

A Pause for Reflection Gulf Research Center: Achievements Transcending Time



Gulf Research Center
Knowledge for All



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Gulf Research Center

As the Gulf Research Center (GRC) celebrates the 20th anniversary of its founding as an independent, non-profit think tank, it marks the celebration of many achievements in advancing independent, academic research in the Arab world and the Gulf in particular.

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Before the inception of GRC, research centers in the region were primarily governmental organizations, specialized according to the orientation of each center and the nature of the entity to which it was affiliated, whether universities, ministries, etc. Most of these centers had a specific mandate and orientation and were limited to the interests of its pre-developed mission. Nonetheless, other prestigious centers in some Arab countries did specialize in research and strategic thinking, but only in very small numbers, and they tended to focus on the affairs of one specific country, yet many challenges, dangers and needs facing these countries remain regional and therefore strategic solutions to these issues should have a regional outlook as well.

The Gulf region, in particular, was in dire need of think tanks addressing its particular issues, focusing on its challenges and threats, and providing solutions to its problems, through a local lens and from the perspective of fact-based academic research. With the beginning of the third millennium, GRC was established to carry out this mission as an independent non-profit think tank and dedicated itself to the service of the wider Gulf region, that is to say, the six GCC states in addition to Iraq, Iran and Yemen. GRC activities and interests

extend to the whole region, and even globally, given that the Gulf region affects and is affected by regional and global events.

The Gulf is a vital region with economic, military, political, religious, and cultural importance. The region came into the international spotlight in the mid-1970s as a significant economic power, then as a result of wars and crises and their various impacts on regional affairs. Tensions erupted as a consequence of the so-called Arab Spring revolutions. This led to the growing role of neighboring regional states, including Iran, Turkey and Israel, and the international and regional interventions in Iraq, Syria and Yemen, not to mention the Palestinian cause, which is a vital issue to the region. Then come the strategic balance, arms race issues and the danger of a nuclear race led by Iran and Israel in light of the power imbalance after the exit of key Arab countries from the Joint Arab Action and the corresponding expansion of the regional influence of such regional non-Arab countries. Additionally,

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the topic of energy and oil prices is a major topic in Gulf affairs that impacts the entire world, and its implications for income diversification and economic base expansion movements in Gulf countries, modification of the demographic imbalance and the nationalization of economic production and labor.

At the time of GRC's establishment, the demand for a Gulf-based multidisciplinary think tank had become urgent in order to address those needs.

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GRC was a pioneer among such think tanks. GRC celebrates numerous accomplishments throughout the last two decades since its founding.

Such achievements include writing and publishing reference books, translating global books and dictionaries, organizing periodic conferences and workshops, whether independently or in cooperation with other entities.

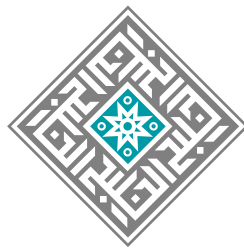
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Such efforts also include the personal activities of GRC Founder and Chairman, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, who leads a team of multilingual experts located in the various countries where the GRC has offices. Dr. Sager’s passion for the affairs of the Gulf region and his quest for solutions to issues impacting the region is incessant. This is demonstrated by his

numerous roles in multilateral dialogues at the international level, where he is often called upon to give a Gulf perspective, utilizing his vast knowledge, charismatic and enthusiastic speech and drawing upon a diverse network of experts with whom he regularly exchanges views on these important matters. This experience has allowed him to develop deep insight into many complicated matters that affect not only the Gulf and the Arab world, but international relations and geopolitics as a whole. He is an exemplary leader in the field of international relations and think tanks, having left behind the lucrative private sector to devote his career and invest his resources into his true mission and passion of advancing academic research on the Gulf. He has done this admirably and incomparably over the last two decades.

Finally, we hope that the experience of GRC and its Chairman will be replicated in all GCC States and all Arab countries.





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