct=Kuwait>
- **Oman:** <https://gulfmigration.grc.net/glmm-database/demographic-and-economic-module/?search=1&cmct=Oman>
- **Qatar:** <https://gulfmigration.grc.net/glmm-database/demographic-and-economic-module/?search=1&cmct=Qatar>
- **Saudi Arabia:** <https://gulfmigration.grc.net/glmm-database/demographic-and-economic-module/?search=1&cmct=Saudi+Arabia>
- **UAE:** <https://gulfmigration.grc.net/glmm-database/demographic-and-economic-module/?search=1&cmct=United+Arab+Emirates>

GLMM also constructs **unique GCC regional tables based** exclusively on the official country data. Access the regional tables.

Highlights of GCC regional tables added in 2025 include:

- **GCC:** Population employed in the private sector and percentage of non-nationals in the sector in GCC countries (2015-2024)
- **GCC:** Labour Force Participation Rates by nationality (national/non-national) and sex in GCC countries (%) (2013-2024)
- **GCC:** Total populations (nationals+non-nationals) employed in the private sector, by sex and GCC country (2015-2024)
- **GCC:** Non-national populations employed in the private sector, by sex and GCC country (2015-2024)

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- **GCC:** National populations employed in the private sector, by sex and GCC country (2015-2024)

Click [here](#) for all of GCC regional tables.

Legal documents

(for all GCC countries) can be accessed [here](#).

Further GLMM Staff Activities

Nasra M. Shah moderated a high-level panel at the launch of the United Nations Network on Migration in Pakistan, which took place in Islamabad from 1-3 September 2025. The panel brought together representatives from the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, the National Commission for Human Rights, IOM, and SSDO. The discussion focused on strengthening migration governance, protecting rights, and tackling challenges such as trafficking and irregular migration through a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach - <https://www.instagram.com/p/DOEGCbOgpul/>.

Nasra M. Shah, Françoise De Bel-Air, and Froilan Malit, Jr. have recently been confirmed as members of the Migration Advisory Group (MAG) of the ILO Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS) and participated – together with Imco Brouwer – in the MAG Meeting which took place on 25 - 26 September 2025 in Beirut. Françoise De Bel-Air presented a communication on “[Sub-Saharan African and South Asian migrants in Arab states: What do available data reveal about protection challenges?](#)”.

Françoise De Bel-Air has four forthcoming publications that are independent of GLMM activities.

1. De Bel-Air, F. (2025). « Les Jordaniens dans les pays du Conseil de Coopération du Golfe (CCG) », in: Jalal al Husseini, Solenn Al Majali and Kamel Doraï, “La Jordanie au prisme des migrations,” in Napolitano, V., al Husseini, J. and Dubois, S. (Eds). La Jordanie au présent, Beirut: Presses de l’Ifpo.
2. De Bel-Air, F. (June 2026). “The Politics of Migration in the Gulf States.” In Introduction to Gulf Politics, Kh. Almezaini and K. Alexander (Eds). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
3. An Introduction to Gulf Politics | Cambridge Aspire website
4. De Bel-Air, F. (2026). “Current drivers and future prospects for Arab migration to Saudi Arabia,” in: Fahad Al-Sharif (Ed.). Labor Migration Patterns and Their Role in Economic Diversification and Sustainable Development in Saudi Arabia: Acceptance and the Resistance Towards Achieving Saudi Vision 2030, I.B. Tauris.
5. De Bel-Air, F. (2026). “Labour and migration policy reforms in the UAE: Filipino migrants at crossroads,” in Hosoda, N.; Watanabe, A. and Ishii, M. (Eds). Filipino Migration to the United Arab Emirates: Trajectories of Navigating Permanent Temporariness, Routledge.

Imco Brouwer participated in the second Gulf Labor Market Conference, which took place in Riyadh on 29 and 30 January - <https://globallabormarketconference.com>.

Froilan Malit, Jr. has two publications that will come out shortly:

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1. Malit, Jr. F and Alexander, K. (2025) "A new capital pipeline to the Gulf? Geopolitical conflicts, capital flight, and the Russian exodus to the United Arab Emirates," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, DOI:10.1080/13530194.2025.2559341 (forthcoming)
2. Malit, Jr. F. (2025). "Diaspora Mobilization in the Global South: Deterritorialized Mobilization Strategies, 'Informal' Filipino

Diaspora Organizations, and the Politics of Social Protection," *Third World Quarterly*, DOI:10.1080/01436597.2025.2567500 (forthcoming)

He also conducted fieldwork research interviews with think tank directors (migrant and trade union NGOs, academic institutions, international organizations) working explicitly on migration-related issues in Nepal and Thailand.

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Graph Saudi Arabia: Population by nationality (Saudi/non-Saudi) and sex (2010-2024)

Graph GCC: Percentage of nationals and non-nationals by country (mid-2022)

UAE: Year-on-year net change in the number of workers, by activity (Q1 2019-Q4 2021) (Private sector, Dec. 2019-Dec. 2021)

Saudi Arabia: Net change in the number of workers, by activity (Q1 2019-Q4 2021) (Saudi/non-Saudis)

Percentage of nationals and non-nationals in GCC countries' employed populations (2020)

Year-on-year evolution of the size of foreign populations in Gulf States (mid-year figures, 2010-2021)

Percentage of nationals and non-nationals in Gulf populations (2020)

Percentage of nationals and foreign nationals in GCC countries' populations (latest year available, 2010-2016)

National and Non-National populations in GCC Countries (1970 - 2010)

Number of men per 100 women in national and foreign populations of GCC countries (latest year available, 2010 to 2016)

Age distribution of national and foreign populations in GCC countries: A comparison (Latest year available, 2005-2016)

Percentage of foreign nationals in each age-group, per GCC country (latest year available, 2005-2016)

Gulf Research Center Knowledge for All

Gulf Labour Markets, Migration, and Population (GLMM) Programme

An International independent, non-partisan, non-profit programme hosted and supported by the Gulf Research Center. The programme provides data, analyses, and recommendations contributing to the improvement of understanding and management of Gulf labour migration, population, and labour markets, engaging with and respecting the viewpoints of all stakeholders.

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GLMM Workshop

Call for Papers

Africa-Gulf Migration, Mobility and Trade: Past and Present, Policy and Prospects

Nairobi, 10-11 September 2026

Deadline for Applications: 26 February 2026

Directors

- Dr. Faisal Garba – Associate Professor of Sociology, Migration, and Mobility at The Africa Institute, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates
- Dr. Linda Ouchou – Executive Director, African Migration and Development Policy Centre, Nairobi, Kenya and Part-time Professor, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, Florence, Italy

Workshop Description

Online Application Form

The Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO) is workshop partner.

GLMM Projects

- Vision 2030 and the Socio-Economic Reform Process: The Future of Labour and Migration in Saudi Arabia
- Highly Skilled Migration to the Gulf States: How do GCC Countries Fare in the Global Competition for Talent?
- Other projects

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Mr. Imco Brouwer, GLMM Managing Director: imco.brouwer@grc.net.

GRC Research Programs

Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program



Director of Program: Dr. Mohamad Abdelraouf

The GRC Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program looks at environmental issues in the Gulf region and seeks to document information about specific concerns related to the area to increase awareness about key environmental issues:

- Trends in the state of the 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, climate change, and construction and demolition (C&D) debris

More information about the Environmental Security and Sustainability Program can be found on the [GRC website](#).

Activities in 2025

Webinar 23 April 2025

Gulf Research Center Foundation in cooperation with UNEP, MGFC at UNEP co-organized a webinar titled: **Preparations on the Way to OEWG 3.2: Major Groups Engagement Modalities in the Science-Policy Panel (SPP) on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution Prevention.**



Webinar Objectives

1. Inform about OEWG 3.2 latest development and preparations.
2. Expectations on how and where best MGS can engage in order to support a smooth process and positive outcome.

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3. Knowledge exchange among MGS on topics to be negotiated during OEWG 3.2 (foundational document; work-programme-related matters; rules of procedure, financial procedures and conflict-of-interest policy; and preparations for the intergovernmental meeting).
4. MGS coordination and preparations before OEWG 3.2 - to begin to consider whether there are consensus positions that can be reached from all MGS,
5. Capacity building for MGS to equip them with necessary knowledge to actively engage in OEWG 3.2 negotiations (exchange of information, preparation of statements, side events, knowledge exchange formats, etc.).

Participations (online + in-person):

28 January 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, chaired the monthly coordination telecall of the Science Policy Panel (SPP) Scientist Alliance for Chemicals, Waste and Pollution Prevention aimed at coordinating the next practical steps for the official establishment of the alliance. The call focused on the criteria selection for the host organization for the alliance and preparations for participation in the next round of negotiations.

29 January 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, presented an overview of MGFC's responsibilities during UNEA, including daily briefings and facilitating consensus among Major Groups, in the General

MGFC and RF Induction Call organized by UNEP, aiming to inform and engage new committee members of the work of UNEP/UNEA.

3 March 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, chaired the monthly telecall for the UNEP Major Groups Facilitating Committee (MGFC). The call discussed Major Groups activities, including following up on Plastic Treaty negotiations INC5.2 and OEWG 3.2 on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution Prevention, current major groups elections, and coming UNEP regional consultations.

11 March 2025

Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels and Director of Research at the Gulf Research Center, Dr. Oskar Ziemelis, Director, Gulf Research Center Foundation Geneva, and Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the first virtual meeting with the Africa Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace for the kick off meeting for the project Alternative Jurisdictions and Instruments of Climate Finance for Africa to discuss the GRC's role in the projects in terms of guidance in identifying subject-matter experts in the GCC and participation of GRC scholars in the actual research, as well as possibly hosting or co-organizing a workshop for the project in the Gulf region.

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19 March 2025



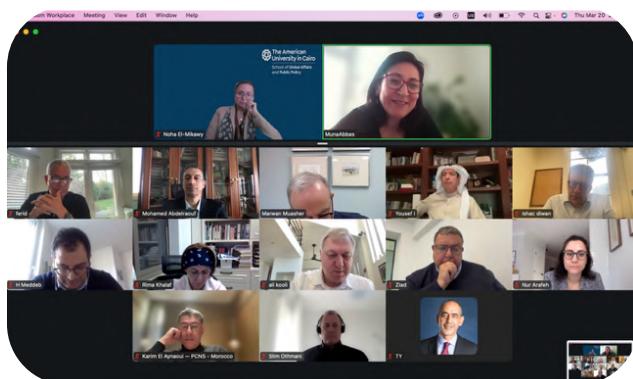
Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the first virtual meeting of the ad hoc working group of the science and technology major group at UNEP,

focusing on the impacts of AI on the environment. The aim was to prepare a statement and possibly a proposal for an AI resolution for the Seventh United Nations Assembly held in December 2025.

19 March 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, attended a virtual meeting with Ms. Shereen Zorba, Executive Director of the UN Science Policy Business Forum, to discuss possible cooperation in the various activities of the Forum in 2025, which included regional meetings in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, in addition to holding a joint pavilion (Impact Pavilion) during UNFCCC COP30 in Belem, Brazil in November 2025.

21 March 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the first virtual meeting of a commission of Arab thinkers and practitioners to discuss a research project exploring the politics and geopolitics of decarbonization in the MENA region. The meeting was an introduction of the committee members as well as an opportunity to discuss the aims of the project, which were to assess the impacts of decarbonization in light of the Paris Climate Agreement on the ongoing energy transition on the region, examine the challenges it poses for energy-producing countries and those dependent on oil recycling, and develop a blueprint for transitioning to a post-rentier economic model in the region.

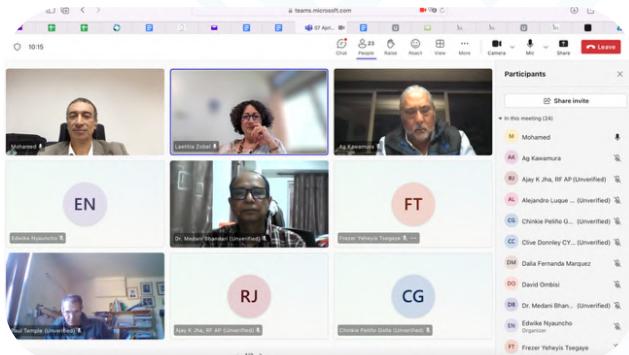
27-30 April 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the Founding Conference of the Global South NGO Platform, held in Baku, Azerbaijan, from April 27-30, 2025. The meeting gathered NGOs from 116 countries—marking a historic moment for civil society and the international community from the Global South. The meeting discussed the new network structure, its vision, goals, and interim preparations, as well as coordinated NGO positions in preparation for their participation in COP30, which was held in November in Brazil. The meeting also addressed strengthening the role of civil society NGOs on climate change and sustainable development issues, particularly in countries of the Global South, including the Middle East and Africa.

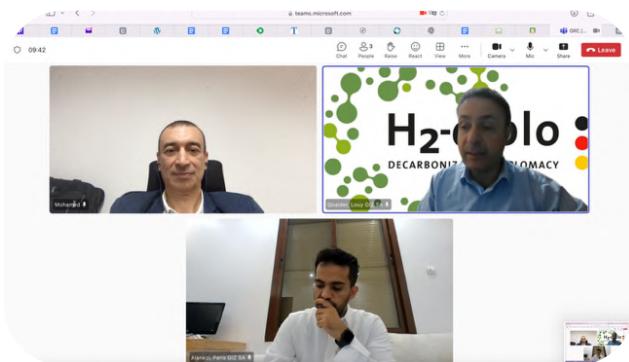
GRC Research Programs

5 May 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, chaired the monthly telecall for the UNEP Major Groups Facilitating Committee (MGFC). The call discussed Major Groups activities, including following up on Plastic Treaty negotiations INC5.2 and OEWG 3.2 on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution Prevention, current Major Groups elections, and UNEP regional consultations.

7 May 2025

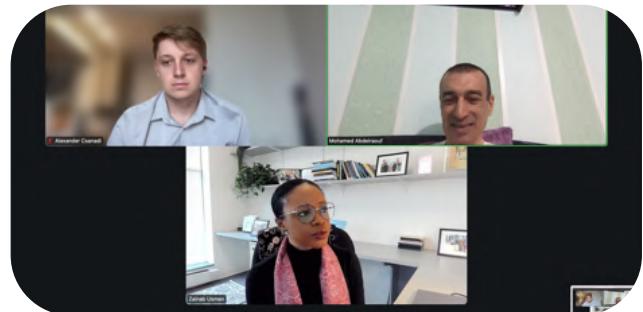


Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, held a virtual meeting with Mr. Faris Alanezi, Head of H2 Diplo in Riyadh, to exchange ideas and discuss possible cooperation between the GRC and H2 Diplo, including research, workshops, conferences, and business missions from the Gulf to Germany.

9 May 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program director at the Gulf Research Center had a virtual meeting with Ms. Shereen Zorba, the executive Director of the UN Science Policy Business forum to discuss the 2025 plan of UNSPF and possible cooperation in the various coming activities of the form in 2025 including regional forum meetings in Africa, Asia and Latin America. In addition to holding a joint pavilion (Impact Pavilion) during UNFCCC COP30 in Belem, Brazil, November 2025.

9 May 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the second virtual meeting with the Africa Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace for the kick off meeting for the project Alternative Jurisdictions and Instruments of Climate Finance for Africa to discuss the GRC's role in the project in terms of guidance in identifying subject-matter experts in the GCC, participation of GRC scholars in the actual research, and possibly hosting or co-organizing a workshop for the project in the Gulf region. The meeting discussed the next practical steps to secure potential authors for the proposed book.

GRC Research Programs

12 May 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the second virtual meeting of a commission of Arab thinkers and practitioners to discuss a research project that seeks to explore the politics and geopolitics of decarbonization in the MENA region, assess the impacts of decarbonization in light of the Paris Climate Agreement and the ongoing energy transition on the region, examine the challenges it poses for energy-producing countries and those dependent on oil recycling, and develop a blueprint for transitioning to a post-rentier economic model in the region. The project concept note was finalized during this meeting.

5 June 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in a virtual coordination meeting for UNEP Major Groups ahead of OEWG 3.2 on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution Prevention to plan and distribute roles during the OEWG 3.2.

6 June 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, held a virtual interview on the topic “BRICS Climate and Just Energy Transitions Project” by SAIIA of South Africa, where he presented the GCC region’s stance and potential for a just climate and energy transition.

10 June 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in a virtual coordination meeting for UNEP Major Groups ahead of the UNEA 7 joint bureaus retreat meeting, which took place in Muscat, Oman on July 2, 2025, to discuss Major Groups input for the ministerial declaration as well as to follow up on various UNEA 6 resolutions.

14- 18 June 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the OEWG 3.2: Science-Policy Panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution in Punta del Este, Uruguay. Dr. Raouf led the international Major Groups consultations, daily morning briefings, and made various interventions during the meeting.

18 June 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the third virtual meeting with the Africa Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace for the project Alternative Jurisdictions and Instruments of Climate Finance for Africa to discuss the various book chapters outlined by potential authors, as well as to discuss a possible host for first workshop for the project in the Gulf region.

GRC Research Programs

19-20 June 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the intergovernmental meeting to discuss the outcomes of the OEWG 3.2: Science-Policy Panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution in Punta del Este, Uruguay. The intergovernmental meeting established an Intergovernmental Science Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution.

3 July 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the fourth virtual meeting with the Africa Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace for the project Alternative Jurisdictions and Instruments of Climate Finance for Africa to discuss the various book chapters outlined by potential authors as well as arrangements for hosting the first workshop for the project in Abu Dhabi. .

7 July 2025

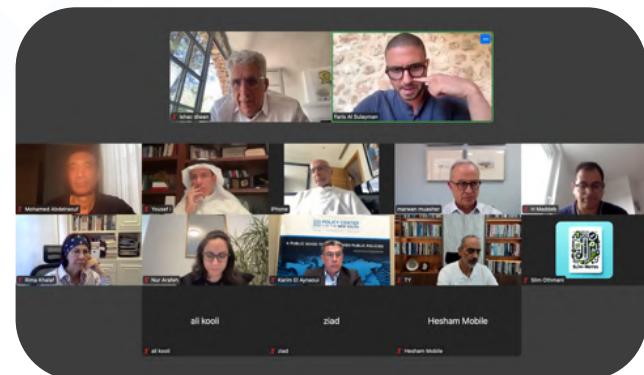
Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the monthly coordination meeting for UNEP Major Groups to discuss the various preparations and task forces by Major Groups for the UNEA-7, which was held in December 2025.

18 July 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the

fourth virtual meeting with the Africa Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace for the project Alternative Jurisdictions and Instruments of Climate Finance for Africa to discuss the outline for the introductory chapter of the planned book.

22 July 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in a virtual call of the “Commission on Decarbonization” with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace- Beirut Office. The session focused on the evolution of business-government relations in the region, in the context of decarbonization and economic diversification, as well as the role of sovereign wealth funds and state-owned companies in the energy transitions of developing countries, particularly the oil-rich states of the Gulf.

28 July 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in a virtual call with the UN Science Policy Business Forum to discuss possible cooperation in future international activities such as COP30 and UNEA-7.

GRC Research Programs

1 August 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the fifth virtual meeting with the Africa Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace for the project Alternative Jurisdictions and Instruments of Climate Finance for Africa. The meeting focused on preparations and the agenda for the first authors' workshop in Abu Dhabi, which was held in October 2025.

10-15 August 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the resumed Fifth Session of

the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to Develop an International Legally Binding Instrument on Plastic Pollution, including in the Marine Environment (INC-5.2) which was held in Geneva, Switzerland, from August 5 to 15, 2025, attended by over 2,600 delegates, representing 183 member states and about 400 observer organizations, including academia, NGOs, waste pickers, indigenous peoples, women, and youth, as well as fossil fuel and chemical industry lobbyists. Seventy Ministers and Vice Ministers, as well as 30 other high-level representatives, also attended and participated in informal roundtables on the margins of the session. Dr. Raouf attended the Civil Society Coordination and Preparations Meeting.

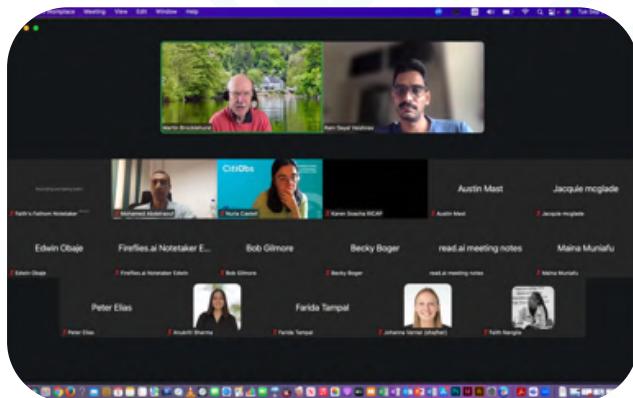
1-5 September 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the 12th Annual Subcommittee meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives from September 1-5, 2025, in Nairobi, Kenya. Dr. Raouf co-coordinated Major Groups engagements in the 12th ASC, including a number of bilateral meetings, daily morning briefings, and a joint statement.

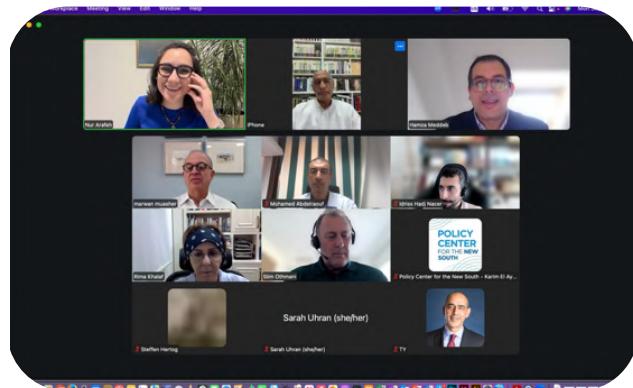
GRC Research Programs

9 September 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in a virtual meeting of Global Citizen Science to prepare for the 7th United Nations General Assembly. Dr. Raouf presented the various activities planned by the Major Group before and during UNEA 7.

29 September 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Director of the Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the fifth virtual meeting of a commission of Arab thinkers and practitioners, convened for a research project exploring the politics and geopolitics of decarbonization in the MENA region. The session focused on economic diversification efforts in the MENA region with two examples (Saudi Arabia and Algeria).

24 October 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Director of the Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program at the Gulf Research Center, participated in a virtual call with colleagues from the Global Methane Hub to explore potential cooperation on research, events, and projects, particularly for GCC countries, in the area of methane and flare reduction to combat climate change. Possible collaboration during the COP30 climate talks was explored.

27-31 October 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Director of the Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the GEO-7 Summary for Policy Makers review and approval meeting from Monday, 27 October to Friday, 31 October 2025, in-person at the United Nations Office in Nairobi. GEO is the flagship report of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), providing an integrated assessment of environmental change, the current state of the environment, the effectiveness of policy response, and the options for achieving different possible futures in the medium to long term. Dr. Raouf participated in the meeting as a member of the GEO Intergovernmental and Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG). Gulf Research Center is currently the representative of the Science and Technology Major Group at UNEP.



GRC Research Programs

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Director of the Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the seventh meeting of the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR-7), which took place from December 1 to 5, 2025. OECPR-7 was a preparatory meeting for UNEA-7.

The Gulf Research Center delivered the opening statement of the Scientific and Technological Community Major Group at UNEP at the opening of the OECPR-7 on December 1, on behalf of the Science and Technology Major Group at UNEP. The statement focused on the role of scientists in various UNEA processes, their commitment to enhancing the delivery of UNEP's program of work across all themes, and contributing their knowledge, expertise, and ideas to support member states' progress in the respective UNEA 7.

4 December 2025



he Gulf Research Center, in cooperation with The Royal Society of Chemistry and the UNEP Science and Technology Major Group, organized a hybrid event on December 4 at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi titled “Dialogue Session with UNEP Chief Scientist and Chief Digital Officer: Imminent Science and Evidence Horizons – as applied to Four Selected UNEA7 Themes.”

The event opened with perspectives by Andrea Hinwood, UNEP Chief Scientist, and Magda Biesiada, Global Sub-Programme Coordinator for Digital Technologies- UNEP, on new

scientific approaches and digital tools. This was followed by a moderated discussion by Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center. The event was attended by 75 experts and scholars from civil society organizations, UNEP, and academia from all over the world. The dialogue covered various issues, including the role of the science Major Group at UNEP, science policy interface, and the role of AI in the environmental field. It concluded with a discussion on a number of selected resolutions that would be negotiated at UNEA 7 on such issues as chemicals, waste and pollution, deep sea mining, and management of wildfires.



6-7 December 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the 21st Global Major Groups and Stakeholders Forum (GMGSF) held on December 6 and 7, 2025, at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi.

GRC Research Programs

The forum provided an avenue for Major Groups and Stakeholders to craft their stances, statements, and contributions for the UNEA-7 process, encompassing formal meetings and negotiations conducted within the Assembly. Dr. Raouf participated in his capacity as a co-chair of the Science and Technology Major group at UNEP.

8-12 December 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the Seventh United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7), which took place from December 8-12, 2025, in Nairobi, Kenya, under the central theme: "Advancing Sustainable Solutions for a Resilient Planet." The assembly focused on driving environmental action, approving UNEP's Medium-Term Strategy for 2026-2029, and addressing key issues such as pollution, climate change, and biodiversity loss, with a strong emphasis on cooperation and inclusive solutions. Dr. Raouf participated in the assembly representing the GRC as a focal point of the Scientific and Technological Community Major Group at UNEP. Dr. Raouf also attended a bilateral meeting with UNEA 7 President His Excellency Abdullah Bin Ali Al-Amri, representing the Sultanate of Oman, who also serves as the Chair of Oman's Environment Authority during UNEA-7.

9 December 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the Major Groups Press Conference at UNEP Headquarters in Nairobi on December 9, 2025. Dr. Raouf spoke on behalf of the Science and Technology Major Group at UNEP, welcoming the resolutions before the assembly and calling for greater ambition as well as strong, independent scientific research, which is foundational to effective global environmental governance.

11 December 2025

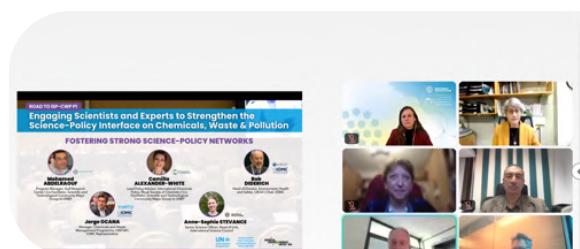


The Gulf Research Center, represented by Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated as a speaker in the UNEA-7 green room hybrid

GRC Research Programs

side event titled “Karst-Aware Decisions for a Sustainable Planet: Bridging Science and Policy: Turning Knowledge of the Hidden Geoecosystems into Sustainable Action.” Dr. Raouf focused on the role of the Science and Technology Major group at UNEP in bridging science and policy for karst protection, as well as the role of environmental economics in guiding policy formulation in relation to karst and cave ecosystems.

16 December 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated as a speaker in the online webinar “Road to ISP-CWP P1” in session two titled “Engaging Scientists and Experts to Strengthen the Science-Policy Interface on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution” organized by Geneva Environment Network together with the interim secretariat for the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution (ISP-CWP). Dr. Raouf’s presentation focused on the role of the Scientific and Technology Major Group at UNEP in linking the global scientific community from all fields with policymakers, ensuring that environmental policy is grounded in robust, independent, and policy-relevant research in relation to ISP-CWP.



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Gulf Environmental Research Program Publications

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Books and Books reviews



Environmental Cost and Face of Agriculture in the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries

Edited By: Shabbir A. Shahid, Mushtaque Ahmed

Publisher: Springer

Date of Publication: Jul 2014



GCC Environmental Action: Origin, Challenges and Prospects

Author: Ali Abduljaleel Ali

Publisher: Gulf Research Center

ISBN / EISBN: 9948-434-77-3

Date of Publication: May 2008

GRC Research Programs

Cultural & Media Program



Director of Program: Dr. Zaid AlFadeil

The establishment of the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center aims to contribute to the preservation and development of the region's culture. The program focuses on creating, managing, and translating the Center's knowledge content across various artistic formats, and on conducting diverse cultural and scientific studies addressing social issues and other matters related to human knowledge. In addition, the program oversees the management and organization of numerous forums and academic conferences with a cultural dimension.

The program seeks to:

- Enhance knowledge by supporting, translating, and publishing serious studies across diverse cultural, heritage, and scientific frameworks (historical, social, political, anthropological, literary, and others).
- Raise awareness of the evolving dimensions of communication processes and the rapid shift toward modern communication technologies and the new digital world, while assessing their impact on the interaction between media outlets and their audiences.
- Strengthen cultural activity within society and foster creativity among individuals, in cooperation with official sponsoring entities and in line with the objectives and visions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's cultural strategic plan.

More information about the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center can be found [here](#).



بودكاست مركز الخليج للأبحاث
Gulf Research Center Podcast

GRC Research Programs

Activities in 2025

Gulf Research Center (GRC) Podcast

In 2025, the Gulf Research Center's cultural and media program recorded 18 episodes in each of the "Tafaseel," "Araa," and "Tagarub Diblumasia" podcasts.

"Tafaseel" Podcast

"Lebanon 2025: Horizons and Ambitions" with former Lebanese Minister of Information, Dr. Manal Abdulsamad



January 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

"The Historical and Strategic Dimension of Transoxiana" with Professor Nader Al-Wathir



January 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

"Djibouti is the Conscience of the Horn of Africa" with Ambassador Diaa Bamakhrama



February 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

"The Kurdish Question: Historical Identity and Political Reality" with Dr. Muhamad Salloum



February 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

"Memory Talk - Saudi Radio: Its Origins and Development" with broadcaster Adnan Saidi



February 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

GRC Research Programs

“Memory Between Two Countries” with journalist Samir Al-Hayari



October 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

“Minerals are the Treasures of Solomon” with His Excellency Dr. Zuhair Nawab



November 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

“Statistics is the Cornerstone of Sustainable Development” with Dr. Ziad Abdullah



December 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

“The Reality of Ethnicities and Jihadist Movements in Sub-Saharan African Countries” with Dr. Marwan Shehadeh



December 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

“Araa” Podcast

“The Organization of Islamic Cooperation: The Problem and Ways of Reform” with Dr. Khaled Al-Shayyat



January 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

“Iraq Between State Rule and the Spread of Armed Factions” with Dr. Ihsan Al-Shammari



July 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

GRC Research Programs

“Women as Actors in Confronting Terrorism”
with Dr. Alissa Jalloul



July 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

“The War Made Iran Aware of its Levels of Strength and Weakness” with Dr. Mohammad Saleh Sedghian



September 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

“Challenges to Implementing the Two-State Solution and Ways to Overcome Them” with Ambassador Dr. Al-Mutawakkil Taha



October 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

“New York Conference: International Challenges and Capabilities” with Dr. Hajjaj Al-Asla'i



October 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

“The Gypsies: The Problem of Identity and the Crisis of Recognition” with Dr. Hamid Al-Hashemi



December 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

“The Structure and Composition of Israeli Society” with Dr. Riyad Shreim



December 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

GRC Research Programs

“Diversity is a Civilizational Value: Jordan as a Model” with Laila Al-Sawaf



December 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

“Tagarub Diblumasia” Podcast

“A Diplomat with a Cultural Mind” with Ambassador Dr. Saud Zaidan.



July 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

For the first time in 2025, the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center launched 17 episodes of the program “**Wamda**” as part of the Gulf Research Center Podcast. The program presents concise ideas highlighting major events across various fields.



The first episode of the “Wamda” series was entitled **“The Impact of Tariffs Approved by President Trump.”**



April 2025

To watch the episode, click [here](#).

The Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center hosted the third seminar of the Roundtable Forum, in partnership with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, entitled **“Cultural Exchange During Hajj.”**



May 2025

To watch the seminar, click [here](#).

GRC Research Programs

As part of strengthening research and knowledge-based engagement with the Palestinian cause, the program organized a roundtable seminar entitled **“How Does Palestinian Culture Confront the Battle of Memory and Identity?”**



July 2025

To watch the seminar, click [here](#).

In line with the Gulf Research Center's commitment to offering practical approaches to supporting the Palestinian cause at all levels, the Cultural and Media Program organized a high-level virtual seminar entitled **“How to Benefit from the Growing Western Awareness of the Palestinian Cause.”**



July 2025

To watch the seminar, click [here](#).

Within the framework of the Jordanian Narrative Lab, the Cultural and Media Program held its third seminar entitled **“The Trajectories of Arab Narrative in the Context of Digital Transformation.”**



January 2025

To watch the seminar, click [here](#).

The fourth seminar was entitled **“Saudi-Jordanian Integration: Radio Broadcasting Integration between Saudi Arabia and Jordan.”**

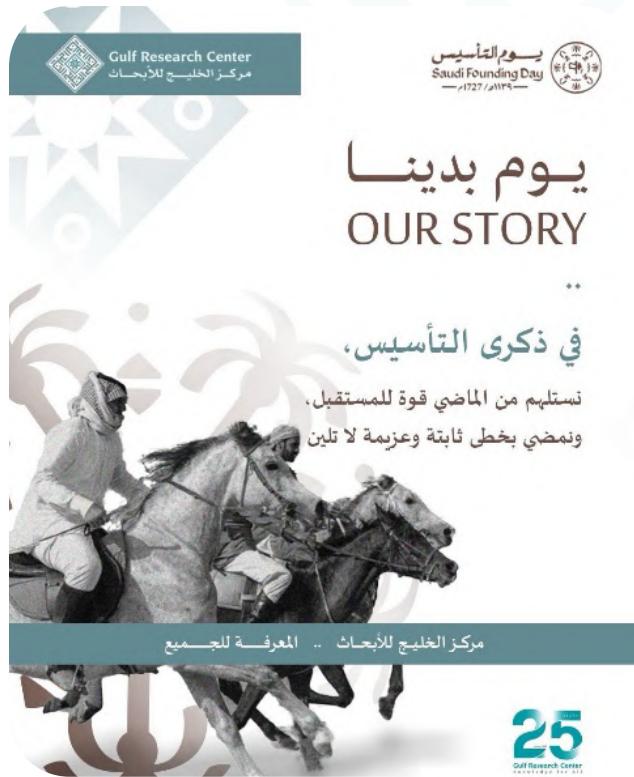


April 2025

To watch the seminar, click [here](#).

GRC Research Programs

The Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center produced a video to commemorate Saudi Founding Day 2025.



February 2025

To watch the video, click [here](#).

The program also produced a video celebrating **the 95th Saudi National Day**.



September 2025

To watch the video, click [here](#).



To watch all episodes of the Gulf Research Center (GRC) podcast, click [here](#).

Publications

In March 2025, the Cultural Program at the Gulf Research Center published a book entitled **“The Cultural Stance 2024–2025.”** The publication monitors, on a semi-monthly basis, the positions of intellectuals regarding specific cultural phenomena across various cultural fields, such as theater, cinema, literature, and other manifestations of culture as defined under the broad, officially adopted concept of culture in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states, alongside Arab and international cultural organizations.



The full publication can be accessed [here](#).

GRC Research Programs

Cultural Stances / Studies / Papers



“Handicrafts as a Cultural Phenomenon”
March 2025
Access the stance [here](#).



“Yemenite Jews: Roots and History”
By: Dr. Zaid AlFadeil
October 2025
Access the study [here](#).



“Cultural Strategies in the Arab World: Reality and Aspiration”
May 2025
Access the stance [here](#).



“The Roots of Jewish Monotheism and the Influence of Islamic Jurisprudential Codification”
By: Ahmed Ashqar
March 2025
Access the paper [here](#).



“Islamic Philosophy on Jewish Religious Thought: A Comparative Anthropological Approach”
By: Dr. Iyad Ablal
April 2025
Access the study [here](#).



“Cultural Heritage: From Material Legacy to Digital Creativity in Saudi Vision 2030”
By: Fatimah bint Mohammed Al-Futaih
April 2025
Access the paper [here](#).



“Cultural Resistance: The Battle of Palestinian Memory and Identity”
By: Salim Fahmi Nuqul
July 2025
Access the study [here](#).



“The Media Crisis in Times of War”
By: Jawad Al-Omari
April 2025
Access the paper [here](#).

GRC Research Programs

Cultural Stances / Studies / Papers



“The Intellectual and the Lure of Power”
By: Jamal Al-Qaisi
May 2025
Access the paper [here](#).



Communication Platforms: A Revolution upon a Revolution”
By: Dr. Marcel Jouannet
August 2025
Access the paper [here](#).



“A Reflection on the Philosophy of History”
By: Prof. Dr. Ali Mahafzah
June 2025
Access the paper [here](#).



“Is Culture the Soft Power of Change?”
By: Dr. Mukhlid Barakat
August 2025
Access the paper [here](#).



“Arab-Kurdish Harmony: A Shared History and a Unified Islamic Identity”
By: Sihanouk Debo
July 2025
Access the paper [here](#).



“The Arab World and the Lessons of the Chinese Experience: A Reading of the Book Encounter of the East”
By: Yosef bin Fahd Alghazoli
October 2025
Access the paper [here](#).



“The State in the Third Millennium”
By: Dr. Zaid AlFaeil - Al-Zubair Al-Ansari
July 2025
Access the paper [here](#).
“Social



“The Western Model in Upcoming International Transformations”
By: Samira bin Rajab
October 2025
Access the paper [here](#).

Cultural Stances / Studies / Papers



“Reflections from the Lands of the Arabs by Her Royal Highness Princess Maha bint Mohammed Al-Faisal.”

By: Dr. Zaid AlFadeil - Al-Zubair Al-Ansari
November 2025
Access the paper [here](#).



To view all cultural papers, click [here](#).

For more information about the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center, visit the Center's website [here](#).

2025

ANNUAL REPORT

GRC EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

GRC Events & Activities

Tafahum wa Tabadul Project



As a non-profit organization, the GRC engages in externally-funded research projects focusing on the Gulf region. Such projects allow collaboration with other institutions and create a broader base for scholarship and research activities.

In 2025, the regional dialogue initiative **Tafahum wa Tabadul** convened official representatives from West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula (WAAP) - a region that subsumes the six member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council plus Yemen, Iraq, and Iran - for high-level policy workshops.

The fundamental objective of the **Tafahum wa Tabadul** project is to outline a process for regional security in the WAAP region. In addition, it aims to generate an overall “understanding” (tafahum) among regional stakeholders on a collaborative process toward regional security followed by the identification and implementation of concrete areas of “exchange” (tabadul). The project is funded by the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA of Switzerland and implemented by CARPO and the GRCF.

More details about the project are available [here](#).

Various events were held in 2025 as part of the Tafahum wa Tabadul project, including the following:

26-27 November 2025, Montreux, Switzerland

Workshop Track Level 1: 8th High-Level Policy Workshop

14-15 October 2025, Bonn, Germany

Workshop Track Level 2: “Regional Dialogue on the Future of Syria - How to accompany and support Syria’s political transformation,”

Within the framework of the Tafahum wa Tabadul project, implemented in partnership with the Gulf Research Center and CARPO, the second expert workshop was held in Bonn dedicated to “Regional Dialogue on the Future of Syria.” The workshop brought together a distinguished and diverse group of experts from West Asia, the Arabian Peninsula, and the Levant, creating a space for candid and in-depth exchanges on Syria’s evolving political, security, and regional landscape. Discussions examined both the emerging opportunities and the persistent challenges shaping Syria’s future, including regional dynamics, pathways for dialogue, and the broader implications for stability and cooperation across the region.

GRC Events & Activities

The deliberations highlighted the complexity of the Syrian file, while also underscoring areas where regional dialogue, confidence-building, and pragmatic engagement could play a constructive role moving forward. The richness of perspectives and depth of analysis provided a strong foundation for continued engagement under the Tafahum wa Tabadul framework.



2-3 July 2025, Montreux, Switzerland

Workshop Track Level 1: 7th High-Level Policy Workshop, Switzerland

26-27 February 2025, Abu Dhabi, UAE

Workshop Track Level 2: Climate and Energy Security in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula (II) Regional Cooperation to Address Extreme Weather Events in Cooperation with Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy

أكاديمية
أنور قرقاش
الدبلوماسية

ANWAR GARGASH
DIPLOMATIC
ACADEMY

The Tafahum wa Tabadul Level 2 project workshop, titled “Climate and Energy Security in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula (II) - Regional Cooperation to Address Extreme Weather Events” was held in Abu Dhabi on February 25-26, 2025. Organized by the Gulf Research Center and CARPO, in collaboration with the Anwar Gargash Diplomatic Academy, the sessions explored the regional impact of extreme weather events, analyzing current challenges, future scenarios, and stakeholder responses. Participants discussed the economic, social, and security implications of extreme weather events, including their effects on economic growth, social cohesion, and political stability. Key topics included infrastructure damage, maritime security risks, and challenges in data collection and risk assessment. Another session focused on the public health implications of extreme weather events, discussing issues such as mental and physical health effects, challenges to regional health resilience, and existing best practices for cooperation.

The second day of the workshop concentrated on developing a policy agenda on how regional cooperation in terms of tackling extreme weather events can be enhanced. The discussions were centered on the key issues that require urgent attention, the measures/actions that need to be put into place, and the structure needed to allow for policy implementation.



GRC Events & Activities

Executive Training Programs

In addition to its research and convening activities, the Gulf Research Center places strong emphasis on executive training and learning as a core pillar of its mandate. The GRC designs and delivers specialized executive training programs tailored to the needs of diplomats, policymakers, and senior officials, with a focus on strengthening strategic thinking, policy analysis, and practical diplomatic skills. These programs integrate academic rigor with practitioner-led perspectives, ensuring a strong balance between conceptual frameworks and real-world application. In 2025, the GRC further reinforced this commitment through the delivery of a dedicated executive training program, held at the GRC's Geneva office in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, reaffirming the Center's role as a trusted partner in capacity-building and the professional development of future diplomatic leaders.

Module 1: Strengthening Global Partnerships: Gulf and Regional Cooperation

Geneva, Switzerland

May 5-9, 2025



The Gulf Research Center (GRC) successfully concluded its week-long **Executive Training Program** in Geneva, Switzerland, held under the

theme **“Strengthening Global Partnerships: Gulf and Regional Cooperation.”** The program brought together a distinguished group of participants from the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other key governmental institutions, offering an immersive learning experience designed to enhance diplomatic skills, deepen policy knowledge, and strengthen international engagement.

As part of the program, participants had the distinct honor of meeting with H.E. Mr. Abdulmohsen Majed A. bin Khothaila, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations (UN) in Geneva, and H.E. Mr. Saqr bin Abdullah Al-Moqbel, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the World Trade Organization (WTO). Both ambassadors shared valuable insights into Saudi Arabia's role in multilateral diplomacy, the priorities guiding its foreign policy, and the importance of building strategic partnerships through international institutions.

Over the course of the week, participants took part in a series of in-depth sessions led by experienced diplomats, academics, and practitioners from international organizations and policy institutions. The agenda covered a broad spectrum of critical themes, including the evolving geopolitical landscape and the Gulf's strategic positioning within it; economic diplomacy and sustainable development goals; the shifting dynamics of global power competition; and the Gulf's role in international organizations and multilateral governance frameworks.

Special emphasis was placed on understanding how Gulf countries can expand their cooperation with emerging regions across Asia, Africa, and Latin America, while continuing to build robust ties with traditional partners in Europe and the U.S.

The program offered participants not only theoretical grounding but also practical tools to navigate complex global challenges. Through interactive workshops, policy simulations, and high-level discussions, the training fostered a deeper understanding of how Gulf states can proactively shape global policy agendas and contribute to regional and international peace, prosperity, and sustainable development.

This initiative is part of the Gulf Research Center's broader effort to invest in capacity building, knowledge transfer, and strategic foresight for future Gulf leaders. By hosting this program in Geneva, a global hub of diplomacy and multilateral cooperation, the GRC emphasized the critical importance of engaging with international institutions and strengthening Gulf visibility and participation on the world stage.



Module 2: The Role of International Organizations and Multilateral Institutions for Saudi Diplomats

Geneva, Switzerland

October 6-10, 2025



The Gulf Research Center (GRC) held its second week-long Executive Training Program in Geneva, Switzerland, under the theme "**The Role of International Organizations and Multilateral Institutions for Saudi Diplomats.**" The program was designed for officials from the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other governmental entities.

Participants had the honor of meeting H.E. Mr. Abdulmohsen Majed A. bin Khothaila, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations in Geneva, and H.E. Mr. Saqer bin Abdullah Al-Moqbel, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the World Trade Organization (WTO), along with a number of experts and professionals during visits to various international organizations in Geneva as part of the program, including:

- The United Nations
- World Trade Organization
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- World Health Organization

Throughout the week, participants took part in a series of in-depth sessions addressing key themes such as the foundations of multilateral diplomacy; trade, development, and multilateral economics; humanitarian affairs and crisis coordination; and global health diplomacy.

GRC Events & Activities



UNITED NATIONS
GENEVA



WORLD TRADE
ORGANIZATION



ICRC



United Nations
Office for the Coordination
of Humanitarian Affairs



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



World Health
Organization



International
Labour
Organization

GRC Events & Activities

Strategic 2025 Outlook Webinar

January 7, 2025

Gulf Research Center
STRATEGIC OUTLOOK 2025
WEBINAR



The Gulf Research Center (GRC) held its first webinar of the year, presenting its 2025 outlook. The webinar looked at the possibilities of emerging trends and examined key priorities shaping the Gulf region's future, including regional security, economic diversification, energy security, and the development of international partnerships. Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels office and Director of Research, moderated the webinar. Speakers of the webinar included Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the GRC; Dr. Mustafa Alani, Senior Advisor & Director of the GRC's Security and Defense program; Prof. Giacomo Luciani, member of the Board of Trustees of the GRC Foundation Geneva; Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist at the GRC; and Prof. Saleh Al-Khathlan, Senior Advisor at the GRC.

The webinar discussed how the evolving geopolitical landscape and the potential impact of a second Trump administration on Gulf and Middle Eastern security deserve close attention. Shifting regional dynamics, including recent

conflicts involving Hamas, Israel, Iran, and others, highlight the fragility of stability and the necessity for nuanced foreign policy.

The webinar also shed light on how Gulf security faced major shifts, notably after Hamas's October 2023 attack on Israel. Israel's prolonged military response escalated regional tensions involving Hezbollah, Iran, and Yemen's Houthis. While Israel weakened Hamas and Hezbollah, Houthi threats to international shipping and missile attacks persisted, exposing limits in Western-Israeli deterrence. Direct Israeli-Iranian confrontations further highlighted Iran's military vulnerabilities as the fall of Syria's Assad regime deepened Iran's strategic isolation.

Key security files for 2025 include Yemen, where fragile ceasefires risk collapse amid Houthi threats, and Syria, now in post-Assad turmoil. Both demand urgent stabilization to avoid further regional chaos. The Iran-Israel conflict, including nuclear tensions, remains volatile. Iraq faces growing pressures to distance itself from Iran, while Hamas and Hezbollah struggle to recover amid diminished Iranian support. These developments will shape Gulf security, alliances, and regional balance in 2025.

Regarding the GCC states' foreign policies, it was mentioned that these are shaped by their external environment, emphasizing reactive and status quo approaches due to their conservative political systems. Unlike democracies, these states rarely experience significant foreign policy shifts, requiring analysis to focus on regional and global structural transformations rather than short-term changes.

In 2025, Gulf-US relations will focus on two key issues beyond the impact of US shale oil production. First, Trump's push to expand

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normalization with Israel could make this a pivotal topic in US-Saudi relations, requiring Riyadh to strategically link normalization to a Palestinian state to protect its interests. Second, Trump's return to a "maximum pressure" strategy on Iran, including tougher sanctions, may challenge Gulf efforts to improve ties with Tehran.

When it comes to the outlook on energy for the region, Saudi Arabia supports production cuts to sustain high oil prices, driven by Vision 2030's financial demands, needing \$100 per barrel to balance its budget. OPEC+ struggles with discipline as some members exceed quotas, undermining market confidence and risking oversupply.

Global oil demand continues to rise but is expected to peak by 2030. High prices risk accelerating this decline, while shifting expectations of lower future demand push producers to extract more now. Trump's pro-drilling stance may further complicate the market.

Saudi Arabia's key leverage is the threat of a price war, which could drop prices to \$50, harming producers but benefiting consumers. Such a move might also reshape global oil dynamics, potentially favoring Riyadh through segmented markets and price premiums on "friendly" oil.

Finally, on the economic outlook, the Middle East is undergoing a major transformation, with 2025 marking significant geopolitical and economic shifts. Focus will be on Iran, impacting Gulf economies, which are diversifying into renewable energy, technology, tourism,

healthcare, and infrastructure. While oil remains important, non-oil sectors are growing, offering new opportunities.

Challenges include global competition, volatile oil prices, and regional tensions. Success depends on adaptability, collaboration, and learning from past mistakes. Key growth areas include renewable energy, AI, fintech, smart cities, and tourism, with major projects like Saudi Arabia's NEOM and Dubai's Expo legacy driving demand. The Gulf economies are evolving beyond oil dependency.

You can read more on the GRC's Strategic 2025 outlook in the GRC's **'2025 Strategic Dossier'** [here](#):



Gulf Research Center

Knowledge for All

Gulf Research Center 2026 Strategic Dossier

January 2026



GRC Events & Activities

GRC Roundtable on 'The Economy of Saudi Arabia in the 21st Century'

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

February 2, 2025



The Gulf Research Center (GRC) hosted a roundtable at its Riyadh office on February 2, 2025, featuring Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist at the GRC, who presented his recent book, "The Economy of Saudi Arabia in the 21st Century." The discussion provided in-depth insights into Saudi Arabia's economic transformation, focusing on key sectors driving growth, the impact of structural reforms, and the challenges and opportunities shaping the country's future.

The event brought together representatives and experts from the diplomatic community, academia, and the private sector for an engaging exchange on Saudi Arabia's evolving economic landscape. Participants explored the implications of Vision 2030, the role of foreign investment, and regional economic integration, fostering a dynamic discussion on the Kingdom's economic trajectory.



Enhancing Regional Security: Implementing the GCC Vision Amid Current Challenges and Opportunities Symposium

Kuwait City, Kuwait

19-20 February, 2025



The Gulf Research Center, in collaboration with the Center for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies at Kuwait University, organized a closed symposium titled "Enhancing Regional Security: Implementing the GCC Vision Amid Current Challenges and Opportunities Symposium" on Thursday, February 20, 2025, in Kuwait. Participation in the symposium included experts and specialists from various GCC countries in security and political fields, each enriching the discussion with their insights about the future of regional security amid current challenges and changes.

The symposium opened with welcome remarks by Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, and Professor Dr. Yagoub Al-Kandari, Director of the Center for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies at Kuwait University, who welcomed the participating

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guests, emphasizing the importance of strengthening security cooperation among GCC countries, addressing regional and international security challenges, and leveraging available opportunities to achieve security and stability in the region.

The first session was titled: “The Nature of Regional and Global Security Risks for the Next Decade and Their Implications for GCC Countries,” featuring H.E. Dr. Abdulaziz Hamad Aluwaiesq, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Negotiations at the GCC. He addressed the GCC’s vision for regional security, reviewing its key features and objectives, as well as discussed the challenges and threats facing regional security. He emphasized the importance of enhancing joint Gulf cooperation to address these challenges in a way that contributes to consolidating regional security and stability.

The second session was titled: “Evaluating GCC Countries’ Response to Current Security Risks and Preparedness for Future Risks,” where participants assessed how GCC countries are dealing with current security threats.

The symposium concluded with a roundtable discussion titled: “Reading into the Council’s Vision for Regional Security,” which reviewed the features of the GCC’s vision for regional security and discussed the ways and mechanisms necessary for formulating an integrated regional security system.



Rethinking Afghanistan-Gulf Relations in a Changing Geopolitical Landscape Webinar

June 3, 2025

PRINCETON SPIA
AFGHANISTAN POLICY LAB

مركز الخليج للأبحاث
Gulf Research Center

On June 3, 2025, the Gulf Research Center (GRC) and the Afghanistan Policy Lab at Princeton University’s School of Public and International Affairs co-hosted a closed-door webinar titled “Rethinking Afghanistan-Gulf Relations in a Changing Geopolitical Landscape.” The session brought together experts and policymakers to examine the evolving dynamics of GCC-Afghanistan relations, with discussions spanning political, economic, and humanitarian dimensions.

The speakers of the webinar were Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the GRC; Dean Amaney Jamal, Dean of the Princeton School of Public and International Affairs; Ambassador Adela Raz, Director of the Afghanistan Policy Lab at Princeton School of Public and International Affairs; Ms. Fatima Gailani, Afghan Women’s Rights Activist, Former President of the Afghan Red Crescent, and Member of the Afghanistan Peace Negotiating Team; H.E. Dr. Majed Al Ansari, Advisor to the Prime Minister, Spokesperson to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Director of the Center for International Policy Research (CIPR); Dr. Yousuf Al Bulushi, Chairman of the Muscat Policy Council; and H.E. Dr. Sultan Mohammed Al-Nuaimi, Director General of the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research. Dr. Christian Koch, Director of Research at the GRC, moderated the webinar.

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The webinar covered five themes:

1. Current Gulf countries' policies and strategies for Afghanistan
2. Opportunities for humanitarian, economic, and political cooperation
3. Perspectives on how Afghanistan fits into the Gulf's regional and global foreign policy outlook
4. Practical recommendations for enhancing Afghanistan-Gulf relations in a way that promotes stability, development, and prosperity
5. Gulf countries' expectations and demands from the Afghan government

The dialogue focused on Afghanistan's current situation and the potential avenues for strategic engagement by the Gulf states. Participants explored pressing challenges, including extremism, drug trafficking, and regional instability, while emphasizing the importance of inclusive dialogue and collaborative efforts to foster long-term peace. It was noted that Gulf support for Afghanistan hinges on concrete actions by the Afghan authorities, particularly in the areas of counterterrorism and governance.

Speakers underscored the urgent need for a political settlement in Afghanistan, stressing the critical role of the GCC in stabilizing the country. The importance of involving all Afghans in the peace process was emphasized, as was the need to redirect regional attention to Afghanistan's internal issues in the current geopolitical context.

Qatar's distinct role as a mediator between the Taliban and the United States was discussed, with recognition of its efforts in facilitating

dialogue and promoting greater inclusivity within the Afghan government. Despite existing challenges, participants agreed that constructive strategic engagement with the Taliban remains essential for advancing peace and addressing humanitarian needs and women's rights.

The session also underscored the importance of empowering Afghan institutions through capacity-building initiatives, such as training bureaucrats on human rights and governance. The emergence of a new generation in Afghanistan was seen as a potential driver for meaningful change under the current regime.

Regional engagement was another key theme, with emphasis placed on connecting with Afghanistan's youth and addressing their socio-economic concerns. Panelists noted the cautious yet strategic diplomatic overtures by Gulf states and stressed the need to balance engagement with regional dynamics.

The UAE's diplomatic outreach was cited as an example of the Gulf's role which could be directed toward promoting stability and economic development. Speakers also addressed the critical issue of supporting Afghan women, emphasizing the importance of their participation across sectors, even amid the challenges of working with Taliban leadership. Historical ties between the Gulf and Afghanistan were acknowledged as a foundation for future cooperation.

Finally, participants called for a more proactive Gulf role in Afghanistan's economic recovery, particularly in sectors such as agriculture and labor. They advocated for enhanced humanitarian assistance, greater support for UN-led peace initiatives, and sustained regional dialogue to counter extremism and disinformation, focusing on peace and stability in Afghanistan.

GRC Events & Activities

Webinar: Escalation and Diplomacy: Gulf Perspectives on the Israel-Iran War

July 3, 2025



On June 30, 2025, the Gulf Research Center (GRC) hosted a webinar titled “Escalation and Diplomacy: Gulf Perspectives on the Israel-Iran War.” The session brought together GRC experts and analysts to examine the implications of the Iran-Israel conflict, focusing on the potential repercussions for the Gulf region and broader Middle East. Speakers included **Dr. Abdulaziz Sager**, Founder and Chairman of the GRC; **Prof. Giacomo Luciani**, Trustee and a Founding Member of the Gulf Research Center Foundation Geneva; **Dr. Mustafa Alani**, Director of Security and Defense Studies at the GRC; **Dr. John Sfakianakis**, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the GRC; and **Prof. Saleh Al-Khathlan**, Senior Advisor at the GRC. **Dr. Christian Koch**, Director of Research at the GRC, moderated the webinar.

The webinar covered six themes:

1. Gulf states’ diplomatic and strategic positioning in light of recent regional events

2. Assessment of the Israel-Iran military exchange and nuclear implications
3. Impact on oil markets and fiscal stability in the Gulf
4. The limits of external mediation and the need for regional engagement
5. Prospects for GCC-led diplomacy and security frameworks
6. Lessons for nuclear non-proliferation and geopolitical changes

The discussions assessed military outcomes, regional stability, diplomatic engagement, and the shifting balance of power in light of Iran’s nuclear program and the Gulf’s strategic position. Dr. Abdulaziz Sager emphasized that the Gulf states condemned the Israeli aggression and its actions under international law but remain cautious toward Iran, particularly its nuclear ambitions. He highlighted the importance of diplomacy and reaffirmed the Kingdom’s stance on the two-state solution in the Israel-Palestine conflict as a precondition of Saudi Arabia’s normalization with Israel. Dr. Sager also pointed out that foreign military operations, especially on Gulf territory (i.e., Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar), are unacceptable and undermine sovereignty. In addition, he asserted the GCC’s opposition to regime change in Iran, stressing that such matters must be resolved internally by the Iranian people. He expressed a Saudi willingness to mediate between Iran and the US, citing historical efforts such as that of Russia and Ukraine, but called for Iran to abandon threatening rhetoric and militia-based regional influence.

Prof. Giacomo Luciani emphasized that oil prices are more influenced by speculation than real geopolitical disruptions. Therefore, markets

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remained relatively stable during the recent crisis. He stated that OPEC+ dynamics may shift post-conflict with Saudi Arabia increasing oil production, aiming to lower prices and undercut high-cost producers, especially in the US. Arguing that issues of nuclear enrichment and proliferation are likely to dominate much of the agenda in the coming period, he advocated for a collective and regional approach to nuclear enrichment, including Iran, to prevent proliferation crises.

Dr. Mustafa Alani evaluated the military operation against Iran's nuclear facilities, claiming that Israel achieved around 90% of its objectives. He underlined the fact that the operation was not put together at the last minute but had, in fact, been in preparation for about 10 years backed by intense intelligence planning from both Israel and the US. Despite this, Iran's broader nuclear ambitions remain unresolved. Dr. Alani dismissed any suggestion that Iran was close to nuclear weapon capability, yet affirmed the program was military in intent. He also questioned Iran's ability to recover quickly under the threat of continued strikes from the US and Israel, despite Iran's surviving leadership structures. He then noted how the GCC's influence over the nuclear dimension remains minimal, although its strategic alignment will matter in the post-conflict phase. Dr. Alani also highlighted the irony of two nuclear-armed states joining forces to attack a non-nuclear state in order to prevent it from acquiring nuclear weapons.

Dr. John Sfakianakis observed that global financial markets are extremely desensitized to the Middle East's unpredictable circumstances unless they directly impact supply chains. For example, he noted the disconnect between economic analysts and Middle East conflicts except in cases involving global escalation

or nuclear risk. He mentioned that high oil prices could benefit Saudi's fiscal situation, particularly in funding its Vision 2030 projects, though unpredictable circumstances remain a concern. Dr. Sfakianakis warned that the war could affect the GCC's international image as a stable, emerging hub of soft power and neutrality.

Prof. Saleh Al-Khathlan labeled the conflict the most dangerous since the 2003 Iraq War due to its regional implications. He argued that both Israel and Iran emerged from the conflict politically weakened, presenting the GRC with the golden opportunity to pursue constructive engagement. He outlined a three-track response: opposition to Iran's nuclear armament, renewed diplomatic outreach to Iran, and stronger political pressure on Israel over its destabilizing regional policies. Dr. Al-Khathlan argued that strategic decisions often rely on perception, not just facts, and that the Gulf must be active in shaping both.

Overall, the webinar conveyed a sense that the GCC states must use their diplomatic leverage and position of economic influence in shaping the post-conflict landscape. This would include:

- **Reinvesting in Multilateral Diplomacy:** The GCC is encouraged to actively pursue confidence-building frameworks with Iran and other neighbours, especially around nuclear risk and military transparency.
- **Reasserting Commitment to a Two-State Solution:** Normalization with Israel must be tied to concrete advances toward Palestinian statehood.
- **Balancing Energy Diplomacy with Stability:** While oil price gains benefit fiscal goals, Gulf producers are advised

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to manage perception by reinforcing their commitment to global stability.

- **Shaping Strategic Narrative:** With Iran and Israel both politically weakened, the GCC has an opportunity to shape the next phase of regional order through proactive engagement and multilateral alignment.

Roundtable on Saudi-German Relations with H.E. Ambassador Dr. Geza Andreas von Geyr, State Secretary of the Federal Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

September 14, 2025



The Gulf Research Center (GRC) organized a high-level roundtable discussion entitled “Saudi-German Relations” bringing together senior officials, diplomats, and experts to exchange views on the current state and future prospects of bilateral ties. The session was attended by H.E. Ambassador Dr. Geza Andreas von Geyr, State Secretary of the Federal Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany, accompanied by an official delegation, alongside a select group of Saudi and international experts with a deep interest in Saudi-German relations.

The roundtable, which took place on September 14, 2025, at the GRC office in Riyadh, provided a platform for candid dialogue on political, economic, security, and cultural dimensions of the partnership. Participants discussed opportunities for enhancing cooperation in areas of mutual interest, while also addressing regional and global challenges that impact both countries.

The event reflected the GRC’s commitment to fostering constructive dialogue between the Gulf region and international partners, highlighting the importance of sustained engagement and collaboration in strengthening Saudi-German relations.



Ways to Strengthen Saudi-Jordanian Relations Workshop

Jordan, Amman

September 18, 2025



GRC Events & Activities

The Gulf Research Center (GRC), in cooperation with the Mashura Center for Studies, organized an in-depth workshop entitled “Ways to Strengthen Saudi-Jordanian Relations” on Thursday, September 18, 2025, in the Jordanian capital of Amman. The workshop served as an important dialogue platform that brought together a distinguished group of experts, officials, politicians, and academics from both Saudi Arabia and Jordan to examine key issues shaping the present and future of bilateral relations.

Discussions were structured into three sessions. The first session explored the foundations of political relations and the prospects for their further development. Participants highlighted the deep historical and cultural ties linking the two countries and emphasized the importance of consolidating these bonds to address common challenges and safeguard shared interests.

The second session examined political and security developments across the region and their implications for Riyadh and Amman. The debate underlined the crucial role both countries play in supporting stability, promoting dialogue, and enhancing regional security amid ongoing geopolitical shifts.

The third session focused on economic and investment cooperation, identifying promising opportunities in trade, infrastructure, and energy, while also addressing the challenges that need innovative solutions. The session stressed the potential for joint initiatives that could broaden the scope of partnership and generate tangible benefits for the people of both nations.

In conclusion, participants affirmed that Saudi-Jordanian relations represent a cornerstone of regional stability and security. Strengthening

these ties across political, security, and economic dimensions was seen not only as a strategic necessity but also as an investment in a more stable and prosperous future for the wider region.



Workshop on Beyond the Great Powers: The Rise of Middle Power Diplomacy in the Middle East

Brussels, Belgium

October 20, 2025



GRC Events & Activities

The Gulf Research Center Foundation, Brussels hosted a project workshop with the UCLA Burkle Center and Middle East Council on Global Affairs (MECGA) entitled “Beyond the Great Powers: The Rise of Middle Power Diplomacy in the Middle East.” The workshop aimed to better understand the changing mediation landscape of the region, featuring discussions on traditional regional powers (Egypt, Algeria, Türkiye), case studies on Iran and Yemen, comparative perspectives on mediation by the US, China, and Europe, and the roles being played by Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq.

The workshop addressed how MENA governments are increasingly engaging in conflict mediation, a practice formerly dominated by traditional Western actors, with the goal of mapping emerging diplomatic roles and assessing their scope and boundaries in the context of global competitiveness.

The workshop brought together senior scholars and policymakers to discuss a draft paper and exchange in an informal format to refine academic analysis and generate insights into the geopolitics and effectiveness of Middle Eastern and Gulf mediation practices in a changing international order.



Joint Workshop on Shared Interests, Shared Actions in Maritime Security: Securing the Waterways around the Arabian Peninsula

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

November 5-6, 2025



The Gulf Research Center (GRC), in cooperation with the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies (KFCRIS), and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) organized a two-day workshop held at the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies in Riyadh. The workshop brought together experts on maritime security from various Saudi and German government entities, as well as representatives from the private sector and research institutions.

The first day of the workshop featured opening remarks by **HRH Prince Turki AlFaisal**, Founder and Trustee of the King Faisal Foundation and Chairman of the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies; **Dr. Abdulaziz Sager**, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC); **Philipp Dienstbier**, Director of the Regional Programme Gulf States, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS); **H.E. Michael Kindsgrab**, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; and **H.E. Thomas Schneider**, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Yemen.



Day One: Diagnosing the Problem and Its Implications

The first day's discussions, held under the theme "Diagnosing the Problem and Its Implications," offered a comprehensive overview of the maritime security challenges surrounding the Arabian Peninsula, particularly in the Red Sea and Gulf regions. Speakers underscored the urgent need for a coherent regional strategy that not only ensures the safety of shipments but also strengthens the broader maritime governance framework, an area still lacking in effective coordination.

Participants emphasized that offshore maritime disruptions in the Red Sea are deeply rooted in onshore fragility. Across the Red Sea basin, state weakness, fragility, and in some cases failure, continue to fuel non-state threats to freedom of navigation. The collapse of state authority in Yemen and Somalia, along with governance deficits in Sudan and Eritrea, has created fertile ground for violent non-state actors to thrive. This is particularly evident in Yemen, where domestic political and economic dynamics cannot be discounted as driving factors for Houthi actions when analyzing the group's persistent disruptions to shipping. A major point of convergence was the recognition that ineffective disruption of these groups' supply lines remains a core vulnerability enabling them to sustain and expand their operational capabilities.

Speakers also noted that while maritime security is often viewed through a naval or defensive lens, Europe, especially Germany, currently lacks the hardware capacity to adequately secure maritime routes in these volatile waters. This reality elevates the importance of strengthened partnerships with Gulf states capable of contributing both security resources and political leverage.

Discussions further addressed the international community's hesitancy to fully engage with the Houthi movement, which continues to pose complex geopolitical challenges. Unlike other

actors, such as pirates from the Horn of Africa, the Houthis are politically and ideologically driven, and their operations in the Red Sea have transformed freedom of navigation into a multidimensional regional and global issue.

Turning to the Gulf, participants agreed that a complete closure of the Strait of Hormuz remains unlikely, given that such an action would be economically self-destructive for Iran. Nonetheless, experts cautioned that in a scenario involving regime collapse or a fragmentation of authority in Tehran, uncoordinated actors could make erratic decisions, including potential attempts at temporary closure. More prevalent and immediate threats include GPS spoofing, cyberattacks on maritime infrastructure, and other asymmetric tactics that increase risks and operational costs for commercial shipping without fully restricting movement.

Across both regions, discussions were framed by the broader context of the decreasing reliability of the United States as a security guarantor, a strategic shift that both Europe and the Gulf must increasingly adapt to. Participants highlighted that for commercial shipping, perceived threats can be as damaging as actual attacks; even a small number of successful strikes can raise insurance premiums and divert global shipping routes. Several European representatives challenged the assumption that the closure of the Red Sea route has had universally severe global economic consequences. They noted that many international supply chains have adjusted, with limited price increases. Instead, the most serious economic impacts fall disproportionately on regional shipping lines, Red Sea littoral ports, and the Suez Canal, which have been directly affected by reduced traffic.

This raised an important question: If the economic costs are not the primary driver for Europe, why should Europe invest in Red Sea and Gulf security? The discussion converged on two key arguments:

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- Protecting the global norm of freedom of navigation, as disruptions in one region create precedents for others and encourage learning among disruptive actors;
- Preventive engagement, to stabilize Europe’s broader neighborhood before localized crises expand into full strategic or humanitarian emergencies.

Ultimately, the first day concluded with consensus that sustainable maritime stability in the Red Sea and surrounding waterways requires a comprehensive, inclusive governance model that integrates security, political, and economic dimensions. Long-term stability will depend on addressing the onshore governance deficits that empower non-state actors, steering conflicts toward negotiated settlements, and aligning regional priorities with international commitments.



Day Two: Shared Solutions for Shared Challenges

The second and final day of the workshop, titled “Shared Interests, Shared Actions in Maritime Security: Securing the Waterways Around the Arabian Peninsula,” focused on advancing practical avenues for cooperation and coordination among regional and international actors. Building on the analytical foundations

established during the first day, discussions shifted toward identifying shared priorities, enhancing joint mechanisms, and fostering a long-term vision for maritime stability that connects security, governance, and development.

Deliberations opened with an assessment of existing regional and multilateral initiatives aimed at addressing maritime challenges in the Red Sea. Participants stressed that the EU is already operating at the limits of its hardware capacity, particularly through its ASPIDES mission. Given the limited number of vessels at Europe’s disposal, both European and Gulf actors must think creatively about how to overcome such constraints. In this context, participants emphasized that preventing the transfer of supplies used to build weapons, rather than solely intercepting missiles and drones at sea, offers a cost-effective and sustainable avenue for reducing threats to freedom of navigation.

A recurring theme was the importance of strengthening littoral states along the Red Sea, with strong expectations for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to assume a greater leadership role, both diplomatically and developmentally, in stabilizing fragile regional environments. Participants noted that reinforcing institutions, governance, and border-control capacities in these states is essential to reducing the operational space of non-state actors who threaten maritime security.

Turning to the Gulf, discussions highlighted the growing role of technology and private-sector innovation in countering threats that fall short of full Strait closure. Tools such as enhanced situational awareness systems, spoofing-detection technologies, and cyber-resilience platforms provide important alternatives for protecting navigation in increasingly contested waters. At the same time, participants noted that

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regional and international navies with limited fleets must engage in deeper coordination to achieve a global footprint. The EU's Coordinated Maritime Presence (CMP) was highlighted as a potential mechanism where greater Gulf involvement or structured exchanges could meaningfully expand operational reach and burden-sharing.

Across both regions, participants acknowledged that limited naval assets constrain the strategic options available to both European and Gulf states. This raises the possibility of coordinated naval capacity-building, enabling partners to more effectively prevent and counter maritime threats. In this context, experts debated whether it is more effective to build on and strengthen existing frameworks or establish new initiatives tailored to current realities. A mapping exercise was proposed to identify gaps, overlaps, and opportunities across existing structures. The role of UNVIM in Djibouti was also referenced as a model for monitoring and compliance mechanisms relevant to broader Red Sea stability.

Another area of convergence was the recognition that information-sharing represents the most immediate and low-cost opportunity for deeper EU-GCC cooperation. Enhanced intelligence exchange, shared threat assessments, and coordinated early-warning mechanisms would substantially strengthen collective responses to evolving maritime challenges.

Participants further discussed how regional states, such as Egypt, which is heavily affected by disruptions to Red Sea navigation, could be incentivized to assume greater responsibility for maritime security. The conversation explored the conditions, frameworks, and political understandings necessary for effective and sustainable regional coordination.

The day concluded with a reaffirmation that securing maritime routes around the Arabian Peninsula is a shared responsibility and strategic necessity. Ensuring long-term stability requires integrating diplomatic engagement, governance reform, technological innovation, and security cooperation. Participants emphasized that turning shared interests into shared actions will require sustained commitment, mutual trust, and a recognition that maritime stability is foundational to economic prosperity, global trade continuity, and wider regional security.



GRC Events & Activities

Roundtable on 'Natural Gas from the Gulf to the World: Realities and Prospects'

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

November 10, 2025



The Gulf Research Center (GRC) organized a dedicated workshop to launch its latest publication, "Natural Gas from the Gulf to the World: Realities and Prospects," authored by **Dr. Naji Abi-Aad**, a renowned international expert in oil and energy economics. The roundtable took place at the GRC's headquarters in Riyadh and brought together a select group of experts, practitioners, and stakeholders from across the energy sector. The discussion was moderated by **Dr. Abdulaziz Sager**, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, and featured the participation of **H.E. Dr. Majid A. Al-Moneef**, Chairman of the Saudi Association for Energy Economics, alongside GRC researchers and representatives from relevant government institutions and leading private-sector entities.

Throughout the session, participants engaged in an in-depth analysis of the strategic role of natural gas in the global energy system, highlighting the Gulf region's position as a key supplier and an increasingly influential player in shaping future market dynamics. The workshop also delved into current and emerging challenges affecting the natural gas industry,

including market volatility, infrastructure requirements, and the implications of global energy transitions. In addition, the discussion explored opportunities for sustainable growth, regional cooperation, and innovation within the sector, particularly in light of the GCC states' expanding investments in LNG, hydrogen, and clean-energy technologies. The workshop concluded by emphasizing the importance of informed policymaking and continued dialogue to maximize the Gulf's contribution to global energy security and economic development.

Gulf Risk Assessment and Classification Joint Workshop

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

November 16-17, 2025



The Gulf Cooperation Council Emergency Management Center (GCC-EMC) and the Gulf Research Center (GRC) held a joint workshop at the GCC Secretariat in Riyadh under the

GRC Events & Activities

patronage and in the presence of **H.E. Jasem Al-Budaiwi**, Secretary General of the GCC. The program focused on advancing scientific methodologies for assessing regional risks and threats. Day one of the workshop featured a dedicated training session on data-collection methods for risk assessment, delivered by **Noor Alshebli**, Risk Planning Director at the GCC-EMC. It also included a panel discussion on “Geopolitical and Security Risk Factors in the Gulf,” moderated by **Amnah Ibraheem**, Director of Emergency Operations at the GCC-EMC. Speakers included **Brigadier Dr. Rashid Al Marri**, Chairman of the GCC-EMC; **Dr. Abdulaziz Sager**, Founder and Chairman of the GRC; and a representative from the GCC Secretariat. The workshop convened participants from the security sectors of GCC member states alongside officials from political affairs departments, fostering comprehensive dialogue on emerging regional risks.



The second day of the workshop featured a series of specialized training modules dedicated to identifying and assessing CBRN (chemical, biological, radioactive, nuclear) threats, providing participants with practical, hands-on insights into detection technologies, early-warning indicators, response protocols, and mitigation strategies. Through interactive exercises and scenario-based discussions, participants explored how to evaluate vulnerabilities, strengthen coordination

mechanisms, and apply international best practices in emergency management.

The sessions also introduced methodologies for conducting comprehensive regional risk assessments, highlighting the importance of data-driven analysis, cross-border information-sharing, and the adoption of unified assessment frameworks among GCC member states. These components aimed to enhance institutional readiness and support the development of coherent regional strategies for crisis prevention and response.

The second day further benefited from the participation of an on-site technical expert from the Regional Secretariat of the EU CBRN Centres of Excellence, who provided technical guidance, shared comparative European experiences, and contributed to discussions on aligning regional practices with global standards.

“Through Syrian Eyes” Film Program

Damascus, Syria

December 10, 2025



GRC Events & Activities

“Through Syrian Eyes” is a filmed program produced in the city of Damascus through a collaboration between the Gulf Research Center and the Taqaddum Center for Dialogue, Development, and Peacebuilding. The program is presented by Syrian journalist Abdullah Al-Ghadawi, Director of the Taqaddum Center. It aims to shed light on developments in the Syrian Arab Republic following the fall of the former regime, within a professional and objective framework, by discussing the most pressing political and economic issues facing Syria today, and by exploring future prospects and the pathways of the new era.

The program has released the first episode titled **“Syria on the First Anniversary of Liberation: Clear Outcomes or Lingering Hopes?”** The episode examines Syria’s realities one year after the liberation, exploring the profound questions Syrians continue to raise about the country’s future amid the political, social, and economic crises it has endured from liberation to the present day.

The discussion is moderated by **Professor Abdullah Al-Ghadawi**, Director of the Taqaddum Center for Dialogue, Development, and Peacebuilding, and features contributions from **Colonel Abdul Jabbar Akidi**, former founder and leader of the Revolutionary Military Council in Aleppo; **Professor Ahmed Al-Asrawi**, Secretary-General of the Arab Democratic Socialist Union Party in Syria; and Ms. **May Khalouf**, Member of the Syrian People’s Assembly.

The second episode, published on December 23, 2025, discusses the assessment of **Burhan Ghalioun**, the first President of the Syrian National Council and leading academic, on Syria one year after liberation.

In this episode, which was moderated by **Professor Abdullah Al-Ghadawi**, Director of the Taqaddum Center for Dialogue, Development, and Peacebuilding, Ghalioun offers a thoughtful reflection on the country’s evolving political and social landscape, addressing key challenges and future trajectories, including: 1) the roots and implications of Syria’s sectarian crisis, 2) pathways toward building an inclusive citizenship-based state, and 3) the role of political elites and governing institutions in reshaping the social contract and restoring public trust.

Both episodes are available to watch and offer in-depth analysis and critical insights into Syria’s evolving political landscape and the prospects ahead. You can watch it here for a comprehensive examination of the country’s future.

EPISODE 1



EPISODE 2:



2025

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GRCPARTNERSHIPS

GRG Partnerships

Enhancing Partnerships and Memoranda of Understanding

The Gulf Research Center (GRG) places strategic partnerships at the core of its mission to advance evidence-based policy research and foster informed dialogue on regional and global issues. Through a growing network of institutional partnerships and Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), GRG works closely with leading think tanks, academic institutions, international organizations, and policy platforms across the Middle East, Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

These partnerships are designed to move beyond symbolic cooperation, focusing instead

on tangible outcomes such as joint research projects, co-hosted policy dialogues and high-level roundtables, capacity-building programs, and knowledge exchange initiatives. GRG's MoUs provide a flexible yet structured framework that enables partners to align expertise, share resources, and respond collectively to evolving geopolitical, economic, and security challenges.

By continuously enhancing and expanding its partnerships, GRG strengthens its role as a trusted convenor and knowledge hub, bridging regional perspectives with global policy debates and contributing to more inclusive, forward-looking, and practical policy solutions.

Gulf Research Center Cooperation with the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of Uzbekistan (ISRS)

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

April 29, 2025



On the sidelines of the GCC-Central Asia Think Tank Forum in Tashkent on April 28, 2025, the Gulf Research Center (GRG) and the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of Uzbekistan (ISRS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen research collaboration and promote deeper



regional dialogue. The agreement was signed by Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRG), and Dr. Eldor Aripov, Former Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan and Director of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies (ISRS), on behalf of their respective institutions.

GRC Partnerships

Gulf Research Center Cooperation with the International Institute for Central Asia (IICA)

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

April 21, 2025



On behalf of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of GRC, signed an MoU with the International Institute for Central Asia (IICA) in Tashkent, in the presence of Mr.

Javlon Vakhabov, Managing Director of the IICA. The MoU aims to deepen research collaboration between the Gulf and Central Asia.

Gulf Research Center Cooperation with Interpeace

Joint Initiative on 'Dialogues on Global Co-Existence'

Geneva, Switzerland

May 8, 2025



The Gulf Research Center (GRC) and Interpeace announced the launch of their joint initiative, "Dialogues on Global Coexistence," a strategic partnership aimed at addressing the

pressing challenges of growing geopolitical fragmentation, polarization, and protracted conflict. This initiative aspires to foster renewed global cooperation through inclusive dialogue, principled diplomacy, and the cultivation of innovative networks that transcend regional and ideological divides.

The formal agreement establishing this collaboration was signed in Geneva on May 8, 2025, by Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), and Mr. Itonde Kakoma, President and CEO of Interpeace. Both institutions bring decades of

GRG Partnerships

experience in mediation, peacebuilding, and international engagement, and together they seek to contribute constructively to shaping a more stable and cooperative global order.

Through the Dialogues on Global Coexistence, the GRC and Interpeace will work closely with global partners, governments, multilateral organizations, civil society actors, and academic institutions that are committed to the principles of peaceful coexistence, mutual respect, and inclusive governance. The initiative will serve as a platform for convening high-level dialogues, producing joint research, and supporting diplomatic processes that prioritize long-term peace and sustainable cooperation.



GRG Cooperation with the Arab Thought Forum

Amman, Jordan

September 17, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, and Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Cultural and Media Program at the Center, visited the Arab Thought Forum in Jordan on September 17, 2025. They were received by the Secretary-General of the Forum, Dr. Al-Sadiq Al-Faqih, who briefed them on the Forum's activities and programs.

During the meeting, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Gulf Research Center and the Arab Thought Forum, signed by Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, and His Excellency Ambassador Dr. Al-Sadiq bin Bakhit Al-Faqih, Secretary-General of the Arab Thought Forum.

GRC Partnerships

GRC Cooperation with the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS)

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

October 23, 2025



上海国际问题研究院
SHANGHAI INSTITUTES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), and Prof. Saleh Alkhathlan, Senior Advisor at the GRC, met with Mr. Li Kaisheng, Vice President of the Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS), and his accompanying delegation at the GRC office in Riyadh on October 23, 2025. The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange views

on recent regional developments and explore potential areas of cooperation between the two institutions. On this occasion, Dr. Ahmed Sager, on behalf of the GRC, and Mr. Li Kaisheng, on behalf of the SIIS, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at strengthening research collaboration and promoting the exchange of knowledge and expertise.



GRC Cooperation with the King Abdullah Institute for Research and Consulting Studies

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

November 19, 2025



The Gulf Research Center (GRC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the King Abdullah Institute for Research and Consulting Studies at King Saud University

GRG Partnerships

on November 19, 2025, at the institute's headquarters in Riyadh. The university was represented at the signing ceremony by Dr. Abdullah Al-Thabit, Dean of the King Abdullah Institute for Research and Consulting Studies, while the GRC was represented by its Chairman, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager.

This agreement aims to enhance scientific and research cooperation between the two parties by developing joint research projects, launching specialized training programs, and organizing scientific events that serve issues of mutual interest and contribute to supporting knowledge.



2025

ANNUAL REPORT

GRC PUBLICATIONS

The Gulf Research Center produces various publications through its research programs, projects, and Gulf Research Meetings. The GRC's publications can be accessed on its website via [this link](#); the commentary and analyses can be found [here](#); and selected Arabic articles can be found [here](#).

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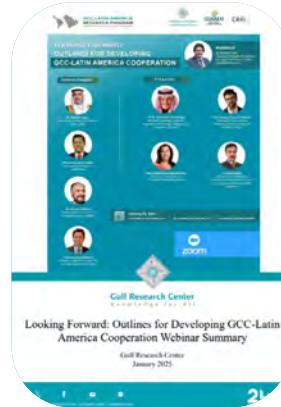
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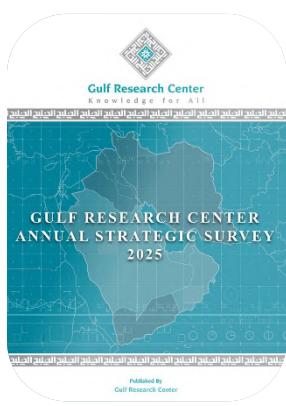
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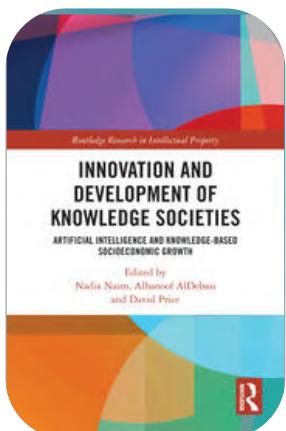
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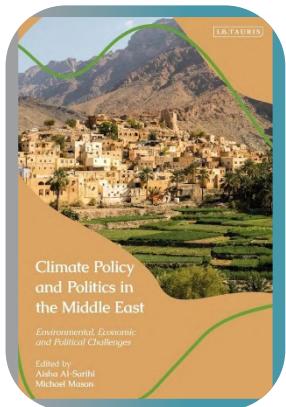
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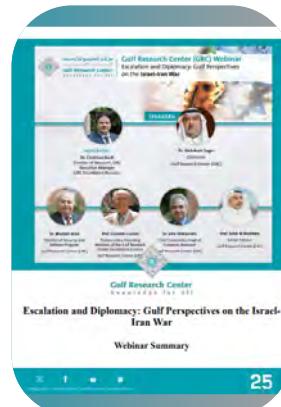
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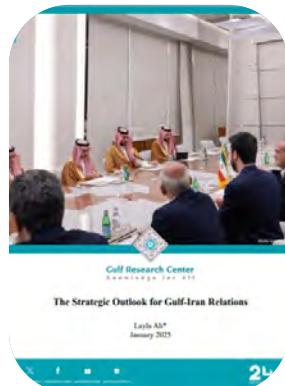
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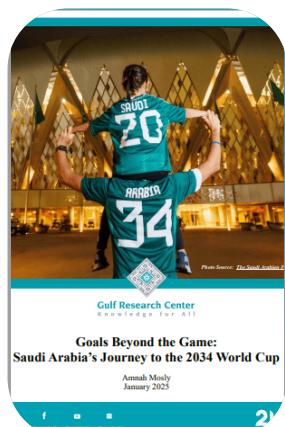
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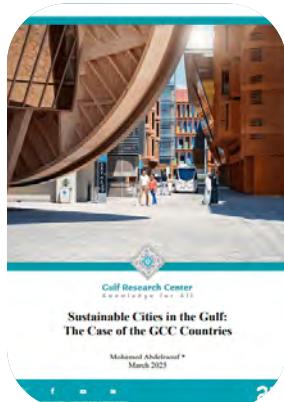
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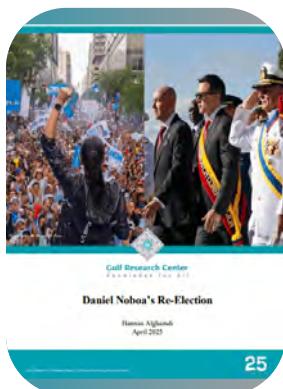
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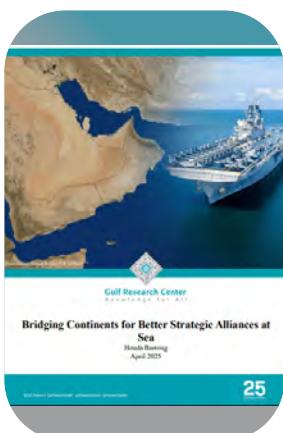
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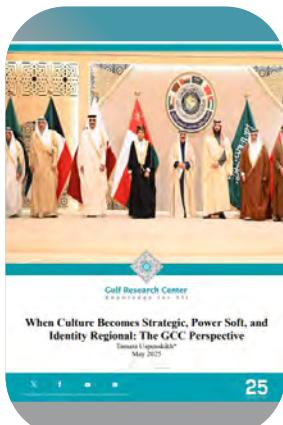
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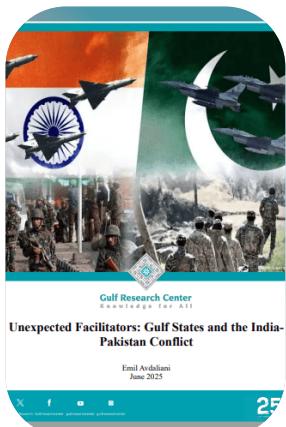
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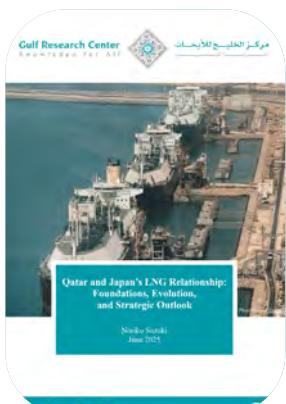
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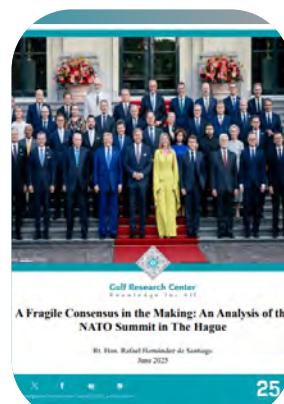
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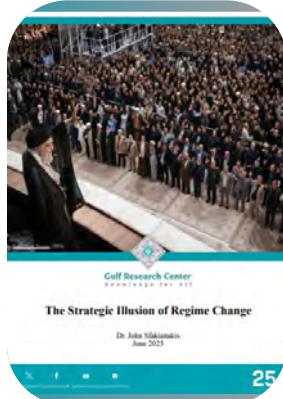
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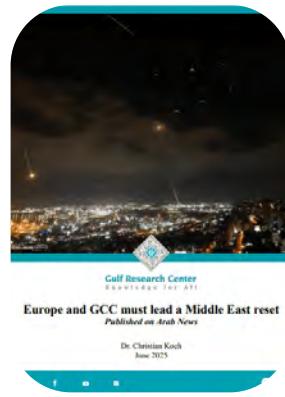
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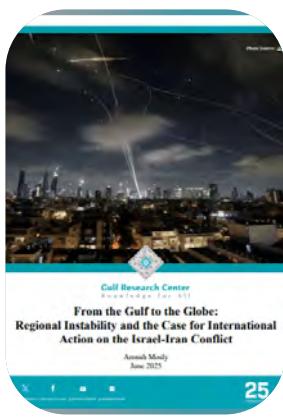


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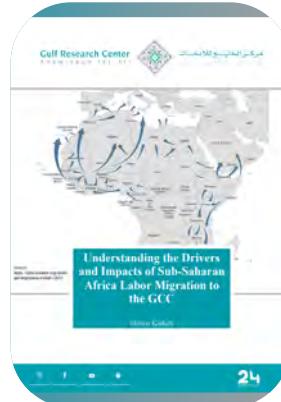
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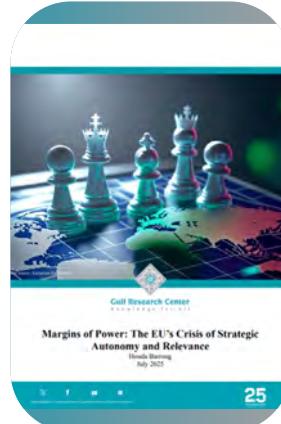
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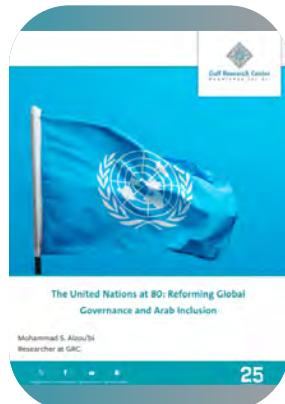


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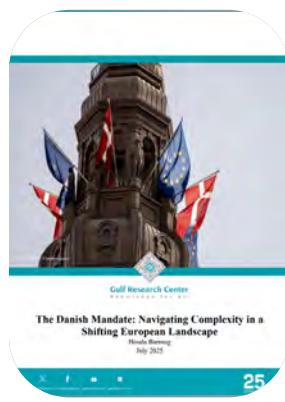
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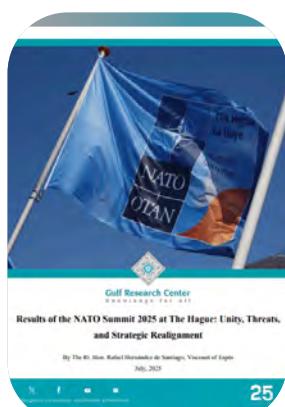
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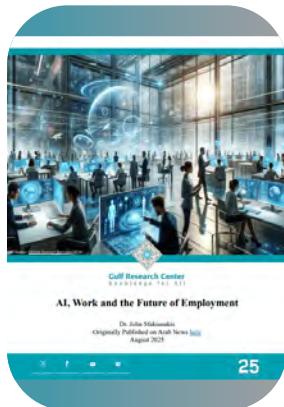
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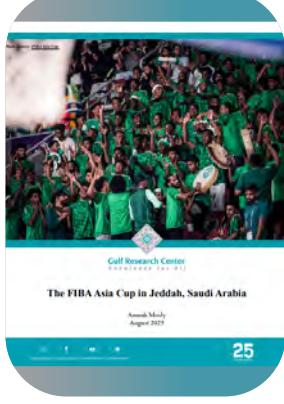
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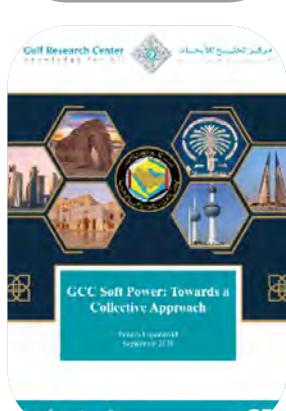
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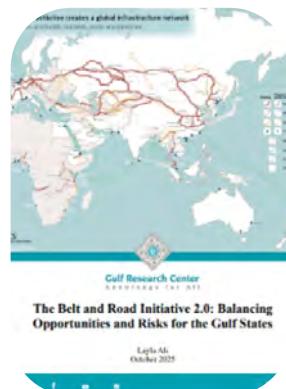
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The New York Conference on the Two-State Solution: Challenges and the Ability to Implement Solutions

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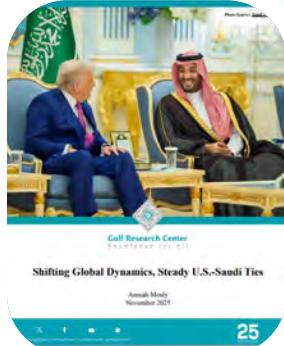
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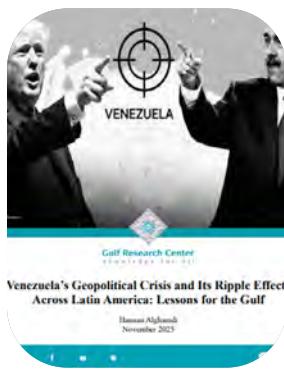
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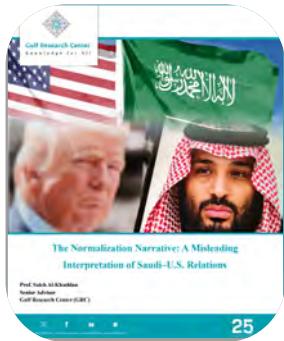
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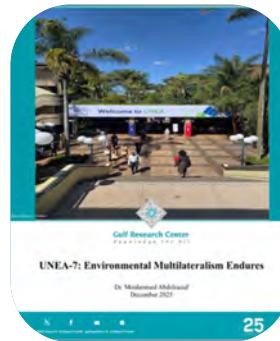
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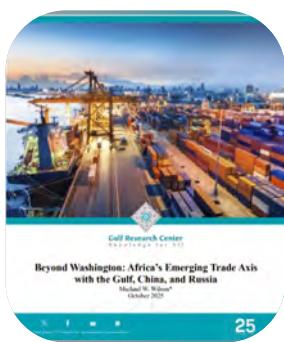
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Araa Magazine

‘Araa’ is an Arabic word meaning opinions or perspectives. Araa Magazine (مجلة آراء حول الخليج) (translated as Perspectives from around the Gulf) is a monthly periodical that focuses on the affairs of the Gulf region, providing in-depth analyses in Arabic of current affairs in Gulf security, politics, economics, environment, energy, and social issues, in addition to the challenges that the region is facing in these areas. Araa was the first Gulf periodical specializing in Gulf affairs bringing together a network of more than 600 contributing writers, including scholars, academics, and other specialists working in the Gulf region. It is a concrete reference for those in academia and higher education working at various

regional universities. Araa Magazine is an independent platform that provides a space for differing opinions within social and moral responsibility. Click here for all Araa Magazines.



The twelve issues of Araa Magazine that were published in 2025:

Issue 205 (January 2025)



The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in the Era of Alliances: Performance and Ambitions

Issue 206 (February 2025)



Issue 207 (March 2025)



Sudan: The Current Situation, Implications, Outcomes, Challenges, and Solutions

Issue 208 (April 2025)



Syria of the Future: Ambitions and Challenges

Issue 209 (May 2025)



Implications of Shifting Power Balances and Deterrence Dynamics on the Arab Region and the World

Issue 210 (June 2025)



The Impact of Trump's Tariffs on the Economy, Trade, and Global Growth

Issue 211 (July 2025)



The Future of Armed Militias and Political Islam in the Arab World

Issue 212 (August 2025)



The Domination of Power over International Relations and the Decline of International Law and UN Organizations

Issue 213 (September 2025)



The Israel-Iran War: Causes, Consequences, and Implications

Issue 214 (October 2025)



The New York Conference on the Two-State Solution: Challenges and the Ability to Implement Solutions

Issue 215 (November 2025)



Gulf Mediations in Resolving International Crises: Continuous Efforts and Complex Issues.

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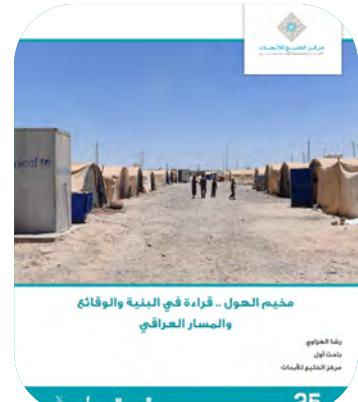
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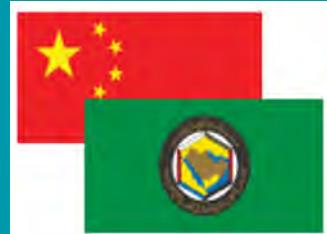
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The screenshot shows the Gulf Research Center website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links to Home, Who We Are, What We Do, Commentary & Analysis, Publications, Events, Executive Learning, Projects, Contact, and a search icon. Below the navigation, there is a search form with fields for Title, Author, Topics, Keyword, and a Search button. To the right of the search form is a sidebar with links to Executive Learning, Publications, and Events. A preview of a publication titled "2024-12-03 Ghana - GCC Relations" is shown, featuring the flag of Ghana and a brief description of the publication's content.

2025

ANNUAL REPORT

GRC EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT (TIMELINE OF EVENTS)

Throughout 2025, the GRC participated in numerous external events, both online and in person, on issues pertaining to the developments in the Gulf region and its wider neighborhood. GRC places particular emphasis on such participation as it allows for a regional perspective to be included in the overall debate. The following is an overview of the key events in which the GRC participated.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

January 6, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), and Prof. Saleh Al-Khathlan, Senior Advisor at the GRC, held a meeting with H.E. Mr. Ahmed Sareer, Ambassador of the Republic of Maldives to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC office in Riyadh. The discussion focused on potential areas for collaborative research activities between the two sides.

January 6, 2025



On January 6, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with H.E. Mr. Alexis Konstantopoulos, Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh. During the meeting, both sides discussed areas for collaboration between research institutions and the growing bilateral relations between Greece and Saudi Arabia.

January 8, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the GRC Foundation Brussels office and Director of Research, and Houda Barrouq, Researcher with the GRCF-B, met with Barbara Einhauser, of the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments, and Ilze Zelgave and Ingo Schendel of the European External Action Service to discuss cooperation between the EEAS and the GRCF-B in terms of current issues within the framework of GCC-EU relations.

January 13, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the GRC, and Prof. Saleh Al-Khathlan, Senior Advisor at the GRC, welcomed and met with H.E. Mr. Alexandre Lévêque, Assistant Deputy Minister for Europe, Arctic, and the Middle East at Global Affairs Canada, as well as H.E. Mr. Jean-Philippe Linteau, Ambassador of Canada to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, along with his accompanying delegation at the GRC office in Riyadh. Both sides discussed the ongoing regional developments and potential areas for collaboration between the two sides.

January 16, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with H.E. Mr. Hans Peter van der Woude, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

the GRC office in Riyadh. The meeting focused on exploring areas of mutual interest and discussing regional developments.

January 17, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the GRC Foundation Brussels office and Director of Research, met with Jamil Anderlini, Editor-in-Chief at Politico's Brussels office.

January 20, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the GRC Foundation Brussels office and Director of Research, Amnah Mosly, Researcher at the GRC office in Jeddah, and Houda Barrouq, Researcher with the GRCF-B, held an online meeting with Alin Gheran, President, and Dr. Liliana Grosaru-Filip, Vice-President for Strategy and International Affairs at the Europe-GCC Economic Platform, to discuss possible cooperation. The Europe-GCC Economic Platform was initiated as a private endeavor to foster business development between EU and GCC member states.

January 24, 2025



Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the GRC Foundation Brussels office and Director of Research met with Jamil Anderlini, Editor-in-Chief at Politico's Brussels office.

January 24, 2025

CENTER FOR SECURITY STUDIES (CSS) AT ETH ZÜRICH



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the Zurich Strategic Dialogue 2025 from January 23-25, 2025, in Zurich, organized by the Center for Security Studies (CSS). The dialogue convened leading experts to discuss issues shaping global and regional security. Key topics included the future prospects of the Middle East, the U.S. and the international order, the Russia-Ukraine conflict and its implications for European security, and the evolving security dynamics in the Indo-Pacific region.

January 27, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC) had the pleasure of meeting His Excellency The Rt. Hon. Guido Crosetto, Minister of Defence of the Italian Republic, during his visit to Jeddah on the occasion of the opening ceremony marking the arrival of the Italian Navy training vessel, Amerigo Vespucci, which docked at the Jeddah Yacht Club and Marina as part of its world tour.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

January 27, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Mr. Pierroberto Folgiero, CEO of Fincantieri, and his delegation in Jeddah on the occasion of the visit of the Italian naval vessel Amerigo Vespucci. Fincantieri is one of the world's largest shipbuilders and is majority-owned by the Italian government. During the meeting, the discussions centered on areas of mutual interest, including maritime security, underwater capabilities, and opportunities for expanding presence in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

January 27, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), delivered a virtual keynote address at a session organized by the Noon Center for Strategic Studies and Dialogue (NASS) in Mosul, Iraq. The session, titled "The Role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Promoting Development Projects: Development Road as a Model," featured the participation of esteemed Iraqi researchers.

During his address, Dr. Sager highlighted the historical and strategic significance of Saudi-Iraqi relations and their impact on the Gulf region and the broader Middle East. He underscored the vital role the Kingdom can play in advancing development projects aimed at fostering security and stability for all countries in the region.

February 3, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), received Dr. Silvia Colombo, Researcher and Faculty Advisor at NATO Defense College, at the GRC's office in Riyadh on February 3, 2025. Several topics related to the Gulf and the Middle East regions were discussed during the meeting.

February 4, 2025



European Parliament

Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the GRC Foundation's Brussels office (GRCF-B), met with Reinhold Lopatka, Member of the European Parliament (MEP) and Chair of the European Parliament's Delegation for Relations with the Arab Peninsula (DARP). During the meeting, Dr. Koch introduced the Gulf Research Center (GRC) and the role of GRCF-B in fostering research-driven dialogue between Europe and the Gulf region. Joined by GRC researchers Houda Barroug and Hannan Alghamdi, the discussion explored opportunities for GRCF-B to support DARP by providing research-based analyses and expert insights on Gulf-related developments.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

February 5, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with HE Dr. Sebastian Mitrache, Ambassador of Romania to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh on February 5, 2025. During the meeting, both sides discussed areas of mutual interest on GCC-Romania relations and recent regional developments.

February 5, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Mrs. Irina Gusacenka, Deputy Head of Mission of the EU Delegation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh on February 5, 2025. During the meeting, they exchanged views on GCC-EU relations and areas of mutual interest.

February 6, 2025



Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the GRC Foundation's Brussels office (GRCF-B), met with Hana Jaloul Muro, Member of the European Parliament (MEP) and 1st Vice Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. The meeting focused on exploring ways in which the GRC can support the European Parliament by providing research-based analyses, briefings, and insights to enhance dialogue and cooperation between Europe and the Gulf region, with a specific focus on Saudi Arabia.

February 6, 2025

COUNCIL OF COUNCILS

An Initiative of the Council on Foreign Relations



COUNCIL on FOREIGN RELATIONS

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the Council of Council's 11th virtual conference organized by the Council on Foreign Relations on February 6, 2025. The topic of the meeting focused on the "Shifts in Global Trade." The discussion looked at how the trade environment has changed in the past decade, including changes in trade policy, including tariffs, export controls, and rules of origin requirements, as well as the future of major trade agreements.

February 6, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the virtual meeting of the World Law Foundation Board of Trustees on February 6, 2025.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

February 6, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the Board of Trustees meeting of the University of Business and Technology (UBT) in Jeddah.

February 7, 2025



Dr. Christian Koch, Director of Research and Executive Manager at the Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels (GRCF-B), hosted a meeting at the GRCF Brussels office on February 7, 2025, with HE Pascal H. Grégoire, the Ambassador of Belgium to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. During the meeting, both sides discussed the latest developments in the Gulf region and Europe, focusing on ways to advance cooperation between Belgium, the European Union, and the GCC states.

February 9, 2025



Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center (GRC), received H.E. Mr. Dya-Eddine Bamakhrama, Ambassador of Djibouti in Saudi Arabia, where he was briefed on the activities of the cultural program and participated in an episode of the GRC podcast.

February 11, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated as a speaker at the National Council on US-Arab Relations' webinar on the "80 Years of U.S.-Saudi Relations: Reflecting on the Past, Shaping the Future." Watch the full webinar [here](#).

February 18, 2025



Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center, received Dr. Fawaz Al Tayeb, Director of the Noon Center for Strategic Studies and Dialogue in Iraq, where he was briefed on the activities of the cultural program and discussed areas of common interest.

February 18, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Mr. Joon Young Park, former Korean Ambassador to Saudi Arabia.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

and current Assistant Professor at Yonsei University's Graduate School of International Studies, on February 18, 2025, at the GRC office in Riyadh. During the meeting, they discussed areas of joint academic research interest.

February 18, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Ms. Valeria Scuto, Civil-Military Engagement Staff Officer at the Middle East Cell of NATO Strategic Direction South Hub (NSD-S Hub), and Mr. Gian Luca Cazzaniga at the GRC office in Riyadh on February 18, 2025. The meeting focused on areas of mutual interest in the field of defense studies and research.

February 23, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Ms. Hana Jalloul Muro, First Vice-Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs at the European Parliament, and Ms. Irina Gusacenka, Deputy Head of the EU Delegation to Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh on February 23, 2025. The meeting focused on areas of mutual cooperation and shared interests.

February 24, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Dr. Eldor Aripov, Former Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Uzbekistan and Director of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan (ISRS), at the GRC's office in Riyadh on February 24, 2025. The discussion focused on the upcoming joint GCC-Central Asia roundtable, organized by both institutions, that took place in Tashkent in April 2025. This event served as a sideline to the second Heads of State GCC-Central Asia Summit in May 2025.

February 24, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, met with Dr. Ihsan Al-Shammari, President of the Political Thinking Center in Iraq, at the GRC's office in Riyadh. During the meeting, aspects of cooperation between the two centers were discussed, along with deliberations on Gulf-Iraqi relations and the development of a research program concerning Gulf-Iraqi studies.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

February 25, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC) met with Mr. Jiao Zhixin, Director General of the Third Bureau of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC) and his accompanying delegation at the GRC office in Riyadh on February 25, 2025. The discussion centered on mutual areas of interest, including the People's Republic of China's role in promoting peace and security in the region, as well as areas for joint research cooperation.

February 25, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Dr. Pierre Caye, Director of Research at the National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) and Director of the French Institute of Islamic Studies, alongside Dr. Makram Abbas, Director of the French Research Center (CEFREPA), at the GRC office in Riyadh on February 25, 2025. The discussion focused on prospects for

future collaboration between the two centers and areas of mutual research interest.

February 25, 2025



Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the GRC Foundation's Brussels office (GRCF-B), met with Hana Jaloul Muro, Member of the European Parliament (MEP) and 1st Vice Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. The meeting focused on exploring ways in which the GRC can support the European Parliament by providing research-based analyses, briefings, and insights to enhance dialogue and cooperation between Europe and the Gulf region, with a specific focus on Saudi Arabia.

February 25, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Ambassador Torunn Viste, Special Representative for the Middle East at the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at the GRC office in Riyadh on February 25, 2025. The discussion centered on the current developments in the region and areas of mutual interest.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

February 26, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated as a speaker in the fourth session of the conference organized by the Egyptian Center for Strategic Studies in collaboration with the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs. The conference was held on February 26, 2025, under the title “The Implications of Displacement and Resettlement Projects on Regional Security.” In his remarks, Dr. Sager affirmed Saudi Arabia’s firm stance against the displacement of Palestinians from Gaza, its commitment to supporting their rights, the necessity of unifying the Arab position, and the rejection of any normalization before the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

February 27, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Professor

YIN Dongmei, Chair of the University Council at Shanghai International Studies University and Chair of the Board of the China-Arab Research Center on Reform and Development, along with Professor WANG Guangda, Secretary-General of the China-Arab Research Center on Reform and Development, and their accompanying delegation during their visit to the GRC office in Riyadh.

The discussions centered on strengthening research collaboration between Shanghai International Studies University and the GRC, identifying areas of mutual interest, and examining broader Saudi-China relations. The meeting also emphasized enhancing academic cooperation between Gulf and Chinese researchers, fostering institutional exchanges, and facilitating joint initiatives such as research projects and workshops.

February 27, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), and Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice-President of the GRC, met with Mr. Abdy Yeganeh, Policy Director of the Independent Diplomat, at the GRC office in Riyadh on February 27, 2025. The meeting centered on areas of mutual interest, including research and training.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

March 3, 2025



Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels and Director of Research at the GRC participated in the 12th edition of the Ideas Lab Forum organized by the Center for European Policy Studies (CEPS) in Brussels. This flagship event brings together 800 specialists and policy officials annually to discuss key themes in the policies of the European Union.

March 10, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch met with Nicolas Pomey, director of Actis Europe, to discuss trade and economic agreements between the EU and GCC countries.

March 11, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch met with Matthew Hemsley, Senior EU Policy Advisor from the Norwegian Refugee Council's Europe office, in order to discuss humanitarian and development assistance programs between the EU and the GCC.

March 12, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch met with Alessandro Polito from the NATO Defense College Foundation (NDCF) located in Rome to discuss cooperation for NDCF's 2025 Arab Geopolitics Conference.

The same day, Dr. Christian Koch met with Michael Karnitschnig, Acting Deputy Director-

General of the European Commission's newly established Directorate-General for the Middle East, North Africa, and the Gulf (DG MENA). With DG MENA, the discussion focused on areas of cooperation with the GCC states.

March 13, 2025

The Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels team met with Giulia Tercovich and Natalia Martin from the Centre for Security, Diplomacy and Strategy (CSDS) at Université Libre de Bruxelles. Together, they discussed potential partnerships in the organization of future events in key research programs.

March 21, 2025



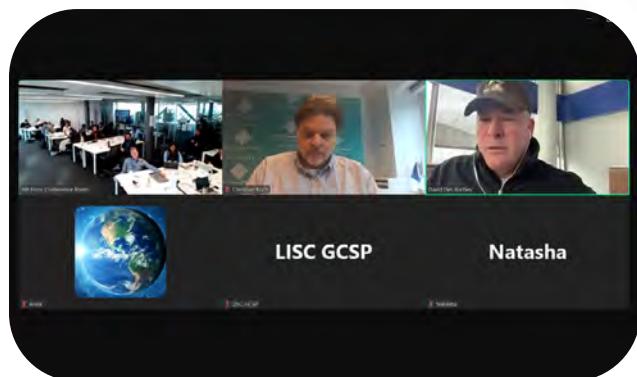
Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC) and the GRC team, held a meeting with Mr. Javlon Vakhabov, Managing Director of The International Institute for Central Asia, and discussed their preparatory work for the upcoming Gulf Cooperation Council-Central Asia Summit in Samarkand. Both sides also stressed the importance of providing regular expert advice and research support in shaping the summit's agenda, ensuring in-depth discussions on economic connectivity, security cooperation, and sustainable development. The meeting concluded with a mutual agreement to collaborate on research initiatives and expert discussions, reinforcing our commitment to fostering deeper engagement between the Gulf and Central Asia.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

March 25, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch attended an event held by the European Policy Center (EPC) titled “Europe: Strength Through Crisis,” during which European Council President Antonio Costa gave a speech outlining how Europe can become stronger through today’s global challenges.

March 26, 2025



Dr. Christian Koch gave an online lecture as part of the Middle East and North Africa module of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy’s Leadership in International Security Course. The lecture, titled “Geopolitical Tensions in the Middle East: What’s Next?” was given in collaboration with Colonel (Ret.) David Des Roches, Associate Prof. at the National Defense University.

March 27, 2025

Dr Christian Koch met with Luigi Di Maio, EU Special Representative for the Gulf Region. The two sides discussed how to best advance EU-GCC cooperation.

March 27, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC) and the GRC team, held a meeting with Mr. Javlon Vakhabov, Managing Director of The International Institute for Central Asia, and discussed their preparatory work for the upcoming Gulf Cooperation Council-Central Asia Summit in Samarkand. Both sides also stressed the importance of providing regular expert advice and research support in shaping the summit’s agenda, ensuring in-depth discussions on economic connectivity, security cooperation, and sustainable development. The meeting concluded with a mutual agreement to collaborate on research initiatives and expert discussions, reinforcing our commitment to fostering deeper engagement between the Gulf and Central Asia.

March 28, 2025

The Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels (GRCFB), along with the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) and the divisions for the Gulf Peninsula and Iraq, and for Regional Affairs (MENA1 and MENA4) from the European External Action Service (EEAS), partnered up for the organization of an informal thematic discussion on EU-GCC partnership. Key topics addressed during the discussion included green transition and clean energy, regional security, cultural and educational exchange, and innovation and emerging technologies.

April 7, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), and the senior members of the GRC, met with H.E. Mr. MORINO Yasunari, Ambassador of Japan to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

GRC office in Riyadh on April 7, 2025. During the meeting, both sides discussed areas of mutual interest and explored opportunities for enhanced cooperation.

April 7, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Professor David Bach, President of the International Institute for Management Development (IMD), and Dr. Hischam El-Agamy, Executive Director at IMD, at the GRC office in Riyadh on April 7, 2025. The meeting focused on exploring areas of mutual interest and strengthening collaboration in research and academic initiatives.

April 8, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), welcomed a delegation from Global Bridges, a non-profit organization committed to promoting international dialogue and understanding across politics, business, academia, and culture. The meeting took place at the GRC's office in Riyadh on April 8, 2025. The delegation was led by Mr. Malte Hohlfeld, Executive Chairman of Global Bridges. Discussions focused on Saudi-German economic relations and current regional developments.

April 11, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in a webinar on April 10, 2025, titled "Yemen: What has a decade of military intervention achieved?" organized by Chatham House.

April 14, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center, received Mr. Ayman Ayoub, Head of the Middle East and North Africa Division at the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF), along with his accompanying delegation. The two sides discussed areas of mutual cooperation.

April 15, 2025



Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the GRC's Cultural and Media Program, participated in the Umrah and Ziyarah Forum in a seminar on Hajj and Umrah as soft power and its activation mechanisms, on April 15, 2025, in Madinah. The closed workshop was moderated

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

by Dr. Abdulrahman Alkheraigi, Communication Advisor at the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah, in the presence of Dr. Alhassan Almanakhra, the undersecretary for international cooperation at the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah.

April 15, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center, received Ms. Jisu Pyo, Director of the Middle East Division at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Korea, at the Center's office in Riyadh. The meeting included discussions on areas of mutual cooperation.

April 16, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated in the 9th Sulaimani Forum held on April 16–17, 2025, in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq. Organized by the Institute of Regional and International Studies (IRIS) at the American University of Iraq, Sulaimani, the event featured high-level figures including Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani and Kurdistan Region President Nechirvan Barzani. Dr. Sager spoke on a panel titled “Iran, Iraq, and the Middle East,” moderated by Zeinab Badawi, alongside speakers such as Iran’s Deputy Foreign Minister Saeed Khatibzadeh and former U.S.

official Amb. Barbara Leaf. The session examined shifting political and security dynamics and emerging regional alignments.

April 17, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center, met with Mrs. Irina Gusacenka, Deputy Head of Mission of the EU Delegation to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The meeting featured a discussion on EU-Gulf cooperation and key regional developments.

April 21, 2025



On April 21, 2025, Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the GCC-C5 Summit Preparatory Workshop held in Tashkent. The event was jointly organized by the International Institute for Central Asia and the Bourse & Bazaar Foundation. Dr. Sager addressed key aspects of Gulf-Central Asia relations and the opportunities to strengthen them amid rapid international transformations.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

April 21, 2025



Professor Dr. Saleh Al-Khathlan, Senior Advisor at the Gulf Research Center, and Professor Abdulaziz Al-Aqeel, Senior Advisor at the Gulf Research Center, participated on April 21 in a seminar titled “Relations of the Gulf Cooperation Council with the Republics of Central Asia, and the Foundations of Comprehensive Cooperation” at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the Gulf Cooperation Council for the Arab States in Riyadh.

April 22, 2025



On April 22, 2025, at the Gulf Research Center's office in Riyadh, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), and Prof. Saleh Al-Khathlan, Senior Advisor at the GRC, met with Prof. Dr. Rob de Wijk, Director of The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies (HCSS) and Professor at the Institute of Security and Global Affairs at Leiden University, and Dr. Arend Jan Boekestijn, Associate Professor at University College Utrecht. Both sides discussed areas of mutual interest as well as GCC-EU relations.

April 28, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Ms. Ann Måwe, Director of the Swedish Dialogue Institute for the Middle East and North Africa, and her accompanying delegation on April 28 at the GRC office in Riyadh. The meeting focused on discussing areas of mutual cooperation.

April 29, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), visited the International Institute of Central Asia (IICA) in Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan, on April 29, 2025. During the visit, he met with Ambassador Javlon Vakhabov, Managing Director of the IICA, along with colleagues from the institute. The meeting focused on strengthening institutional cooperation and expanding joint research activities between the GRC and the IICA, with the aim of deepening knowledge and fostering academic exchange between the Gulf region and Central Asia.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

May 6, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated as a speaker in a workshop titled “Think Tanks in the Kingdom: Experiences, Challenges, and Future Prospects,” organized by Prince Saud Al-Faisal Institute for Diplomatic Studies and the Center for Research and Knowledge Intercommunication. Dr. Sager addressed the key challenges facing think tanks in the Kingdom and presented a set of recommendations to enhance their role and strengthen their partnerships.

May 7, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), received HRH Princess Christina, sister of the King of Sweden, Mr. Tord Magnuson, and their accompanying delegation on May 7 at the GRC office in Riyadh. The meeting addressed topics of mutual interest between the two sides.

May 10, 2025



Amnah Mosly, Researcher at the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the NEXT Milan Forum 2025, co-hosted by ISPI, Bocconi University, and OECD Development.

May 12, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Mr. Ji Yongjun, Director-General of the Asia-Africa Department of the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC), and his accompanying delegation at the GRC office in Riyadh. The discussion focused on areas of mutual interest and recent developments in the region.

May 14, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Prof. Dr. Wang Jian, Director of the Institute of International Relations at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, at the GRC’s office in Riyadh. Prof. Dr. Wang was accompanied by colleagues from the Academy. The meeting focused on strengthening mutual relations and enhancing research cooperation and joint activities between the two institutions.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

May 14, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with H.E. Mr. Javier Carbajosa Sanchez, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Spain to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Ms. Carmen Margarinos Casal, Director-General for the Maghreb, Mediterranean, and Arab World at the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The meeting focused on issues of mutual interest, current regional developments, and the EU-GCC MENA Political Directors' Meeting, which took place in Riyadh.

May 14, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Prof. Janice Stein, Founding Director of the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, Amb. Arif Lalani, Distinguished Fellow at the Munk School of Global Affairs and Public Policy, and Chiran Perera, Canadian Foreign Service Officer,

at the GRC's office in Riyadh. The meeting focused on strengthening mutual relations and enhancing research cooperation and joint activities between the two institutions.

May 20, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated as a speaker at the 28th Arab-German Business Forum organized by the Arab-German Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Berlin on April 20, 2025, in a session on "Saudi Arabia as the Powerhouse of the Arab Economy." Dr. Sager discussed areas to enhance Saudi-German economic ties through innovation, technology transfer, and strategic investment partnerships.

The panel also included the participation of:

- HRH Prince Abdullah bin Khaled Al Saud, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Germany
- Mr. Khaled Juffali, Chairman of the Saudi German Business Council, Chairman of Juffali Group
- Mr. Olaf Hoffman, President of Ghorfa, Chairman of Dorsch Global
- Dr. Dalia Samra-Rohte, Delegate of German Industry & Commerce for Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Yemen

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

June 2, 2025



The GRC Foundation's Brussels office welcomed Dr. Wejdan Fahad, Head of the Arab and Islamic Organizations Department, Political Affairs Sector at the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

June 3-4, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the GRC Foundation Brussels, participated in the "Fourth Conference on Promoting Regional Security in the Gulf/MENA Region" in Brussels organized by the European External Action Service. Dr. Koch discussed US and Iran talks, the growing role of the GCC countries as mediators, the situation in Yemen and the Red Sea and the role of European countries, and Syria and Lebanon and the potential opportunity for strategic alignments for the GCC.

June 11-12, 2025



Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the Gulf Research Center Foundation office in Brussels, participated in and spoke at a consultation event hosted by the European Commission

in Brussels. The event was organized by the European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed) through the EuroMeSCo network as part of the EuroMeSCo Consultation Circles initiative. This consultation provided a structured platform for policy dialogue and expert exchange aimed at informing the development of the forthcoming New Pact for the Mediterranean, which is expected to serve as the European Union's primary political framework for enhancing cooperation with its Southern Neighbourhood partners. Dr. Koch spoke on the necessity to closely link the envisaged Pact of the Mediterranean with the GCC-EU Strategic Partnership framework for actionable projects.

The Brussels consultation brought together policymakers, think tank representatives, civil society actors, and private sector stakeholders from across the Euro-Mediterranean region to engage in focused discussions on shared priorities and future collaboration.

June 16-17, 2025



Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the GRC Foundation Brussels, participated in a conference organized by the ICI Institute and Egmont on "China in the Middle East: Geopolitics, Trade and Society" and held in Brussels. Conference participants discussed emerging challenges and opportunities in the relationship between China and the Middle East. Dr. Koch provided remarks in the session titled "China-Middle East Economic Relations and the Belt and Road Initiative."

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

June 18, 2025



Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Program Director for Environmental Security and Sustainability at the GRC spoke at the 3rd Meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on a Science-Policy Panel to Contribute Further to the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste and to Prevent Pollution held in Uruguay, emphasizing the importance of active engagement of Major Groups in all activities of the panel. Delegates are trying to finalize recommendations for key design elements of the new science-policy panel.

June 20, 2025



The GRCFB office met with Andrea Cangini, Secretary-General of the Luigi Einaudi Foundation and former Senator of the Italian Republic and members of the foundation, to discuss potential future collaboration.

June 23, 3035

Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the GRC Foundation Brussels and Director of Research at the GRC, participated in the 'Rethinking EU-GCC

Cooperation on Peace & Conflict Amid Turbulent Times' meeting organized by the Berghof Foundation in Berlin.

June 23, 2025



Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the GRC Foundation Brussels (GRCFB) and Director of Research at the GRC, spoke in a panel at the 7th German-Arab Gulf Dialogue, organized by the German-Arab Friendship Association and the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation and held in Berlin on June 23 and 24, 2025. Dr. Koch focused his remarks on short-, medium- and long-term steps to be taken to contribute to a peacebuilding agenda in the region and beyond.

July 6, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with H.E. Mr. Hans Peter van der Woude, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh. During the meeting, they discussed recent regional developments and areas of mutual interest.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

July 6, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with H.E. Ms. Kjersti Tromsdal, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh. The meeting reviewed areas of mutual interest, as well as recent regional developments.

July 6, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with H.E. Dr. Sebastian Mitrache, Ambassador of Romania to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh on July 6, 2025. The meeting reviewed areas of mutual interest, as well as recent regional development.

July 7, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with H.E. Mr. Alexis Konstantopoulos, Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh. The meeting included a discussion on recent regional developments and areas of mutual interest.

July 8, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Brigadier General Zhu Jie, Defense Attaché of the People's Republic of China to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh. The meeting included a discussion on recent regional developments and areas of mutual interest.

July 10, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Mr. Kristijonas Gedvilas, Chief Executive Officer of the European Chamber of Commerce in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh. The meeting covered areas of mutual interest on EU-GCC relations.

July 11, 2025



The GRC Brussels office received a delegation from the Council for Mediterranean Diplomacy (Diplomeds). The discussion focused on the role of the EU and GCC states in fostering greater stability in the wider MENA region.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

July 14, 2025



The sixteenth session of the Conference of Parties (COP16) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) decided to grant observer status to the Gulf Research Center Foundation, following the recommendation made by the UNCCD secretariat. This accreditation is valid for all sessions of the COP and its Subsidiary Bodies. This is a UN recognition of the GRCF's work and activities in the field of environmental protection, climate change, and desertification.

July 14, 2025



On July 14, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), welcomed Dr. Celaleddin Duran, Director General of the Center for International Relations and Diplomacy (Milletlerarası İlişkiler ve Diplomasi Merkezi) (MID) in Turkey, along with his colleagues, at the GRC office in Jeddah. Both sides discussed political, economic, and security issues related to Saudi Arabia, the Gulf region, and Turkey. They also explored potential joint research initiatives on these topics.

July 23, 2025



Dr. Zaid AlFaeil, Director of the GRC's Culture and Media Program, participated in a panel discussion organized by Masaarat (Jordanian Masaarat for Development and Progress), entitled "The Middle East and the Options of the Phase."

August 26-27, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the Gulf Research Center Foundation in Brussels and Director of Research at the Gulf Research Center, conducted a series of meetings with senior officials at the European Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS).

The discussions primarily focused on the joint GRC-Bertelsmann Foundation Survey on "Promoting MENA Prosperity and Stability in the Context of EU-GCC Relations" and its potential contribution to the EU's broader regional approach, particularly in relation to the Pact for the Mediterranean. Additional exchanges addressed the current status of EU-GCC ties as well as opportunities for joint activities and avenues for future cooperation.

Dr. Koch met with the following officials during his visit:

- **Michael Karnitschnig**, Deputy Director-General, DG MENA-Middle East, North Africa, Gulf, European Commission
- **Gurvan Le Bas**, Deputy Head, Policy Planning and Strategic Foresight Division, EEAS

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

- **Florin Nita, Chief of Staff**, Office of the EU Special Representative for the Gulf, EEAS
- **Lucio Demichele**, Political Advisor, Office of the EU Special Representative for the Gulf Region, EEAS
- **Birgit Loeser**, Head of Division MENA.1 Regional Affairs, EEAS
- **Ilze Zelgalve**, Desk Officer for Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and League of Arab States (LAS), MENA.1 – Regional Affairs, EEAS
- **Ingo Schendel**, Policy Officer, OIC Desk, MENA.1 – Regional Affairs, EEAS
- **Georgia Papagianni**, Member of Cabinet, Cabinet of Commissioner Dubravka Šuica, European Commission
- **Raül Hernández Sagrera**, Member of Cabinet, Cabinet of Commissioner Dubravka Šuica, European Commission
- **Henrike Trautmann**, Principal Advisor for Reconstruction in Gaza, Director of DG MENA B: Middle East
- **Ruta Zarnauskaite**, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Yemen, MENA C.2, European Commission
- **Leonetta Pae**, Deputy Head of Unit, Gulf Cooperation Council, Strategic Cooperation on Investment Promotion and Financial Instruments, DG MENA – Middle East, North Africa, Gulf, European Commission
- **Martin Dudermel**, Desk Officer, Yemen, DG for International Partnerships (INTPA), European Commission

August 28, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Mr. Daniel Gerlach, Chief Editor of Zenith and Head of the Candid Foundation, along with HE Mr. Thomas Schneider, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Yemen, at the GRC's office in Riyadh on August 28, 2025. The discussions centered on Gulf-German relations and explored areas of mutual interest.

August 31, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Mr. Pit Koehler, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC office in Riyadh. The meeting focused on Germany-GCC relations and areas of cooperation.

September 3, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch, Director of Research and Executive Manager of the Gulf Research Center Foundation, Brussels, met with Nicolas Pomey, Director of Actis Europe, to discuss potential future collaboration on projects related to Gulf-EU business relations.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

September 8, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the 2nd Hili Forum in Abu Dhabi, speaking on the panel “Global Gulf: Middle Powers and Mediators.” The panel explored the growing role of the six GCC states as middle powers and mediators, shaping global debates on economic diversification, technology, conflict resolution, and diplomacy. Dr. Sager highlighted Saudi Arabia’s longstanding role as a trusted mediator in regional disputes, explaining how its efforts have steadily expanded from regional engagements to internationally recognized mediation initiatives. He noted that Saudi diplomacy is now helping to set new benchmarks for global conflict resolution, reflecting the Gulf’s wider capacity to influence both regional stability and international governance frameworks.

September 8, 2025



Dr. Christian Koch, Director of Research and Executive Manager of the Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels, participated in a workshop organized by Bertelsmann Stiftung, titled “EU-MENA Mapping.” It brought together perspectives from experts from all 27 EU

member states who have just participated in an expert survey, reflecting the EU-27’s interests, priorities, and strategies vis-à-vis ten conflicts in the MENA region, namely Iran, Iraq, Israel-Palestine, the Kurdish Question, Lebanon, Libya, Sudan, Syria, Western Sahara, and Yemen. Participants debated these results with the aim of identifying concrete avenues for improved EU-27 cooperation in addressing these conflicts in the wider EU southern neighborhood.

September 10, 2025



Dr. Oskar Ziemelis, Director of the Gulf Research Center Foundation (GRCF) in Geneva attended the 13th edition of the Geneva Peace Talks at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, organized by the UN Office at Geneva, Interpeace, and the Geneva Peacebuilding Platform. Under the theme “Peace is Possible,” this year’s event brought together a group of individuals from around the world, including diplomats, peacebuilders, and unity leaders, all united in the belief that peace is possible.

September 10, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch, Director of Research and Executive Manager of the Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels, met with Marc Franco, Senior Associate Fellow at Egmont Institute and former Ambassador/Head of the European Union Delegation to Egypt (2009-2012) and Head of the European Commission’s Delegation to Russia (2004-2009). Together, they discussed potential future collaboration with the Egmont Institute on projects related to security issues.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

September 11, 2025

Gerd Nonneman, Professor of International Relations and Gulf Studies at the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University's campus in Qatar, visited the Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels office, where he met with GRC Director of Research, Dr. Christian Koch, to discuss collaboration with Georgetown University on the topic of Gulf-EU relations.

September 15, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, met with H.E. Ambassador Christophe Bigot, European Union Special Representative (EUSR) for the Middle East Peace Process, during his visit to Riyadh.

September 16, 2025



GRC's Director of the Cultural and Media Program, Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, participated in the forum "Worlds of Conflict in the Middle East," held in Amman, Jordan, under the patronage of

H.E. Dr. Bisher Al-Khasawneh and organized by the Eilaf Center and the Applied Science Private University, where he presented a paper during the second session on the struggle for influence in the Middle East.

September 16, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, received H.E. Professor Dr. Ahmed Al-Tijani Al-Mansouri, Minister of Animal Resources and Fisheries of the Republic of Sudan, at the GRC's office in Riyadh. The dialogue revolved around food security in the region, where Sudan is an important source of animal imports to Gulf countries. Moreover, animal exports constitute a vital component of the Sudanese economy and one of its most important sources of foreign currency.

September 28, 2025



Dr Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, met with H.E. Maira Myrogianni, Secretary General for Greeks Abroad and Public Diplomacy, along with H.E. Mr. Alexis Konstantopoulos, Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to Saudi Arabia, at the GRC office in Riyadh. Both sides discussed promoting business interests between Saudi Arabia and Greece.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

September 29, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, met with Dr. Peter Vorhofer, National Security Advisor at the Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria, and H.E. Mr. Oskar Wüstinger, Ambassador of Austria to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at the GRC's office in Riyadh. The meeting focused on areas of mutual interest and regional developments.

September 29, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, met with H.E. Dr. Stefano Sannino, Director General for the Directorate of MENA at the European Commission, and his accompanying delegation at the GRC office in Riyadh. The meeting focused on areas of mutual interest, including regional developments and ways to further strengthen EU-GCC relations through various research initiatives.

September 29, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, met with Dr. Onike Nicol-Houra, Lead Investment Relations Specialist at the African Development Bank, along with her accompanying delegation from the Africa Finance Corporation (AFC) and the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), during their investment roundtable at the GRC's office in Riyadh. The meeting focused on areas of mutual interest, with discussions centered on strengthening economic partnerships between the Gulf states and Africa.

September 30, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, met with Mr. Tristan Aureau, Director of the Centre for Analysis, Planning and Strategy at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on September 30, 2025, at the GRC office in Riyadh. The meeting focused on recent regional developments and areas of cooperation.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

September 30, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, met with H.E. Dr. Thanos Dokos, National Security Advisor to the Prime Minister of Greece, on September 30, 2025, at the GRC office in Riyadh. The meeting focused on areas of mutual interest and regional developments.

September 30, 2025



Professor Saleh Al-Khathlan, Senior Advisor at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the 22nd Annual Meeting of the #Valdai Forum in Sochi, Russia, where the sessions

discussed transformations in the international system, the decline of American power versus the rise of China, and the growing trend toward what is known as strategic independence. The discussions included research into the nature and depth of these transformations, their impacts on regional conflicts, opportunities for peace, the effectiveness of international institutions, and paths for national development, in addition to the impact of technological transformations on the future of international relations.

October 2, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated as a speaker at the Munich Leaders Meeting 2025, organized by the Munich Security Conference, in AlUla, Saudi Arabia. Dr. Sager participated in the panel session titled "In High Demand: Advancing Economic Security, Cooperation, and Trade," where he addressed the global and geopolitical challenges shaping the Gulf's economic security. The session was held at the iconic Maraya venue in Hegra, AlUla. Speakers in the panel also included: Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary-General of the United Nations Trade and Development, and H.E. Mr. Stefano Sannino, Director-General, Middle East, North Africa and the Gulf of the European Commission.

October 4, 2025



GRC's Director of the Cultural and Media Program, Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, participated in the symposium "Culture and Enlightenment" held in Amman, Jordan, and organized by the Arab Thought Forum and the German Cultural Dialogue Center.

September 30, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC) and Member of the Board of Trustees of the International Crisis Group, attended and participated in the International Crisis Group's 30th Anniversary Board Meeting held in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, from October 3 to 5, 2025.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

October 7, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with a delegation of experts from leading German think tanks on October 6, 2025, at the GRC office in Riyadh. The delegation included: Dr. Isabelle Werenfels, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Dr. Guido Steinberg, German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP), Dr. Marie-Christine Heinze, Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO), Dr. Sebastian Sons, Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO), Ms. Sophia Meranto, Munich Security Conference (MSC), and Ms. Rachel Tausendfreund, German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP). Representatives from the German Federal Foreign Office and the German Embassy in Riyadh also attended the meeting. The discussions centered on strengthening cooperation between German research institutions and the Gulf Research Center, building on a long-standing partnership. Both sides also exchanged views on key regional developments and shared perspectives on issues of mutual interest.

October 8, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with H.E. Ms. Kjersti Tromsdal, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the

GRC's office in Riyadh. During this meeting, both sides discussed areas of mutual interest and regional developments.

October 12, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, met with Dr. Peter Vorhofer, National Security Advisor at the Federal Chancellery of the Republic of Austria, and H.E. Mr. Oskar Wüstinger, Ambassador of Austria to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at the GRC's office in Riyadh. The meeting focused on areas of mutual interest and regional developments.

October 13, 2025



The Gulf Research Center Foundation office in Brussels hosted 14 young diplomats from the GCC member states taking part in the "Young Leaders in Regional Diplomacy program" of the EU. The events focused on the Gulf perspectives on EU policymaking and partnership. The discussion opened with an overview of GRC's mission in fostering competence and dialogue between the GCC and the EU. As a platform for policy exchange, the GRC's office in Brussels facilitates discussions and initiatives that promote institutional cooperation and cross-cultural understanding. The discussion showcased the dynamic role of GCC young diplomats, underscoring their innovative perspectives and nuanced approaches to strengthening the comprehensive GCC-EU partnership.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

October 14, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, received H.E. Mr. Carlo Baldocci, Ambassador of the Republic of Italy to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh. During the meeting, both sides discussed areas of mutual interest and recent regional developments.

part of the 11th edition of the Mediterranean Dialogues (MED) held in Naples, Italy. During the discussion, Dr. Sager addressed the Red Sea crisis and its implications for the Gulf region, as well as the security and resilience of Saudi Arabia's underwater infrastructure. The panel featured distinguished speakers, including Admiral Giuseppe Cavo Dragone, Chairman of the NATO Military Committee, and Özgür Ünlühisarcikli, Director of the German Marshall Fund's Ankara Office, reflecting the high-level strategic dialogue on maritime security.

October 20, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), and Prof. Saleh Alkhathlan, Senior Advisor at the GRC, met with H.E. Ms. Kjersti Tromsdal, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Ms. Heidi Elburgi Johansen, Norway's Special Representative for Yemen, along with their accompanying delegation, at the GRC office in Riyadh.



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated as a speaker in a webinar organized by the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington (AGSIW) on "Unpacking the Saudi-Pakistani Mutual Defense Agreement." Also joining the discussion was (Ret.) Brigadier Feroz Hassan Khan, Lecturer at the Naval Postgraduate School. Dr. Sager examined the Saudi-Pakistani defense partnership and discussed the importance of sustained cooperation between Riyadh and Islamabad within the broader framework of Gulf-South Asia relations. Watch the full webinar recording [here](#).

October 16, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the panel "Redefining Maritime Agendas," as

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

October 21, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, received Professor Abdullah Al-Ghadawi, Director of the Taqadum Center for Dialogue, Development, and Peacebuilding, at the GRC's office in Riyadh. During the meeting, the recent situations and developments in Syria were discussed, as well as areas of research cooperation between the two centers.

October 22, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated as a speaker at the Reuters NEXT Gulf 2025 Conference, held in Abu Dhabi on October 22, 2025. Dr. Sager took part in a panel session titled "What's NEXT? MENA's Role in a New World Order," alongside H.E. Lana Nusseibeh, Minister of State, United Arab Emirates and Jihad Azour, Director of the Middle East and Central Asia Department, International Monetary Fund (IMF). The session was moderated by Samia Nakhoul, Reuters Global Foreign Policy Editor. During the session, Dr. Sager highlighted Saudi Arabia's expanding global partnerships and its growing role in mediating regional conflicts, while underscoring the Kingdom's balanced approach in maintaining strong economic relations with both the United States and China.

October 23, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), and Prof. Saleh Alkhathlan, Senior Advisor at the GRC, met with a delegation from the Norwegian Centre for Conflict Resolution (NOREF), including Ms. Laura Mitchell, Senior Advisor for NOREF's MENA Programme, Dr. Gina Lende, Senior Advisor for the Global Programme and head of NOREF's Africa and Sahel work, and The Honourable Aliyu Ibrahim Gebi, NOREF's partner in the Sahel, at the GRC office in Riyadh on October 23, 2025. The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange views and explore areas of mutual interest and potential collaboration between the two institutions.

October 27, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated as a speaker at the Bruno Kreisky Forum for International Dialogue, held in Vienna on October 27, 2025. During the session, Dr. Sager addressed ongoing regional security developments and examined the dynamics of U.S. relations with Gulf states in shaping regional stability.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

October 27, 2025

Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated as a speaker at the Saudi-Greek Business Council Meeting, held in Riyadh on October 27, 2025. During the meeting, Dr. Sfakianakis delivered remarks in a session focused on providing key insights into the Saudi economy.

October 27, 2025

Mr. Abdulaziz Alageel, Senior Advisor at the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Mr. Ashok Kumar Mirpuri, Head of International Policy & Governance at Temasek International Pte. Ltd., one of Singapore's leading sovereign wealth funds and former Singaporean Ambassador to the United States, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Australia, at the GRC office in Riyadh. During the meeting, both sides discussed the Kingdom's growing sectors and ongoing development projects.

October 31- November 2, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the 21st edition of the Manama Dialogue, held in the Kingdom of Bahrain from October 31-November 2, 2025. The dialogue brought together ministers, policymakers, and decision-makers to debate the Middle East's most pressing foreign policy, defense, and security challenges.

November 2, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with H.E. Åsmund Grøver Aukrust, Norway's Minister of International Development, and his delegation at the GRC office in Riyadh. The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange views on areas of mutual interest and regional developments, with a focus on Gulf-Norwegian relations, including prospects for research, academic collaboration, and economic cooperation.

November 3, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with H.E. Mr. Heiko Nitzschke, Germany's Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa, at the GRC office in Riyadh. The meeting focused on regional developments and areas of mutual interest.

November 4, 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in a virtual telecall of UNEP Major Groups Consultations of the Seventh United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) on Clusters A and B draft resolutions and intersessional coordination.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

November 4, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), received the Ambassador of Australia to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, H.E. Mr. Miles Armitage, at the GRC office in Riyadh. During the meeting, the two sides discussed Saudi-Australian and Gulf-Australian relations as well as other areas of mutual interest.

November 5, 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in a virtual telecall of UNEP Major Groups Consultations of the Seventh United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) on Clusters C and D draft resolutions and intersessional coordination.

November 6, 2025

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in a virtual telecall of UNEP Science and Technology Major Groups discussing preparation for UNEA 7, such as task forces on specific topics, ministerial declarations, resolution focal points, and joint statements.

November 8, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Mr. Taha Ayhan, President of the Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF), at the GRC's office in Riyadh. During the meeting, both sides discussed frameworks of cooperation between the ICYF and the GRC and explored ways to enhance the role of youth in research activities and joint knowledge initiatives between the two institutions.

November 9, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with H.E. Charis Moritsis, Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC office in Riyadh. The discussion focused on areas of mutual interest, including economic and investment relations between the Gulf and Cyprus, potential avenues for research cooperation, and recent regional developments.

November 10, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with H.E. Carlo Baldocci, Ambassador of Italy to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh. The meeting focused on regional developments and explored areas of mutual interest between the two sides.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

November 13, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels met with Stefano Sanino, Director-General of the Directorate-General for Middle East, Africa and the Gulf (DG MENA) and his team at the European Commission. They discussed potential future opportunities for projects around the themes of education, research and culture, among others.

November 13, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels met with GCC Head of Delegation H.E. Ambassador Fahad Aljaimaz in Brussels, during which they discussed the current status of relations.

November 13, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center, met with a delegation from the Universidade Católica Portuguesa, headed by Prof. Isabel Capelo Gil, Rector of the University, and H.E. Ambassador Nuno Matias, Ambassador of the Republic of Portugal to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, along with the accompanying delegation, at the GRC's office in Riyadh. The meeting discussed areas for academic cooperation between both sides and areas of mutual interest.

November 17-18, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels participated in a workshop organized by the Geneva Graduate Institute in Switzerland titled "A new comprehensive framework to address the Iranian nuclear issue, regional security, and sanctions-lifting," during which participants explored a new framework to address the Iranian nuclear issue in a regional and international framework and discussed the range of sanctions relief measures and ways of ensuring economic benefits to Iran to facilitate concessions.

November 18, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), received a delegation from the Association Réalités et Relations Internationales (ARRI), led by its Chairman, Mr. Jean Thierry Augustin, Founder and Chairman of the Association's Board, along with the accompanying members at the GRC office in Riyadh. The meeting addressed recent regional developments and explored areas of mutual interest between both sides.

November 19, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels, met with Michel de Kemmeter, President of the Club of Brussels. They discussed the activities of the Club, notably its hosting of the World Regeneration Forum, and potential collaboration with GRCFB.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

November 19, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Ambassador François Cornet d'Elzius, Director for the Middle East and North Africa at the Federal Public Service (FPS) Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of Belgium, together with H.E. Pascal H. Grégoire, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to Riyadh. The meeting focused on areas of mutual interest and reviewed recent regional developments.

October 13, 2025



Valentina Angiolani, Intern at the Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels, attended the S&D MED Day at the European Parliament, titled “30 Years Since the Barcelona Process: Pact for the Mediterranean, a Progressive Vision,” a high-level conference assessing three decades of the Barcelona Process and exploring progressive strategies for a renewed Euro-Mediterranean partnership, with a focus on shared governance

and sustainable regional cooperation. She also attended the EU Parliamentary Democracy Forum.

November 19-20, 2025



Michael W. Wilson, researcher at the Gulf Research Center Foundation office in Geneva, participated in the Nairobi Security Symposium 2025 from November 19-20, 2025, in Nairobi, Kenya, which was organized by the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. The two-day forum gathered diplomats, analysts, and security experts to assess how external powers shape East Africa's geopolitics and geoeconomics. The GRC participated in the panel: “The Horn of Africa and the Middle East,” discussing Qatar's political mediation as a soft-power tool in the Horn of Africa.

Key outcomes of the symposium were: 1. The Horn of Africa remains a key arena of great-power competition amid conflicts in Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia; 2. Gulf states - Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Qatar - are expanding influence through economic leverage, strategic ports, and mediation diplomacy; 3. Red Sea maritime insecurity is escalating due to Houthi attacks and widening trafficking networks; and 4. External actors (EU, U.S., Russia, China, India) are recalibrating engagement as East Africa becomes central to global trade and security dynamics.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

November 20, 2025



The Gulf Research Center Foundation office in Brussels received a delegation of GCC diplomats based in Brussels, including representatives from the Embassy of Qatar to Belgium and the Mission of Qatar to the EU and NATO, the Embassies of Bahrain and Kuwait, and the Mission of Saudi Arabia to the EU. The delegation met with Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the GRC's Brussels office and Director of Research for the GRC, for discussions on areas of mutual interest, including recent regional developments and the evolving dynamics of Gulf-Europe relations.

November 20, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Alexandre Dormeier Freire, Director of the Executive Programmes in Development Policies and Practices, and Sofia Mueller, Programme Manager for Development Policies and Practices

(DPP) and Conflict and Fragility Management (CFM) at the Geneva Graduate Institute (IHEID), at the GRC's office in Riyadh. The meeting covered areas of mutual interest and explored avenues for enhanced cooperation between the GRC and IHEID in research, training, and joint project development.

November 24, 2025

Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels, met with Risto Penttilä, Secretary-General of the European Business Leaders' Convention (EBLC), during which they discussed potential future collaboration.

November 24, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with members of the Danish Parliament, Mr. Peter Juel-Jensen, The Liberal Party, and Chairman of the Danish Delegation to NATO Parliamentary Assembly from 2024; Karsten Hønge, The Green Left; Peter Skaarup, The Denmark Democrats; Carsten Bach, Liberal Alliance; along with Delegation Secretaries Flemming Kordt Wessel and Claudio Larson at the GRC office in Riyadh on November 24, 2025. Both sides discussed areas of mutual interest.

November 25, 2025

Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center, participated as a speaker in the first session on "Dialogue, Peace, and Development: Three

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

Interconnected Elements Difficult to Separate, Upon Which Coexistence, Justice, and the Promotion of Human Rights Are Based,” at the first Kuwait Forum for Social Dialogue and Enhancing National Unity in the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries, under the patronage of H.E. Dr. Nader Abdullah Mohammed Al-Jalal, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, and organized by the Women’s Institute for Development and Peace, where he presented a paper titled “Civil Society as the Head of Sustainable Development.”



November 25-26, 2025



The Gulf Research Center (GRC), represented by Hannan Alghamdi, Researcher at the GRC, participated in the Saudi-Italian Business and Investment Forum held in Riyadh on November 25, 2025. The event brought together senior officials, business leaders, and institutions from both countries to strengthen bilateral cooperation and explore new investment opportunities. With over 1,600 participants, the Forum highlighted the growing momentum of Saudi-Italian relations and Italy's expanding

presence in the Kingdom's investment landscape. GRC's participation reflects the important role of research and dialogue in advancing Saudi-Italian cooperation, a priority to which the Gulf Research Center remains firmly committed.

November 26-28, 2025



The Gulf Research Center (GRC), represented by Mr. Abdulaziz Alakeel, Senior Advisor at the GRC, and Michael W. Wilson, Researcher at the GRC, participated in the Africa Investment Forum (AIF) 2025 in Rabat, Morocco, the African Development Bank's flagship, deal-driven platform for mobilizing capital for Africa's development. This year's edition placed major emphasis on Gulf-Africa investment partnerships to drive industrialization across energy, infrastructure, critical minerals, agriculture, and digital transformation. Over the three days of the Forum, AIF secured \$15.2bn in commitments for 39 bankable projects. The GRC joined ministerial and high-level panels with African finance ministers, sovereign wealth funds, development banks, and global investors, highlighting that expanded Gulf capital flows are vital to scaling Africa's growth. The GRC also participated in closed Investor Boardrooms with AD Ports, Africa Finance Corporation, and IFC, promoting investments in ports, rail (Lobito Corridor), urban transit, industrial zones, and renewable energy. GRC's participation in the Forum reflects its commitment to advancing strategic Gulf investment that accelerates African industrialization, trade connectivity, and sustainable development.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

November 27, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated as a speaker in a panel discussion at the Fourth Annual Interactive Conference of the Swedish Dialogue Institute for the Middle East and North Africa, held in Amman, Jordan, on 27 November 2025. The conference, titled “Shaping Shared Futures: Inclusive Peace and Sustainable Development between Europe and the MENA Region,” brought together a distinguished group of specialists and experts.

December 2, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Mr. Park Byoung Seob, Minister Counselor at the Embassy of Korea to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh on December 2, 2025. The meeting focused on exploring areas of mutual interest between the two sides.

December 2, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with HE Lieutenant General Babar Iftikhar, President of the National Defence University in Pakistan, at the GRC's office in Riyadh on December 2, 2025. The meeting focused on exploring areas of mutual interest between the two sides.

December 3, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Mr. Michael Pistecky, the Deputy Head for the MENA region at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, at the GRC's office in Riyadh on December 3, 2025. During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on areas of mutual interest and discussed recent regional developments.

December 3, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Mr. Denys Tan, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of Singapore to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh on December 3, 2025. Both sides exchanged views on recent regional developments and discussed areas of mutual interest.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

December 4, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with a delegation from the Italian Carabinieri Corps led by H.E. Lieutenant General Marco Minicucci, Deputy Commander General of the Carabinieri, along with H.E. Mr. Carlo Baldacci, Ambassador of Italy to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the accompanying delegation, on December 4 at the GRC's office in Riyadh. The meeting addressed regional developments related to security affairs and discussed ways to enhance the exchange of expertise and knowledge between the GRC and the Carabinieri, reflecting the shared interest in promoting Saudi-Italian cooperation.

December 4, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Her Excellency Mrs. Katerina Varvarigou, Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh on December 4, 2025. During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on areas of mutual interest and discussed recent regional developments.

December 6, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated as a speaker in a panel session at the Doha Forum 2025 titled "Yemen at a Crossroads: Prospects for a Political Process in a Transforming Region," held in partnership with the Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies. Panelists in the session also included: HE Dr. Shaya Al-Zindani, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, Republic of Yemen; Hans Grundberg, UN Special Envoy of the Secretary General of the United Nations to Yemen; and Maged Al-Madhaji, Chairperson, Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies. The moderator of the session was Maysaa Shuja al-Deen, Senior Researcher, Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies. The session explored the prospects for an inclusive political process in Yemen, assessing both the feasibility of achieving a durable ceasefire and the willingness of local, regional, and international stakeholders to engage with the conflict through a renewed and constructive approach.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

December 6, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in a closed-door workshop on GCC & Nordic Think Tanks on the sidelines of the Doha Forum 2025.

December 7, 2025



On the sidelines of the second day of the Doha Forum 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), held a series of meetings with senior officials and representatives from international institutions, including: Mr. Valerio De Molli, Managing Partner and CEO of The European House – Ambrosetti; Mr. Carlos Conde, Director of the OECD MENA Programme; Mr. Yousef Al Mohsin, General Coordinator of the Iraqi Group for Foreign Affairs; Mr. Jakob Hallgren, Director of the Swedish Institute of International Affairs; Dr. Eldor Aripov, Director of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies (ISRS), Uzbekistan; H.E. Ambassador Nathalie Chuard, Director of the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF); Ambassador Dr. Thomas Greminger,

Executive Director, Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP); Dr. Clionadh Raleigh, Executive Director of the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED) ; Dr. Majed Al Ansari, Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar ; and representatives of the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR).

December 8, 2025



On the sidelines of the final day of the Doha Forum 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), held a series of meetings with: Dr. Ana Gabriela Fernández, Director of FLACSO Uruguay; Mr. Francisco de Santibañes, President of the Argentine Council on Foreign Relations (CARI); H.E. Amr Moussa, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt and former Secretary-General of the Arab League; Mr. Itonde Kakoma, President of Interpeace; and a meeting with Dr. Comfort Ero, President of the International Crisis Group.

December 9, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated as a speaker in the 7th Istanbul Cooperation Initiative Policy Advisory Group Meeting (ICI-PAG), held at the NATO-ICI Regional Centre in Kuwait on

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

December 9, 2025. Dr. Sager spoke in the panel session titled “Mutual Security Perspective,” joining: HE Minister Plenipotentiary Abdulaziz Al Jarallah, Assistant Foreign Minister for International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kuwait, Mr. Giedrius Jokubauskis, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Lithuania, UAE, and, Mr. Szczepan Haluszczak, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Poland, Kuwait. The discussion highlighted the importance of strengthening cooperative security frameworks, enhancing regional stability, and deepening NATO-GCC dialogue in an increasingly complex strategic landscape.

December 10, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center, met with His Excellency Mr. Harri Kamarainen, Ambassador-at-Large for the Middle East and the Gulf Region at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Finland, and Lieutenant Colonel Dr. Juha Makela, Chief of Information Technology Division at the Finnish Defence Research Agency, on December 10, 2025 at the GRC's office in Riyadh. During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on areas of mutual interest.

December 10, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center, met with Mr. Abdullah Al-Ahmed, the CEO of Bahrain Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies “Derasat,” along with his accompanying delegation, on December 10, 2025 at the GRC's office in Riyadh. The meeting discussed areas of mutual interest and reviewed ways to strengthen research cooperation between the two sides.

December 10, 2025



On December 10, 2025, Yuan Zhang, Senior Research Fellow at the Gulf Research Center, moderated a fireside chat organized by the University of Hong Kong Saudi Economic Forum, which was held in Riyadh, titled “Dialogue Across the Silk Road: Business Innovation, Legal Transformation & Global City Development.” Joined by Dr. Martyn Davies (Head of City Excellence, Royal Commission for Riyadh City – RCRC) and Prof. Torki Alshubaiki (Dean, College of Law and International Relations, Alfaisal University), the discussion explored Riyadh's vision to become a top 10 global city economy, with a focus on quality of life, legal predictability, innovation governance, and the city's role as a gateway to West Asia, North Africa, and South Asia.

December 10, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, delivered a lecture titled “Research

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

Centers: Their Role and Importance in the Arabian Gulf Region,” organized by the Center for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies, in collaboration with the Department of Political Science at Kuwait University, on December 10, 2025, at Sabah Al-Salem University City. In it, he reviewed the evolution of think tanks in their modern form, their future and roles in the Arabian Gulf, in addition to the most prominent challenges facing them, while shedding light on the experience of the Gulf Research Center in this field.

December 11, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Mr. Hongkyu Jang, Senior Researcher at the Institute for National Security Strategy (INNS) and Mr. Youngwuk Kim, Researcher at INSS, and their accompanying colleagues, on December 11, 2025, at the GRC’s office in Riyadh. The meeting explored potential avenues for cooperation and reviewed key areas of mutual interest between both sides.

December 11, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Professor Hongbin Cai, Dean and Chair of Economics at the Hong Kong University (HKU) Business School, and Mr. Adrian Chan, Executive Director of Executive Education at HKU Business School, along with their accompanying colleagues, on December 11 at the GRC office in Riyadh. The meeting explored areas of mutual interest and discussed opportunities to strengthen academic and research cooperation between the two institutions.

December 11, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with H.E. Mr. Park Byung Seob, Minister-Counselor at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC’s office in Riyadh on December 11, 2025. During the meeting, the GRC presented a copy of the master’s thesis authored by Ms. Shahad Ahmed Al-Ghamdi, Marketing Specialist at the Center. The thesis, completed at King Abdulaziz University, is titled “The Extent of Saudi Youth Exposure to Korean Soft Power.” This

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

initiative reflects the Gulf Research Center's dedication to supporting research initiatives and encouraging studies that deepen understanding and cultural exchange between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Korea, thereby strengthening bilateral relations and opening broader avenues for knowledge sharing and cultural cooperation between the two countries.

December 13, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated as a speaker in a panel discussion titled "The Broader Context: America's Role in the Middle East" at the Sir Bani Yas Forum 2025, held on December 13, 2025.

December 15, 2025



Dr. Ahmed Sager, Vice President of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), and Prof. Saleh Al-Khathlan, Senior Advisor at the GRC, met with H.E. Mr. Herbert Scheibner, President of European Institute for Counter Terrorism and Conflict Prevention, and H.E. Mr. Oskar Wüstinger, Ambassador of Austria to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and their accompanying colleagues on December 11 at the GRC office in Riyadh. The meeting discussed areas of mutual interest between both sides.

December 16, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), delivered a lecture titled "Existing and Potential Strategic Threats to Saudi National Security" on December 16, 2025, at the War College of the National Defense University in Riyadh. The session was attended by members of the university's faculty. Dr. Sager extended his sincere gratitude and appreciation to H.E. Major General Mohammed bin Jadou Al-Ruwaili, President of the National Defense University, H.E. Major General Badr bin Menif Al-Otaibi, Commander of the War College, as well as all members of the university, for the kind invitation and warm hospitality.

December 16, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with His Excellency Mr. Jean-François Guillaume, France's Special Envoy to Syria, and his accompanying colleagues, on December 16, 2025 at the GRC's office in Riyadh. Both sides discussed areas of mutual interest.

GRC External Engagement (Timeline of Events)

December 17, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with His Excellency Sayyid Najib bin Hilal Al Busaidi, Ambassador of the Sultanate of Oman to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh on December 17, 2025. During this meeting both sides discussed areas of mutual interest and regional developments.

December 18, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), met with Her Excellency Ms. Safia Taleb Al Souhail, Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, at the GRC's office in Riyadh on December 18, 2025. During this meeting, both sides discussed areas of mutual interest.

2025

ANNUAL REPORT

GRCA IN THE MEDIA

GRCA media participation can be accessed [here](#), at the GRCA's official YouTube channel.

GRC in the Media

January, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), appeared on Al Arabiya News to share his insights on Ahmed Al-Shara's recent statements during an interview with the channel. Dr. Sager delved into the evolving relationship between Syria and the Arab Gulf nations. The interview can be viewed [here](#).



Dr. Abderrezaq Gherraf, Senior Researcher at the Gulf Research Center, participated on Algeria International Channel on January 1, 2025, to discuss the outcomes of one year of Algeria's membership in the Security Council.



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), appeared

on BBC Arabic's "Noktah Hewar" program on January 3, 2025. The episode, titled "What Will the Relationship Between the New Syria and Its Arab Surroundings Look Like?" delved into the evolving dynamics and future prospects of Syria's relations with its Arab neighbors. For more details, you can watch the episode [here](#).



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the program "Ala Al-Hodood" on Sharq TV (Bloomberg) on January 3, 2025. The episode, titled "Does the New Year Mark the Beginning of a Geopolitical Shift Against Iran in the Middle East?" explored the potential geopolitical shifts in the region and their impact on Iran. For more details, you can watch the episode [here](#).



On January 13, 2025, Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Culture and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center, contributed to the Voice of Lebanon channel with an intervention titled "The Role of the Kingdom in Supporting National Reconciliation." watch the intervention [here](#).

GRC in the Media

Dr. Abdulrazak Gherraf, Senior Researcher at the Gulf Research Center, participated on Algeria International Channel on January 1, 2025, to discuss the outcomes of one year of Algeria's membership in the Security Council.



On January 13, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated in the AlRaqib Podcast, hosted by Othman Alanjari. They discussed key topics related to defense policy, regional security, and military industries. To watch the podcast, click [here](#).



"Trump's Era Towards the Arab Gulf Cooperation Council Countries," organized by the Middle East Studies Center in Jordan.

February, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the News Bulletin on Al Jazeera Channel on February 2, 2025. The discussion covered the visit of Syrian President Ahmed Al-Shara to Saudi Arabia on his first foreign trip after assuming office. To watch the interview, click [here](#).



On February 19, 2025, Dr. Abderrezaq Gherraf, Senior Researcher at the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in a discussion on Algeria International TV about the Russian-American negotiations in Riyadh. To watch the interview, click [here](#).



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), made an intervention in "Al-Sharq News" on Asharq TV (Bloomberg) on February 2, 2025. The discussion revolved around the Saudi Crown Prince's meeting with Al-Shara in Riyadh to support Syria's security and stability. To watch the interview, click [here](#).

GRC in the Media



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the News Bulletin on Al-Araby TV on February 2, 2025. The discussion focused on the meeting between Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Syrian President Ahmed Al-Shara during his first official visit to Saudi Arabia. To watch the interview, click [here](#).



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), appeared in “The World Tonight” on Al Arabiya Channel on February 2, 2025. The episode was titled: “The Saudi Crown Prince Affirms to the Syrian President the Strengthening of Relations... Al-Shara Expresses Gratitude for Saudi Arabia’s Supportive Stances.” To watch the interview, click [here](#).



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in “Here is Riyadh” on Al Ekhbariya Channel on February 2, 2025. The episode was titled: “Syria... Saudi Embrace for a True Partnership.” To watch the interview, click [Here](#).



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), appeared on Al Arabiya English TV on February 5, 2025, commenting on President Trump’s statement on Gaza and the Palestinian issue, as well as Saudi Arabia’s response. To watch the interview, click [here](#).



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), made an intervention on “Nightly News” on Al-Hadath Channel on February 5, 2025. The discussion revolved around President Donald Trump’s statements on controlling Gaza and displacing Palestinians, as well as Saudi Arabia’s response to these remarks. To watch the interview, click [here](#).

GRC in the Media



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the “DW Evening Program” on DW Arabic on February 7, 2025. The episode was titled: “Gaza Riviera: Can Saudi Arabia Reject Trump’s Plan?” To watch the interview, click [here](#).



Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the “7 PM News” program on Roya News Channel on February 7, 2025. The episode was titled: “Saudi Arabia’s Firm Stance Against Plans to Liquidate the Palestinian Cause.” To watch the interview, click [here](#).

On February 8, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), published an article in Arab News analyzing Saudi Arabia’s position on Palestinian statehood and the Kingdom’s response to U.S. President Donald Trump’s statements. Read the full piece [here](#).



On February 16, 2025, Dr. Abderrezaq Gherraf, Senior Researcher at the Gulf Research Center (GRC), appeared on Algeria International TV to discuss Trump’s plan for the displacement of Palestinians. To watch the interview, click [here](#).



On February 19, 2025, Dr. Abderrezaq Gherraf, Senior Researcher at the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in a discussion on Algeria International TV about the Russian-American negotiations in Riyadh. To watch the interview, click [here](#).



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the program “On the Borders” on Asharq TV (Bloomberg) on February 21, 2025. The episode was titled: “Riyadh Talks: Trump’s and Putin’s Plans and the Future of the Global Order.” To watch the interview, click [here](#).

GRC in the Media

March, 2025



On March 4, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, made a guest appearance on “Al Arabiya’s 4PM News Bulletin” (نشرة الراحلة #) to discuss the Emergency Arab Summit on Palestine held in Cairo. He shared insights on the summit’s outcomes, regional consensus, and the importance of coordinated Arab efforts to address the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Watch the full segment [here](#).



On March 4, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, joined the program #Waqt_AlSiyasa (Time for Politics) with Tariq Al-Hamid on Al Arabiya FM. The episode focused on the Emergency Arab Summit on Palestine in Cairo and discussed the latest regional developments and the collective Arab stance on the situation in Gaza. Listen to the full episode [here](#).



On March 4, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, commented on the developments of the Emergency Arab Summit in Cairo in a statement published by Albilad Press (Bahrain), under the headline: “A Unified Arab Stance to Confront the Risks of Displacement and Rebuild Gaza Amid Complex Challenges.” Dr. Sager highlighted the significance of Arab unity in addressing the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, emphasizing the urgency of reconstruction without forced displacement. Read the article [here](#).



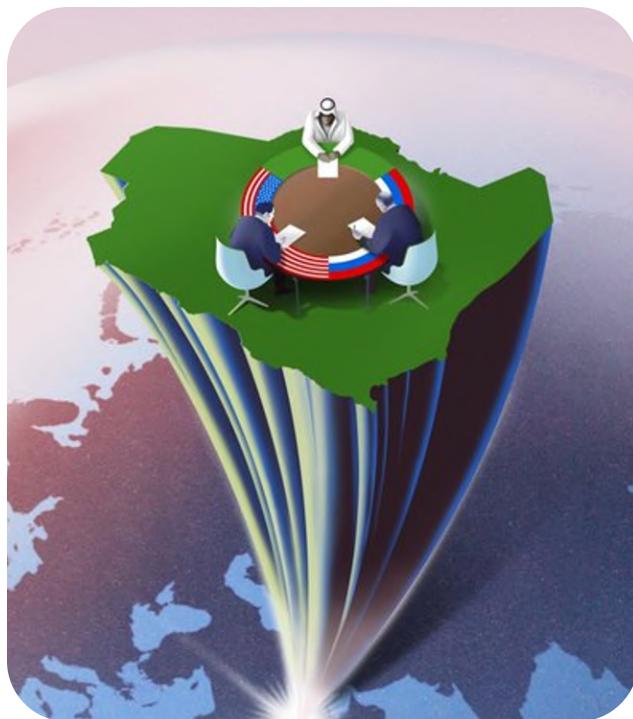
On March 5, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on the program #Huna_AlRiyadh (Here in Riyadh) on Al Ekhbariya Channel, in an episode titled: “Emergency Arab Summit: A Plan to Rebuild Gaza Without Displacement.” Dr. Sager discussed the outcomes of the summit and the proposed framework for Gaza’s reconstruction, emphasizing the importance of preserving the population’s right to remain on their land. Watch the full episode [here](#).

On March 7, Amnah Mosly, a researcher at the Gulf Research Center, was featured in Arabian Gulf Business Insight (AGBI) in an article titled: “Canada Must Do More to Capitalise on Billion-Dollar Saudi Projects.” Read the full article [here](#).

GRC in the Media



On March 7, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on BBC Arabic in the program #WorldAtNoon (#النهار). He discussed the announcement that U.S. President Donald Trump has scheduled a visit to Riyadh within the next six weeks – marking one of his first international trips since taking office on January 20. Watch the full interview [here](#).



On March 9, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), published an article with Majalla titled: "Saudi Arabia's Diplomacy and the Changing World Order." In the article, Dr. Sager explores the Kingdom's evolving foreign policy, its strategic

positioning in a shifting global landscape, and its growing role as a diplomatic powerbroker. Read the full article [here](#).



On March 10, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, authored an article for Asharq Al-Awsat titled: "Saudi Arabia Cements Its Position as a Trusted Mediator in Global Diplomacy." In the piece, he highlights how the Kingdom has become a key platform for negotiations between regional and international powers, reflecting its rising diplomatic stature. Read the full article [here](#).



On March 11, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on Rudaw TV (Kurdish) to discuss the Saudi-Ukrainian negotiations held in Jeddah. He provided insights into the objectives and progress of the talks and the broader implications for regional and international diplomacy. Watch the full interview [here](#).

GRC in the Media



On March 11, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, stated that Saudi Arabia is an emerging power in international mediation, in an article published by Albilad Press (Bahrain). He highlighted the Kingdom's growing diplomatic influence and its ability to bring conflicting parties to the negotiation table. Read the full article [here](#).



On March 12, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, spoke to Asharq Al-Awsat (@aawsat_News) in an article titled: "Moscow Holds Off on Ukraine Ceasefire Proposal, Awaits 'Details' from the U.S. Side." Dr. Sager commented on the developments of a new round of negotiations with Washington, noting that while talks are ongoing, no date has been set for a potential Putin-Trump summit. Read the full article [here](#).



On March 12, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on the program #Huna_AlRiyadh (Here in Riyadh) on Al Ekhbariya Channel, in an episode titled: "From Jeddah... The First Steps Toward Peace." The discussion focused on the initial breakthroughs in peace efforts emerging from Jeddah and Saudi Arabia's growing role as a diplomatic mediator. Watch the full episode [here](#).



On Wednesday, March 12, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, was quoted in Independent Arabia (@IndyArabia) in an article titled: "The Deal with the SDF Cools Down Security Council Tensions... Independent Arabia Obtains Draft of Closed-Door Session." Dr. Sager emphasized that the upcoming resolution stresses the importance of fighting terrorism, preserving national unity, and rejecting foreign intervention, while welcoming the formation of an investigative committee. Read the full article [here](#).

GRC in the Media



On March 14, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on the program “On the Border” (على الحدود) on Asharq News (Bloomberg). The episode focused on the aftermath of the successful U.S.-Ukraine talks in Jeddah, ahead of former President Trump’s anticipated visit to Saudi Arabia. Dr. Sager shared insights on the regional and international implications of the talks. Watch the full episode [here](#).



On March 18, Albilad Press (Bahrain) reported a statement from the Gulf Research Center (GRC) condemning Israel’s resumption of what it described as a genocidal war in Gaza, calling it a crime that threatens regional stability. Read the full article [here](#).



On March 15, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), contributed to the Council of Foreign Relations’ Council of Council’s global memo on “President Trump’s Address to Congress: Global Reactions.” Read [here](#).

On March 23, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, joined @AlRaqibPodcast to discuss the defense strategy of the Gulf states. Key highlights from the episode include:

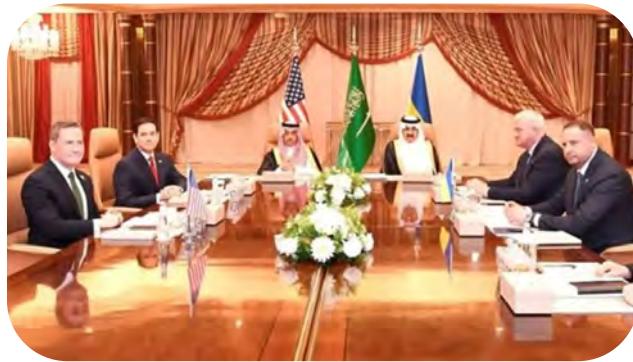
- An attack on one Gulf state is an attack on all.
- Unified defense capabilities are a cornerstone of regional security.
- He shared several examples of military cooperation among GCC countries.

Watch the full episode [here](#).

GRC in the Media



On March 24, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on France 24 Arabic to comment on the launch of U.S.-Russia talks in Saudi Arabia. He highlighted the Kingdom's pivotal diplomatic role and its growing credibility as a neutral ground for global dialogue. Watch the full interview [here](#).



On March 24, Albilad Press published an article titled “Russia and Ukraine...Shuttle Diplomacy Between Escalation and De-escalation,” highlighting Saudi Arabia’s growing role in international mediation. The article featured Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), who stated that Saudi Arabia’s neutral stance has enabled it to bring together Russia, Ukraine, and the United States at the same table, helping to advance efforts toward ending the war between Moscow and Kyiv. Read the full article [here](#).



On March 25, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, made a guest appearance on “Al-Irtidad Sharqan” on Asharq News (Bloomberg). During the interview, he discussed the talks between Moscow and Washington held in Riyadh, shedding light on Saudi Arabia’s role in facilitating dialogue between the two powers. Watch the full interview [here](#).

April, 2025

On April 17, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, made an intervention on the program “Out of the Box” aired on Al Arabiya Channel. During the segment, he discussed the visit of Saudi Defense Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman to the Islamic Republic of Iran. Watch the full interview [here](#).



On April 18, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated in the program “On the Border” on Asharq News (Bloomberg). The episode was titled: “Trump and the Prospects for a Solution with Iran.” Watch the full interview [here](#).

GRC in the Media



On April 22, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated in the program (“Political Hour with Tarek Al-Hamid”) on Al Arabiya FM Radio. The episode discussed the latest regional developments and addressed the following key topics:

1. Saudi-Iranian relations following the visit of Saudi Defense Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman to the Islamic Republic of Iran.
2. Updates on the Iranian nuclear file.
3. The situation in Yemen in light of U.S. strikes against the Houthis.
4. Iraq’s positioning between the Gulf, the United States, and Iran.
5. The visit of the Prime Minister of India to the Kingdom.

To watch the full episode, click [here](#).

May, 2025



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), gave an interview to Independent Arabia, published on Sunday, 11 May 2025, in an article titled: “The ‘Alliance of the Century’ Faces a New Test... in the Era of the ‘Predatory Friend.’” To read the full article, click [here](#).



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), recently published an article with Arab News titled “A Strategic Opportunity Amid Regional Challenges,” offering key insights into President Trump’s visit to Saudi Arabia. Read the full piece [here](#).

GRC in the Media



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated on 12 May 2025 in Al-Rabea News Bulletin on Al Arabiya Channel, discussing the upcoming visit of U.S. President Donald Trump to Saudi Arabia. To watch the full segment, click [here](#).



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), gave an interview to Asharq News published on 13 May 2025, in an article titled: "A New Regional Landscape Awaits Trump During His Second Visit to Saudi Arabia." To read the full article, click [here](#).



"A historic visit in its timing and political and economic significance, reflecting Saudi Arabia's importance on both the international and regional stage."

This was highlighted by Dr. Zaid AlFaeil, Director of the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center (GRC), during his appearance on the program "7 o'clock News" on Roya News, in an episode titled: "Why Did Trump Choose Saudi Arabia as His First Foreign Destination?" The appearance aired on 13 May 2025. To watch the full segment, click [here](#).



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated on 13 May 2025 in the live coverage on Al Hadath Channel of U.S. President Donald Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia, in a segment titled: "Saudi Arabia's Diversification of Alliances and Balancing Between East and West." To watch the full segment, click [here](#).

GRC in the Media



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), made a guest appearance on 13 May 2025 as part of the special coverage on Al Arabiya of U.S. President Donald Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia. To watch the full segment, click [here](#).



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated on 13 May 2025 in the program "World at Noon" on BBC Arabic, discussing U.S. President Donald Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia. To watch the full segment, click [here](#).



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated on 13 May 2025 in the live coverage on Asharq News Channel of U.S. President Donald Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia, in a segment titled: "Saudi Arabia

and the U.S.: The Potential Security Agreement." To watch the full coverage, click [here](#).



Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated on 13 May 2025 in a program with journalist Tony Khalife on Al Mashhad TV, in an episode titled: "Politics Is Based on Interests, and Trump Manages Politics with a Business Mindset." The discussion followed President Trump's striking and astonishing speech at the Investment Forum in Riyadh. To watch the full episode, click [here](#).



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), gave an interview to Asharq Al-Awsat on 14 May 2025, titled: "Saudi-American-Syrian Meeting in Riyadh." In the interview, Dr. Sager stated: "Saudi Arabia's role in regional and international politics is indispensable." To read the full article, click [here](#).

GRC in the Media



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated on 15 May 2025 in Al Arabiya's Al-Rabea News Bulletin, discussing the visit of U.S. President Donald Trump to Riyadh. To watch the full segment, click [here](#).



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated on 15 May 2025 in the program Qisara Al-Qawl on Russia Today (RT Arabic) in an episode titled: "Wonders Come from Saudi Arabia." To watch the full episode, click [here](#).

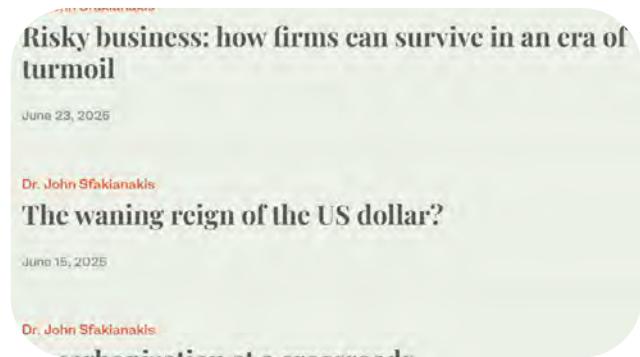


Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated on 16 May 2025 in the program Asas Media in an episode titled "The Pillars of the Policy of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and Arab Concerns Over Losing Syria to Turkey." To watch the full episode, click [here](#).



On June 19, 2025, Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center, participated on Ain Radio under the title: "The Arabs Have Launched a Project Following the Speech of His Majesty King Abdullah II." To watch the segment, click [here](#).

June, 2025



Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist at the GRC, contributed three opinion pieces to Arab News in June 2025. His articles include "Decarbonization at a Crossroads" (June 5), "The Waning Reign of the US Dollar?" (June 15),

GRC in the Media

and “Risky Business: How Firms Can Survive in an Era of Turmoil” (June 23), offering insights on global finance, energy transitions, and economic resilience. Click [here](#) to read the pieces.



On June 10, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated in the program Madar Al-Layl wal-Nahar on the Russian international news agency Sputnik radio, discussing Donald Trump's statements on Russia's role in World War II and the latest developments in the Los Angeles protests. To watch the segment, click [here](#).



On June 13, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated in the program DW Evening on the German news channel DW Arabic, discussing the repercussions of the Israeli strike on Iran. To watch the segment, click [here](#).



On June 13, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated on Asharq News Channel in a discussion about the Israeli strike and the Iranian response. To watch the segment, click [here](#).

The regional implications of escalating Iran-Israel tensions



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, published an article in Arab News on June 15, 2025, titled “The Regional Implications of Escalating Iran-Israel Tensions.” In it, he examines how growing hostilities could reshape regional dynamics and urges a strategic response from Gulf states. Click [here](#) to read the full piece.

Opinion

Israel vs Iran — does the Gulf Cooperation Council have a role?

Dr. Christian Koch, Director of Research and Executive Manager at GRCFB – Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels, authored an opinion piece for EU Observer on June 16, 2025, titled “Israel vs Iran – does the Gulf Cooperation Council have a role?” In the article, he argues that amid Israeli-Iranian military escalation, Europe and GCC states must jointly step forward with diplomatic leadership to prevent wider regional conflict and redefine post-crisis security dynamics. Click [here](#) to read the full article.



On June 17, 2025, Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center, participated on Roya News Channel in the program “News at Seven” under the title: “Gulf Politics in Times of Crisis: From Statements of Condemnation to Equations of Influence.” To watch the segment, click [here](#).

Europe and GCC must lead a Middle East reset



CHRISTIAN KOCH

June 17, 2025
14:00



Europe and the GCC must act together as co-architects of a new Middle East, outlining a path for cooperation and security (AFP)

Dr. Christian Koch, Director of Research and Executive Manager at GRCFB – Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels, authored an article in Arab News on June 17, 2025, titled “Europe and GCC Must Lead a Middle East Reset,” highlighting the need for renewed strategic cooperation in the region. To read the piece, click [here](#).



On June 19, 2025, Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center, participated on Ain Radio under the title: “The Arabs Have Launched a Project Following the Speech of His Majesty King Abdullah II.” To watch the segment, click [here](#).

GRC in the Media



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated on June 20, 2025, in the program Political Magazine on Monte Carlo Doualiya Radio (MCD) under the title: "Post-War Scenarios Between Iran and Israel." To watch the segment, click [here](#).

July 2025



On July 8, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on the program "Al-Jar Al-Sabea" with Ali Kazan on Iraq 24. The episode, titled "Neighbors: A Gateway to Prosperity, Not a Door to Conflict" (الجوار فرصة لازدهار وليس باباً للصراع), explored the potential of regional cooperation over confrontation. Watch the full episode [here](#).



On July 8, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on Al Arabiya's program #ساعة_حوار (Hour of Dialogue) in an episode titled: "A Sudden Shift by Khamenei" (تحول مفاجئ لخامنئي), offering expert insight into recent developments in Iranian leadership dynamics. Watch the full episode [here](#)



On July 10, 2025, in a milestone video marking 30 years of the International Crisis Group's mission "Authoritative. Global. Essential." Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, discusses the organization's imperative role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Watch the video on [X](#).

GRC in the Media



On July 15, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on Al-Ekhbariya Channel's program #Huna_AlRiyadh, in an episode titled: "The New Middle East: Realities and Opportunities" (الشرق الأوسط الجديد.. الواقع). Watch the full episode [here](#).

The 15th Annual Gulf Research Meeting (GRM), organized by the Gulf Research Center, took place at the University of Cambridge from July 22-24, 2025.



Dr. Hana Jalloul Muro, Member of the European Parliament (Spain), Vice-Chair of the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs, and rapporteur for Saudi Arabia, shared her impressions of the Opening Ceremony of the

15th Annual Gulf Research Meeting at the University of Cambridge, organized by the Gulf Research Center:

"A true pleasure to attend the Official Opening Ceremony of the 15th Annual Gulf Research Meeting #GRM2025 organized by @Gulf_Research at the University of Cambridge.

Keynote speeches by H.H. Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, Dr. @AbdulazizOSager, and Dr. Christian Kotch set the stage for #GRM2025. This was followed by an enriching panel discussion featuring @EroComfort, @EUSR_Gulf, @abuhamad1, and @majedalansari, which addressed key challenges facing the Gulf region." View the tweet [here](#)



H.E. Luigi Di Maio, European Union Special Representative for the Gulf region since June 2023, described his experience at the 15th Annual Gulf Research Meeting (GRM2025) in Cambridge as exceptionally rewarding:

"A great pleasure to be in Cambridge and have such excellent exchanges at the 15th Annual Gulf Research Meeting (#GRM2025) organized by the Gulf Research Center."

GRC in the Media

In accompanying LinkedIn remarks, he shared that he participated in the opening panel and co-chaired a high-level EU-GCC roundtable alongside Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, H.E. Abdelaziz Aluwaisheg, Comfort Ero, and Hana Jalloul. The discussions focused on shared regional priorities like trade, connectivity, and security.



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Qatar highlighted the participation of Dr. Majed Al Ansari, Advisor to the Prime Minister and Official Spokesperson, in a panel at the 15th Gulf Research Meeting at the University of Cambridge. He addressed key regional challenges and Qatar's diplomatic role. Read more [here](#).

Abdulla Mohamed Alahmed, Executive Director of the Bahrain Centre for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (Derasat), represented Bahrain at the 15th Gulf Research Meeting, held from 22-24 July 2025 at the University of Cambridge. He highlighted the need to advance Gulf-Europe cooperation, calling for deeper engagement through trade diplomacy, security collaboration, and structured dialogues linking security with sustainable development. [Al-Watan News Coverage](#) [Al-Bilad Press Coverage](#).

باحثون كويتيون يثرون ملتقى الخليج للأبحاث في (كامبريدج) البريطانية بدراساتهم العلمية

LOC18:24 | 23/07/2025
GMT 15:24



In an article titled "Kuwaiti Researchers Enrich Gulf Research Meeting at the University of Cambridge with Their Scientific Contributions," the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) spotlighted a key workshop at the Gulf Research Meeting (GRM), focusing on the future of energy in the Gulf region. The session explored the geopolitical and environmental transformations shaping regional and global energy policies. Read the full article [here](#) (Arabic).

بهمة ازدواجية المعايير ترجمة أوروبا في مؤتمر الخليج للأبحاث

افتتحت جامعة كامبريدج النسخة الـ15 من الملتقى العلمي وسط استثناء واضح من السلوك الإسرائييلي في المنطقة
عيسى النهاري محرر الشؤون السياسية | @ES_Nahari | الأربعاء 23 يونيو 2025 | 16:47



Independent Arabia journalist Eisa Nahari reported on discussions at the 15th Gulf Research Meeting, arguing that debates in the GRM highlighted a perceived double

GRC in the Media

standard in Western approaches to human rights. Analysts at the meeting emphasized how Western policies often differ in their response to similar human rights situations, depending on political and strategic interests. Read the full article [here](#).

August 2025



25 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

On August 6, 2025, The Gulf Research Center released a commemorative video titled "GRC at 25: A Legacy of Knowledge and Impact," honoring its 25th anniversary. Watch [here](#).



On August 7, 2025, Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center, appeared on "Eye of Five" on Al-Ekhbariya Channel, discussing the launch

of the Libraries Commission's pilot phase of the "Cultural Houses" project in five new cities. Watch [here](#)



On August 17, 2025, Dr. Abderrezaq Gherraf, Senior Researcher at the Gulf Research Center, intervened on Algeria International TV, commenting on the U.S.-Russia Summit in Alaska. Watch [here](#).



On August 25, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on "World at Noon" on BBC Arabic to discuss "The Extraordinary Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation on the Ongoing Israeli Aggression Against the Palestinian People." Watch [here](#).

GRC in the Media

September 2025



On September 3, 2025, Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Cultural Program at the Gulf Research Center, appeared on “Eye of Five” airing on Al-Ekhbariya, where he discussed the launch of the Cultural Investment Conference 2025. Watch [here](#)



On September 5, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on an episode of “Ala Al-Hodood” airing on Al-Sharq (Bloomberg), entitled “Iran Facing the Snapback Mechanism.” Dr. Sager stated that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) failed to support Iran during the U.S.-Israeli attacks and remains unable to offer military protection. He added that the E3’s activation of the Snapback Mechanism aims to pressure Iran, while Gulf states reject militarizing the nuclear issue and advocate for a peaceful path to stability. Watch [here](#)



On September 9, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on the Al-Sharq TV News Bulletin, discussing the Israeli attack on the State of Qatar. Watch here



On September 10, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on “Al Arabiya 4 O’Clock News” airing on Al Arabiya, where he discussed the repercussions of the Israeli aggression against Qatar. Watch [here](#)



On September 14, 2025, Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center, appeared on “Sawt” (Voice) on Al Arabiya, discussing the Doha summit. Watch [here](#)

GRC in the Media



On September 15, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on Al Arabiya Channel, participating in the live coverage of the Arab-Islamic emergency summit in Doha. Watch [here](#)



On September 15, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on an episode of "Akhbar Al-Sharq" airing on Al-Sharq TV, as part of the special coverage of the Arab-Islamic emergency summit in Doha. Watch [here](#)



On September 15, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on an episode of "In the Picture" with Abdullah Almudaifer, airing on Rotana Khalijia TV, discussing key regional developments and the Gulf's evolving diplomatic landscape. Watch [here](#)



On September 17, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on the podcast "Al-Fajr" by Thmanyah, discussing the Israeli attack on Doha and its regional implications. He highlighted Qatar's clear foreign policy strategy aimed at promoting peace through diplomacy and mediation, and noted that the assault coincided with Israel's plan to fully occupy Gaza. Dr. Sager stressed the need for a unified Gulf stance to rally international support for condemning Israel and advancing the Two-State Solution. Listen [here](#)

GRC in the Media



On September 19, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on an episode of “Akhbar Al-Sharq” airing on Al-Sharq TV, discussing the future of Saudi-Indian relations following the signing of the Saudi-Pakistani Joint Strategic Defense Agreement. Watch [here](#)



On September 19, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center joined Jamal Al-Mulla on the ArabCast Podcast, in an episode titled “After the Bombing of Qatar: Where Are the Gulf’s Options Headed?” discussing key questions of the moment and the implications of the Israeli war for the region. Watch [here](#)



On September 19, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on an episode of “Al-Hekaya” with Amr Adib on MBC Masr, discussing the Saudi-Pakistani Joint Strategic Defense Agreement. Watch [here](#)



On September 20, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on an episode of “Here in Riyadh,” airing on Al-Ekhbariya, where he discussed the phone call between the Saudi Crown Prince and the French President regarding the outcomes of the International Conference on the Two-State Solution and coordination efforts ahead of the High-Level Conference on the Implementation of the Two-State Solution which was held on September 22. Watch [here](#)



On September 21, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on an episode of “Akhbar

GRC in the Media

Al-Layl” airing on Al-Hadath entitled “Saudi Arabia has Pushed for a Two-State Solution Long Before it Became an International Headline.” Watch [here](#)



On September 21, 2025, the Gulf Research Center released a commemorative video ahead of the 95th Saudi National Day, marking the Kingdom's enduring legacy and leadership. On this national occasion, the GRC celebrates Saudi Arabia's leadership and its role as a pillar of stability among nations, expressing hope for continued security, prosperity, and progress. Watch [here](#)



On September 22, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on an episode of “World at Noon” airing on BBC Arabic, where he

discussed the launch of the Two-State Solution Conference, held in New York and co-chaired by Saudi Arabia and France. Watch here



On September 23, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on an episode of “Al-Arabiya 4 O’Clock News” airing on Al Arabiya, where he discussed the outcomes of the Two-State Solution Conference held at the United Nations headquarters in New York. Watch [here](#)



On September 23, 2025, Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center, appeared on Roya News in an episode titled “A Summit at a Critical Time: Between Trump’s Repositioning and Political Messages in the Middle East.” Watch [here](#)

GRC in the Media



On September 24, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on “Politics Time” with Tariq Al-Hamid, broadcast on Al Arabiya FM, where the discussion focused on recent regional developments and the momentum generated by the Two-State Solution Conference at the United Nations General Assembly. Watch [here](#)



On September 24, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on an episode of “DW Evening” airing on DW Arabic, entitled “Trump’s Meeting with Arab and Muslim Leaders: What’s New in the Gaza File?” Watch [here](#)



On September 26, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, was featured in an interview with Reuters, in an article titled “Sources: Iran Behind Hezbollah’s Call to Open a New Page with Saudi Arabia.” Read [here](#)



On September 26, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared in an episode of “Here in Riyadh,” airing on Al-Ekhbariya, entitled “Saudi Arabia: Optimism Over the End of the Gaza War Following Commitments Expressed by Trump,” in which he noted Saudi Arabia’s diplomatic efforts prompting President Trump to reconsider his support for Israel’s plans to annex the West Bank. Watch [here](#)



On September 27, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on an episode of “Al-Bud’ Al-Akhar” airing on Al Arabiya, entitled “The New York Declaration,” a Saudi-French initiative

GRC in the Media

that places the State of Palestine on the path to realization. Watch [here](#)

October 2025



On October 1, 2025, Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Cultural Program at the Gulf Research Center appeared on Al-Ekhbariya Channel, discussing the launch of the Riyadh International Book Fair 2025. Watch [here](#)



On October 28, 2025, Dr. Zaid AlFadeil, Director of the Cultural Program at the Gulf Research Center (GRC) appeared on “The Seventh Neighbor” on Iraq 24 TV, in an episode titled “From Geography Textbooks to the Reality of Neighborliness.” He discussed how education systems shape regional perceptions and emphasized the need for curricula that promote shared understanding and constructive neighborly relations. Watch [here](#)

November 2025



On November 10, 2025, Dr. Abderrezaq Gherraf, Senior Researcher at the Gulf Research Center, appeared on Algeria International Channel to comment on the election of Zohran Mamdani as Mayor of New York and its potential implications for the future of the U.S. political landscape. In his intervention, Dr. Gherraf analyzed the broader social and ideological dynamics reflected in this outcome and how it may influence policymaking and political realignments within the United States. Watch the interview [here](#)



On November 12, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, was featured in Al Jazeera 360’s program “Mawazeen” in an episode titled “Western Think Tanks: Instruments of Soft Penetration?” During

GRC in the Media

the discussion, Dr. Sager examined the influence of Western research institutions in shaping policy narratives and their role as instruments of soft power within international relations. Watch the episode [here](#)



On November 17, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated in Al Arabiya Channel's program "Sa'at Hiwar" (Hour of Dialogue) in an episode titled "What is the Significance of the Saudi Crown Prince's Visit to Washington?" In his remarks, Dr. Sager discussed the diplomatic and strategic importance of the visit, highlighting its implications for Saudi-U.S. relations and the Kingdom's broader foreign policy objectives. Watch the episode [here](#)



On November 18, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in Al Jazeera's news program "Newshour" in an episode

titled "Saudi Crown Prince's U.S. Visit." During the discussion, Dr. Sager addressed the key objectives and outcomes of HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's visit to Washington, offering insights into the broader context of Saudi-U.S. relations and their regional significance. Watch the interview [here](#)



On November 18, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on Al Jazeera Channel to comment on HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's visit to Washington and its implications for Saudi-U.S. relations. In his remarks, Dr. Sager analyzed the evolving dynamics of the bilateral relationship, emphasizing the strategic depth and mutual interests shaping current cooperation between the two nations. Watch the interview [here](#)



On November 18, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research

GRC in the Media

Center, appeared on Asharq News (Bloomberg) in the segment titled “Saudi Crown Prince in Washington.” Dr. Sager discussed the key outcomes and strategic dimensions of HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman’s visit to Washington, highlighting its significance for the long-standing Saudi-U.S. partnership and future cooperation across political and economic spheres. Watch the interview [here](#)



On November 19, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, appeared on Asharq News in the program “Akhbar Al-Sharq” as part of the channel’s special coverage of the Saudi-U.S. Investment Forum held in Washington. Watch the interview [here](#)



On November 20, 2025, Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the Gulf Research Center Foundation’s Brussels office and Director of Research at the Gulf Research

Center, was quoted in The New Arab’s recent analysis of HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman’s visit to Washington, in the article titled “F-35s, AI, and defence: MbS and the Saudi comeback in Washington.” For the full analysis, read the article [here](#).



On November 23, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated in the program “Here in Riyadh” on the Saudi Al-Ekhbariya channel in an episode titled “Regional Stability: A Saudi Priority.” During the discussion, Dr. Sager addressed Saudi Arabia’s approach to regional stability in light of current developments and the outcomes of the G20 Summit in Johannesburg, where the Saudi Foreign Minister met with his counterparts to review key regional issues. Watch the episode [here](#)



Dr. Abderrezaq Gherraf, Senior Researcher at the Gulf Research Center, appeared on Algeria International Channel to comment on the recent

GRC in the Media

formation of a new presidential body in Libya. In his intervention, Dr. Gherraf analyzed the political and institutional implications of the development and discussed its potential impact on Libya's stability and the broader regional landscape. Watch the interview [here](#).

December 2025



On December 2, 2025, Dr. Abderrezaq Gherraf, Senior Researcher at the Gulf Research Center, provided commentary on Algeria International Channel in connection with the Algiers Conference on the Criminalization of Colonialism. Watch the interview [here](#).

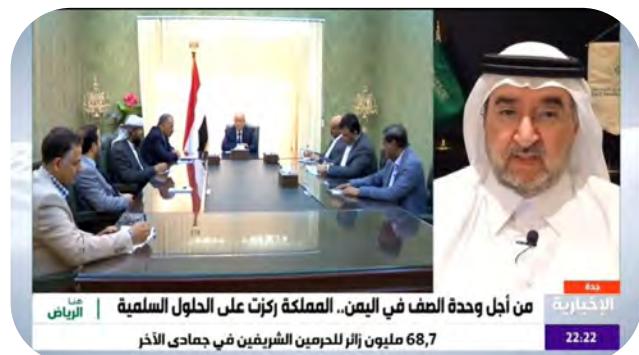


On December 12, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research

Center, spoke to Asharq News in an article titled: "Amid Concerns over Impact: 'Ideological Regulations' Threaten a Potential Gulf Exit from European Markets." Watch the interview [here](#).



On December 24, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated in the program East Circle on Asharq TV (Bloomberg), as part of the 2025 year-end coverage, discussing the evolution of Saudi Arabia–United States relations in 2025. Watch the interview [here](#).



On December 25, 2025, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated in the program Here in Riyadh on Al Ekhbariya Channel, in an episode titled: "Yemen: Avoiding 'Chaos' as a Saudi Priority." Watch the interview [here](#).

2025

ANNUAL REPORT

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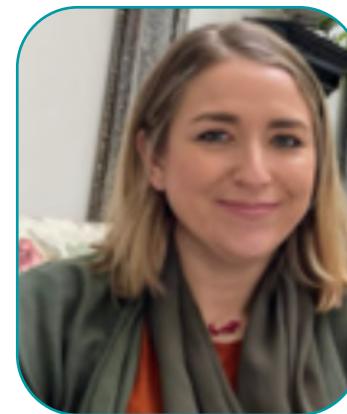
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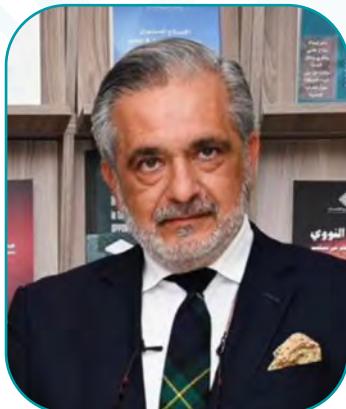
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Project Manager

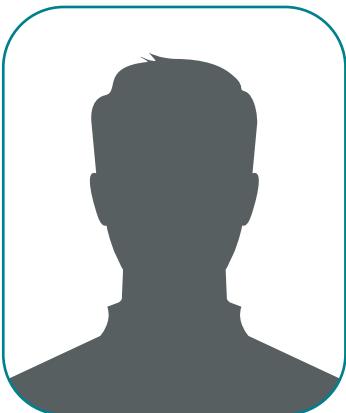
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Ambassador Joon yong Park
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Yuan Zhang
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2025

ANNUAL REPORT

GRC FINANCIALS



Gulf Research Center
Knowledge for All

The Gulf Research Center Financials

Jeddah – Geneva – Brussels – Cambridge – Dubai⁽²⁰⁰⁰⁻²⁰¹⁰⁾

For the Period of 26 Years
2000 - 2025

Financials

The GRC financials have been compiled for the period 2000-2025. The consolidated financial statement is a compilation of financial data from the following GRC entities:

Gulf Research Center Foundation, Geneva
Gulf Research Center Foundation, Brussels
Gulf Research Centre Cambridge, UK
Gulf Research Center, Jeddah
Gulf Research Center, Dubai (2000-2010)

The consolidated statement presents a summarized view of information abstracted from the annual financials of the individual GRC entities.

The primary source of GRC funding is Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, GRC Founder and Chairman.



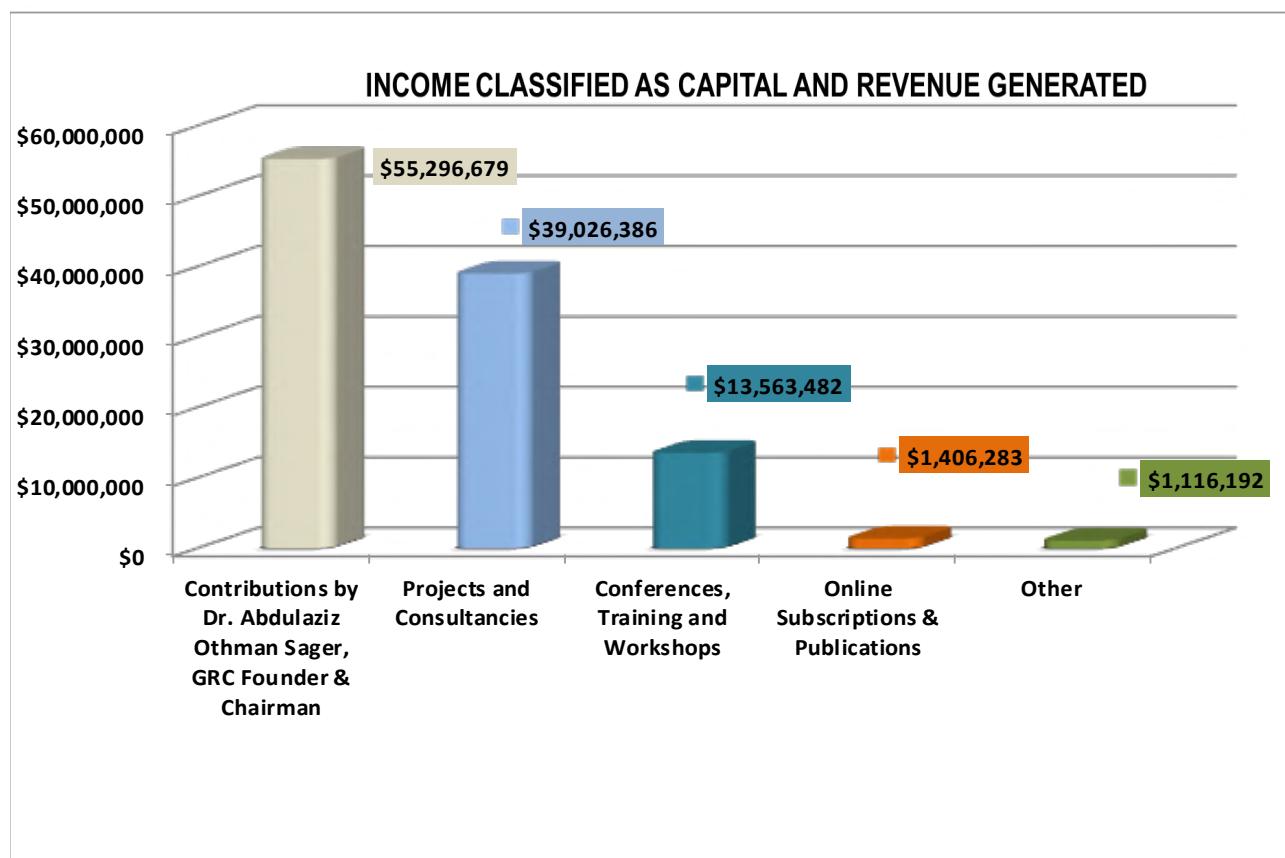
Consolidated Financial Statement of Gulf Research Center

Consolidated GRC Financial Statements -- (Unaudited)

Consolidated Statement of Activities for

Period - 01 Jan 2000 to 31 Dec 2025

Description	Total
All amounts in USD	
Revenues	
Contributions by Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Sager, GRC Founder & Chairman	\$55,296,679
Projects and Consultancies	\$39,026,386
Conferences, Training and Workshops	\$13,563,482
Online Subscriptions & Publications	\$1,406,283
Other	\$1,116,192
Total Revenue	\$110,409,022

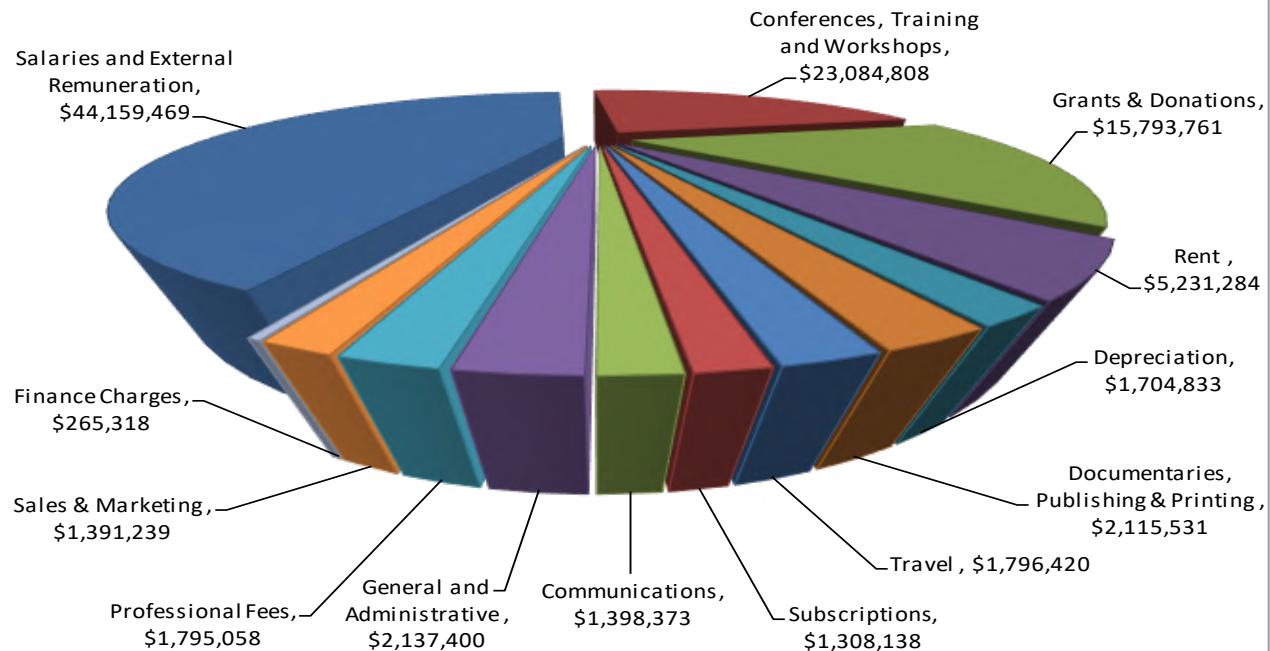


Consolidated GRC Financial Statements -- (Unaudited)

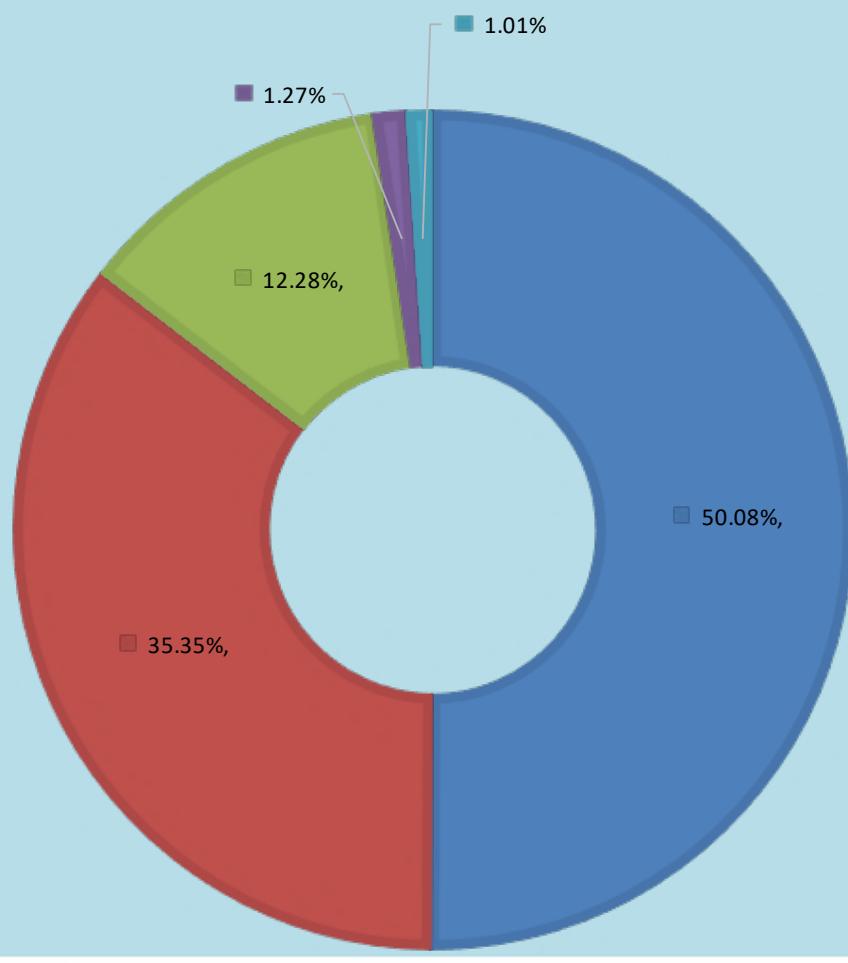
Consolidated Statement of Activities for
Period - 01 Jan 2000 to 31 Dec 2025

<u>Operating Expenses</u>	All Amount in USD
Salaries and External Remuneration	\$44,159,469
Conferences, Training and Workshops	\$23,084,808
Grants & Donations	\$15,793,761
Rent	\$5,231,284
Depreciation	\$1,704,833
Documentaries, Publishing & Printing	\$2,115,531
Travel	\$1,796,420
Subscriptions	\$1,308,138
Communications	\$1,398,373
General and Administrative	\$2,137,400
Professional Fees	\$1,795,058
Sales & Marketing	\$1,391,239
Finance Charges	\$265,318
Total Operating Expenses	\$102,181,632

EXPENSE CLASSIFICATION BASED ON CATEGORIES



SOURCES OF INCOME IN PERCENTAGE



- Contributions by Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Sager, GRC Founder & Chairman
- Projects and Consultancies
- Conferences, Training and Workshops
- Online Subscriptions & Publications
- Other

Consolidated GRC Financial Statements -- (Unaudited)

Consolidated Statements of Financial Position

01 July 2000 to 31 Dec 2025

Particulars	Total
	All amounts in USD
Assets:	
Long-term assets	
Property and equipment net	\$98,523
Total long-term assets	\$98,523
Current assets	
Trade and other receivables	\$195,425
Prepayments / advances	\$193,891
Investments	\$1,082,525
Deposits	\$554,576
Cash in hand and at bank	\$556,806
Total current assets	\$2,583,223
Total assets	\$2,681,746
Liabilities:	
Current liabilities	
Trade and other payables	\$232,143
Accrued expenses	\$101,410
Total current liabilities	\$333,553
Net Assets	\$2,348,193
Net Equities/Reserves and Surplus	\$2,348,193
Total Liabilities & Equities	\$2,681,746

NOTE:

This is a consolidated financial statement for the following GRC entities:

Gulf Research Center Foundation Geneva ----- Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels

Gulf Research Centre Cambridge ----- Gulf Research Center – Jeddah ----- Gulf Research Center – Dubai

This statement is a compilation of the financial activities of the individual GRC entities.

The primary source of GRC funding is Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, GRC Founder and Chairman

Consolidated Financial Statement of Gulf Research Center (Entity-based)

Jeddah – Geneva – Brussels – Cambridge- Dubai(2000-2010)
For the Period of 26 Years
2000 - 2025

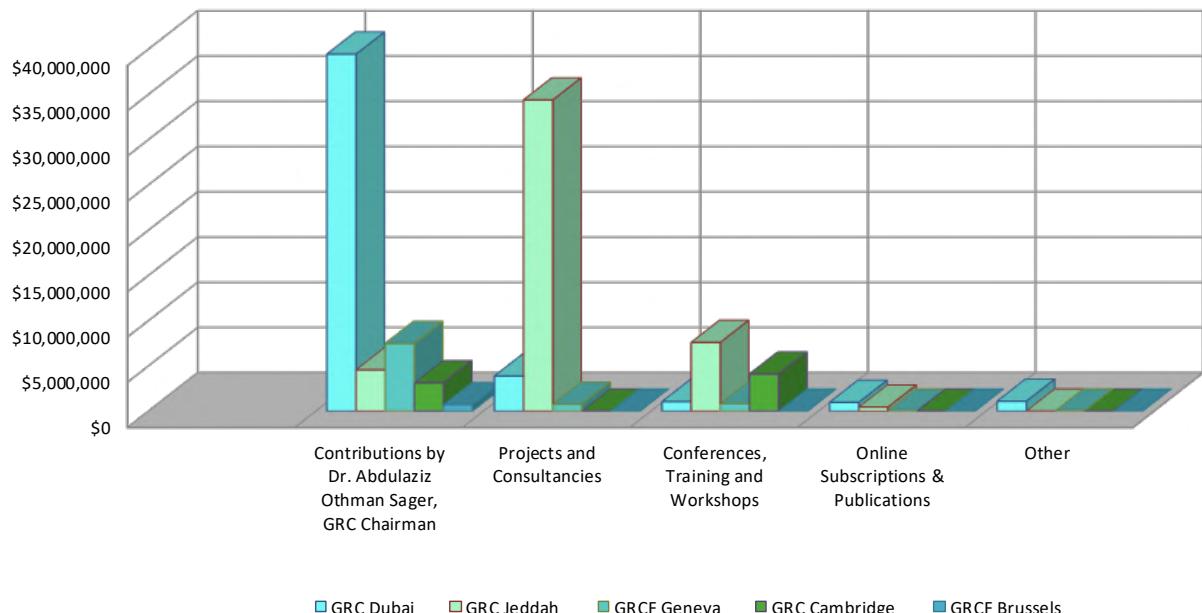
Consolidated GRC Financial Statements -- (Unaudited)

Consolidated Statement of Activities for the period

01 Jan 2000 to 31 Dec 2025

Revenues	GRC Dubai	GRC Jeddah	GRCF Geneva	GRC Cambridge	GRCF Brussels	Total
Contributions by Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Sager, GRC Chairman	\$39,435,929	\$4,562,689	\$7,471,414	\$3,119,105	\$707,542	\$55,296,679
Projects and Consultancies	\$3,874,344	\$34,382,940	\$769,101	-	-	39,026,385.50
Conferences, Training and Workshops	\$1,046,116	\$7,593,989	\$831,268	\$4,092,109	-	\$13,563,482
Online Subscriptions & Publications	\$971,040	\$435,243	-	-	-	1,406,283.10
Other	\$1,094,835	\$7,319	\$11,327	\$2,711	-	\$1,116,192
Total Revenue	\$46,422,265	\$46,982,180	\$9,083,109	\$7,213,925	\$707,542	\$110,409,022

Income Contribution to all GRC Units

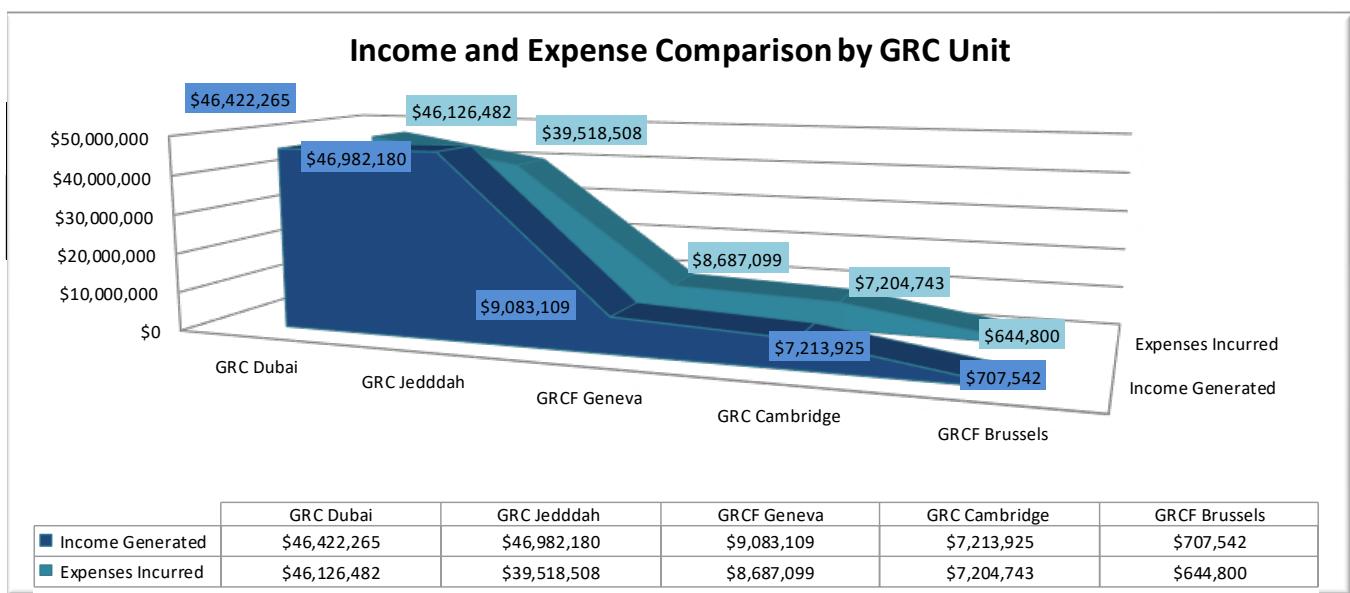


Consolidated GRC Financial Statements -- (Unaudited)

Consolidated Statement of Activities for

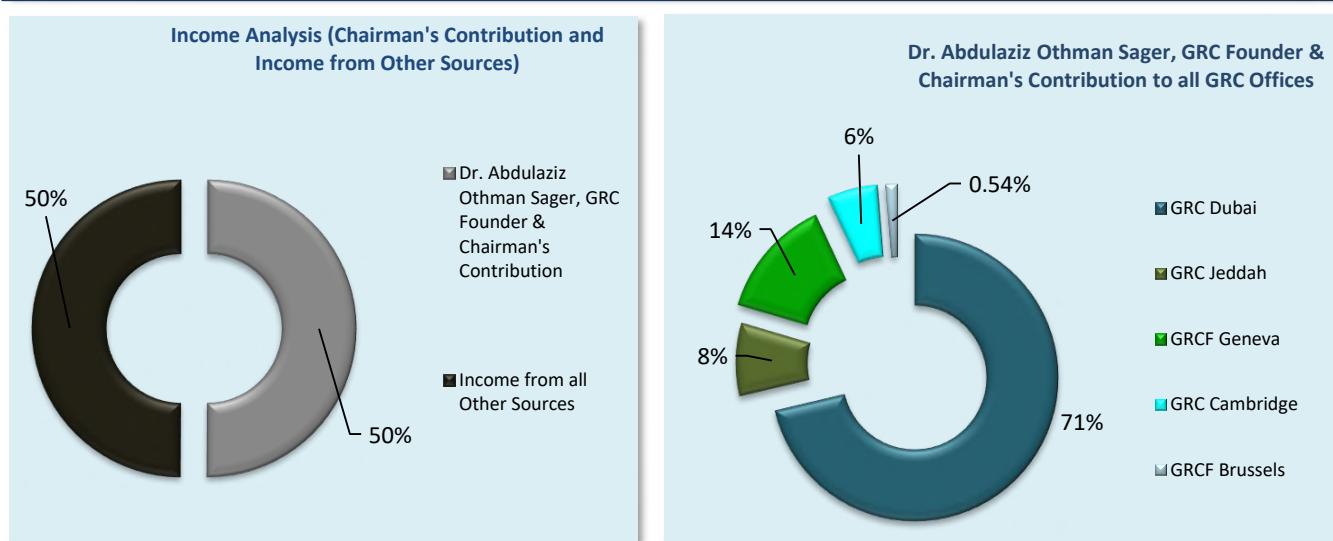
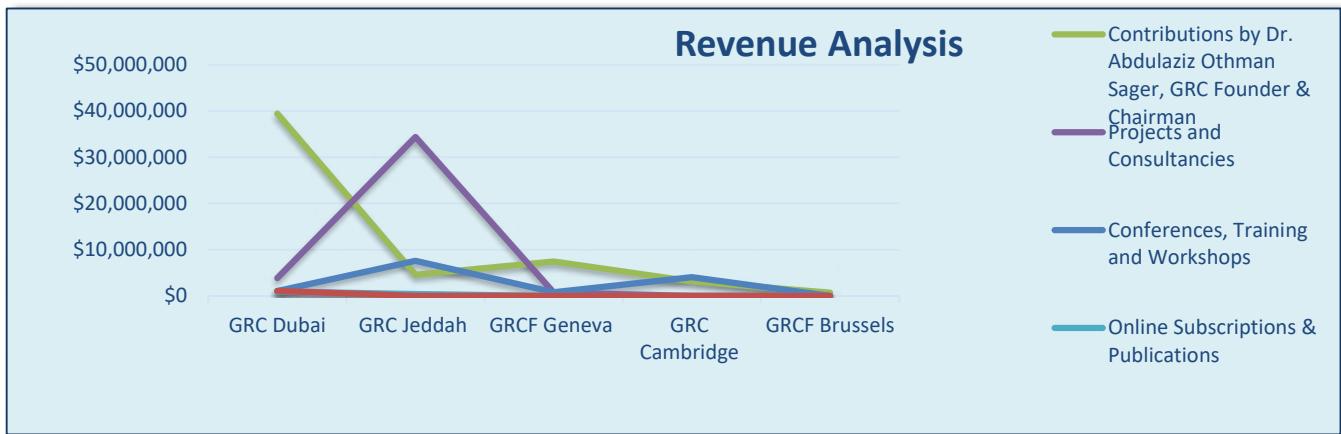
Period - 01 Jan 2000 to 31 Dec 2024

Description	GRC Dubai	GRC Jeddah	GRCF Geneva	GRC Cambridge	GRCF Brussels	Total
<u>Operating Expenses</u>						
Salaries and External Remuneration	\$25,539,451	\$12,642,920	\$5,140,714	\$421,689	\$414,695	\$44,159,469
Conferences, Training and Workshops	\$5,980,385	\$10,003,490	\$509,596	\$6,588,210	\$3,127	\$23,084,808
Grants & Donations	\$2,899,944	\$12,611,347	\$282,471	-		\$15,793,761
Rent	\$3,242,739	\$461,480	\$1,427,445	-	99,619.56	\$5,231,284
Depreciation	\$1,606,628	\$17,124	\$81,081	-		\$1,704,833
Documentaries, Publishing & Printing	\$1,481,636	\$633,895	-	-		\$2,115,531
Travel	\$952,662	\$267,538	\$558,957	-	17,262.56	\$1,796,420
Subscriptions	\$1,306,434	-	-	-	1,703.27	\$1,308,138
Communications	\$1,070,063	\$129,602	\$181,972	-	16,735.65	\$1,398,373
General and Administrative	\$698,399	\$1,183,212	\$213,749	\$22,587	\$19,453	\$2,137,400
Professional Fees	\$636,767	\$719,078	\$211,467	\$157,153	\$70,592	\$1,795,058
Sales & Marketing	\$532,781	848,819.73	-	\$9,638		\$1,391,239
Finance Charges	\$178,593	-	\$79,647	5,465.62	1,612.18	\$265,318
Total Operating Expenses	\$46,126,482	\$39,518,508	\$8,687,099	\$7,204,743	\$644,800	\$102,181,632



Revenue and Expense Analysis for all GRC Units (2000 – 2025)

Summary of total revenues and expenses for GRC Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, GRCF Geneva, Switzerland, GRCF Brussels, Belgium, and GRC Cambridge, UK & GRC Dubai, UAE during the period 2000 to 2025:





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