



GRC Events & Activities



| BertelsmannStiftung

"Acting without Unanimity: How the EU Can Deliver in MENA"

Roundtable Discussion

In partnership between the

**Gulf Research Center Foundation Brussels and Bertelsmann
Foundation**

April 28, 2026

Brussels, Belgium



In partnership with the Bertelsmann Stiftung, the GRCF Brussels hosted a roundtable discussion on April 28 to examine the findings and policy implications of a newly released policy brief titled "Acting without Unanimity: How the EU Can Deliver in MENA", published by the European Programme of the Bertelsmann Stiftung. The discussion explored the growing challenges facing the European Union in developing a more coherent and effective approach toward the Middle East and North Africa amid internal divisions and shifting geopolitical dynamics.

The event brought together a diverse group of policymakers, diplomats, and experts from leading think tanks, the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the European External Action Service (EEAS), alongside representatives from several GCC missions and embassies in Brussels. Discussions focused on the EU's decision-making mechanisms, the challenges posed by unanimity in foreign policy, and opportunities for strengthening EU engagement with Gulf and regional partners on key political, economic, and security issues. The roundtable also served as a platform for exchanging perspectives on how enhanced EU-GCC cooperation could contribute to greater regional stability and more effective multilateral coordination.

◆ GRC Events & Activities

Gulf-Central Asia
Online Think Tank
Seminar

'Through Syrian Eyes'
Program

◆ GRC Publications

◆ GRC Programs

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

Environmental
Security and
Sustainability
Program

Cultural and Media
Program

◆ GRC Participations

◆ GRC in the Media



Gulf-Central Asia Think Tank Online Forum Strengthening Gulf-Central Asia Cooperation in a Shifting Regional Order

April 20, 2026



Gulf Research Center
Knowledge for All



This forum, organized by the Gulf Research Center (GRC) in partnership with the Institute for

Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan (ISRS), held its second edition online under the title "Strengthening Gulf-Central Asia Cooperation in a Shifting

Regional Order," building on the inaugural meeting convened in April 2025 in Tashkent.

The online seminar brought together high-level participants, including the Secretary-General of

the Gulf Cooperation Council, alongside representatives from GCC and Central Asian countries.

Discussions focused on regional security dynamics, as well as opportunities to enhance

cooperation in trade, investment, energy, and transport corridors.

Welcoming Remarks and Keynote Speaker

- **Dr. Abdulaziz Sager**, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center
- **Dr. Eldor Aripov**, Director of the Institute for Strategic and Regional Studies under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan (ISRS)
- **HE Jasem AlBudaiwi**, Secretary General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC)

Participation from various experts across Central Asia was welcomed, underscoring the significance of interregional cooperation and dialogue. The current regional context was outlined, emphasizing the ongoing conflict in the Gulf resulting from Iran-Israel-US tensions.

The importance of fostering the exchange of ideas between the Gulf and Central Asia was highlighted, along with an expressed hope to institutionalize such meetings on an annual basis to promote sustained dialogue and understanding.

A brief overview was provided of the historical relations between the Gulf and Central Asia, noting shared concerns such as terrorism and extremism, while also emphasizing the robust economic engagement between the two regions and potential for further development in their relationship. It was emphasized that the current conflict necessitates balance, prudence, and strategic foresight, including efforts to mitigate its impact on connectivity and transportation sectors. An effective response requires diplomacy that strengthens interregional cooperation and maintains strategic autonomy.

PANEL I: Regional Security Dynamics and Conflict Spillover

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



- **Mr. Omurkulov Azamat**, Expert at the Department of Strategic Security and Water Issues, National Institute for Strategic Initiatives under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic
- **Mr. Mohammed Baharoon**, Director General of the Dubai Public Policy Research Center, United Arab Emirates
- **Mr. Barotzoda Fayzullo**, Chief Expert of the Foreign Policy Department, Center for Strategic Studies under the President of Tajikistan

This session explored the free-flowing connectivity between the Gulf and Central Asia, and its

dual implications, both positive and negative, with spillovers becoming a near certainty. While

priorities might differ, strategic convergence between the two regions is growing. Despite the geographical distance between the two regions, the current aggressions of the US-Israel-Iran war

affect economic sustainability globally. Thus, the conflict has negative implications for the future trajectory of the Middle East, making de-escalation efforts vital and necessitating negotiation diplomacy, and collective security initiatives.

There are two major security concepts emerging from recent conflicts, emphasizing the global impact of regional events and the choice between polarization and integration. The discussion highlighted the importance of shared national interests rather than polarity in dealing with Iran,

particularly regarding nuclear capacity and the use of proxies. Additionally, the session emphasized the impact of regional instability on Central Asian states and the need for diplomatic solutions and enhanced cooperation between GCC and Central Asian countries, stressing the importance of addressing cross-border threats through existing collective security mechanisms.

The current conflict has also highlighted the interlinkage between security and economics. Given its central location between the two regions, any deterioration in Iran will have a direct impact on their economic prosperity and development. Possible ways to avoid polarization and unite around shared national interests were discussed, including Afghanistan's relevance in the regional context, the role of middle powers in addressing regional challenges, and the need to move beyond dialogue toward more substantive engagement. This session was moderated by Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the GRC Foundation in Brussels and GRC's Director of Research.

PANEL II: Trade, Energy, and Transport Corridors

- **Mr. Rashid Al-Mohanadi**, Vice President of the Center for International Policy Research (CIPR), State of Qatar
- **Mr. Zhandos Shaimardanov**, Director of the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- **Dr. Abdulla Al Abbasi**, Director of Energy and Environmental Studies Program, Bahrain Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies, Kingdom of Bahrain
- **Dr. Farid Shafiyev**, Chairman of the Center of Analysis of International Relations (AIR), Azerbaijan \Dr. Haila Al-Mekaimi, Acting Head of the Department of Political Science, College of Social Sciences, Kuwait University

The session noted that, relative to the economic scale of the countries and despite advancements in their ties, the relationship remains underdeveloped. This was attributed to political, logistical, and historical challenges, alongside continued dependence on Iranian ports and competition from Europe. Importantly, the panel focused on economic connectivity, with discussions centered on developing



alternative trade routes, diversifying energy sources beyond hydrocarbons, and the steps needed to be undertaken to maximize the relationship between both regions. The panel discussed practical issues related to trade, energy, and transport corridors between the Gulf and Central Asia. Speakers highlighted the need for greater operational mechanisms to follow up on agreements and emphasized the importance of stability and redundancy in connectivity routes. Key points included the challenges posed by Iran's current situation, the potential of the Middle Corridor as an alternative to maritime routes, and the importance of shifting from transactional investments to integrated value chains in energy cooperation. The extensive natural and mineral resources of Central Asia were underlined, providing opportunities for Gulf states. Together, the Gulf and Central Asia can collaborate to develop a sustainable energy architecture. As global fertilizer and food supply chains face threats amid the energy transition, Central Asia can serve as an alternative for Gulf countries by filling gaps in those supply chains. While external dependencies dominate financial outcomes, closer cooperation between the two regions can reduce reliance on them. This partnership has strong foundations; the next step is to make it more structured and consistent.

The importance of the Middle Corridor in facilitating cargo transport, especially during disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz, was emphasized. While Europe shows interest in the region, it lacks longterm vision and investment beyond trade, underscoring the consistency Gulf states can offer. Economic cooperation goes hand in hand with security, and the region's natural resources present diverse opportunities. This session was moderated by Prof. Saleh Al-Khathlan, Senior Advisor at the GRC.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- In the political sphere, there should be a focus on fostering sustainable and inclusive interregional cooperation. This involves building frameworks that ensure all participating regions benefit equitably, promoting long-term stability and mutual growth through dialogue, shared initiatives, and collaborative decision-making.
- Resilient economic architecture is essential to mitigate the impact of external conditions. Thus, strengthening economic systems will help both sides withstand global shocks, disruptions, and geopolitical uncertainties, ensuring continued growth and stability even amid external challenges.
- Diversification of investment cooperation is crucial. Currently, investments are predominantly concentrated in energy; expanding into sectors like agriculture and transportation will diversify economic ties, create new opportunities, and reduce dependency on a single sector, fostering more resilient and balanced economic relations.
- Strengthening transport infrastructure is vital to ensure uninterrupted flow and connection. Developing robust transport corridors and logistics networks will facilitate smoother movement of goods and people, enhancing regional integration and economic efficiency.
- Bilateral working platforms should be established to promote ongoing dialogue and joint initiatives and will serve as forums for resolving issues, coordinating projects, and developing cooperative strategies across various sectors.
- Several practical directions for energy investment are proposed:
 - Investing in hydro-energy to harness renewable water resources.
 - Expanding renewable energy sources such as solar and wind to diversify energy supplies.
 - Creating joint investment platforms and funds dedicated to energy projects to mobilize resources and enable sustainable, long-term development.



- Promoting digitalization and energy-efficiency projects to optimize resource use.
- Implementing a multi-corridor strategy is critical. This involves establishing alternative trade routes, integrating aerial, maritime, and land options, and utilizing existing railway infrastructure passing through Pakistan and Afghanistan. For example, leveraging Qatar Airways cargo transport services can also enhance connectivity and trade resilience.
- Ongoing investments in regional stability in Syria and Afghanistan are vital to ensure trade security and economic prosperity.
- Financial de-risking mechanisms, such as insurance and guarantees, are of strategic importance. These tools can encourage investment by reducing risks and providing confidence to investors and stakeholders, especially in times of conflict.
- In addition, standardizing regulations related to hydrogen, energy, and minerals is essential as harmonized policies will facilitate cross-border cooperation, streamline project development, and attract investment in emerging sectors.
- There is also a recognized need to depoliticize economic trade routes, such as the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). Removing political barriers will enhance trade efficiency, foster economic integration, and promote regional stability.
- Finally, having a well-functioning platform for dialogue and cooperation is crucial as it will enable effective coordination, knowledge sharing, and joint action among regional stakeholders.





"Through Syrian Eyes" Film Program

March 30, 2026

Damascus, Syria



The Gulf Research Center, in collaboration with the Taqaddum Center for Dialogue, Development, and Peacebuilding, has released a new episode of the "Through Syrian Eyes" program, titled: "The Agricultural Sector in Syria: Prospects for Development Amid Ongoing Challenges."

The episode featured **His Excellency Dr. Amjad Badr, Minister of Agriculture of the Syrian Arab Republic**. It explored the current state of Syria's agricultural sector, the challenges resulting from years of conflict, and

the Ministry's plans to support farmers, ensure the provision of fertilizers and fuel, and strengthen food security—particularly with regard to wheat production. The discussion also highlighted strategic priorities for advancing agricultural investment and increasing exports by 2030.

The program is presented by Professor Abdullah Al-Ghadawi, Director of the Taqaddum Center for Dialogue, Development, and Peacebuilding.

You can watch the full episode [here](#)

The Gulf Research Center (GRC) continues to provide in-depth analysis and thought leadership on key regional and global developments. Our latest publications in March cover a wide range of topics, from U.S. foreign policy under Trump's second term to Saudi Arabia's evolving diplomatic role in global affairs. We also explore sustainable development in the Gulf, Russia's repositioning in the Middle East, and Gulf relations with Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

Below are some of our most recent works:

Commentary & Analyses



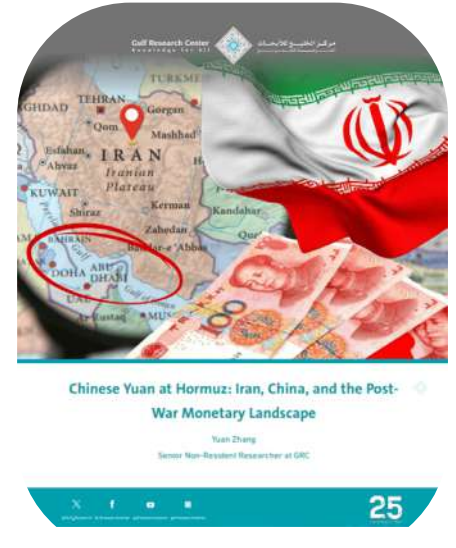
Can Gulf Gas be Replaced? Alternative Options and Challenges

Dr. Naji Abi-Aad



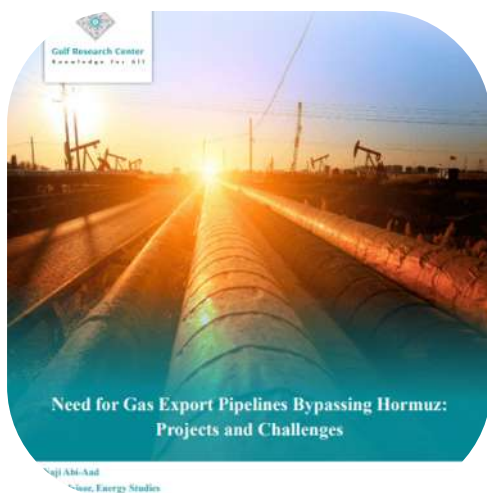
The EU Between Fractured Responses, Security Recalibration, and Realignment Strategies

Houda Barroug



Chinese Yuan at Hormuz: Iran, China, and the PostWar Monetary Landscape

Yuan Zhang



Need for Gas Export Pipelines Bypassing Hormuz: Projects and Challenges

Dr. Naji Abi-Aad



Operation Epic Fury Ceasefire: Ten Action Points for Water Crisis Management

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf



GCC SADC Relations

Michael W. Wilson

Commentary & Analyses



Gulf Research Center
Knowledge for All

How Latin America Is Responding to the US-Israel-Iran War

Hannan Alghamdi
April 2026



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Gulf Research Center
Knowledge for All

The Nordic Stance on the U.S.-Israel-Iran War

Amnah Mosly
April 2026



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Dr. Naji Abi-Aad
Senior Advisor, Energy Studies
Gulf Research Center

Even with the Reopening of Hormuz: More Oil Export Pipelines are Urgently Needed in the Gulf



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How Latin America Is Responding to the US-Israel-Iran War

Hannan Alghamdi

The Nordic Stance on the U.S.-Israel-Iran War

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Even with the Reopening of Hormuz: More Oil Export Pipelines are Urgently Needed in the Gulf

Dr. Naji Abi-Aad

Selected Arabic Articles



مركز الخليج للأبحاث
Gulf Research Center

هل تدعم روسيا الحرس الثوري؟

أ.د. صالح بن محمد الخثلان
مستشار أول
مركز الخليج للأبحاث



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مركز الخليج للأبحاث
Gulf Research Center

الخليج وإيران بعد الحرب: الاحتواء السلبي خيار استراتيجي

أ.د. صالح بن محمد الخثلان
مستشار أول
مركز الخليج للأبحاث

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مركز الخليج للأبحاث
Gulf Research Center

من الاستنزاف إلى الاقتحام البري:

قراءة إستراتيجية في خيار الإنزال الجوي داخل إيران



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Does Russia Support the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps?

Prof. Saleh Mohammed Al Khathlan

The Gulf and Iran After the War. Negative Containment as a Strategic Option

Prof. Saleh Mohammed Al Khathlan

From Attrition to Ground Incursion: A Strategic Analysis of the Airborne Landing Option Inside Iran

Gulf Research Center

Selected Arabic Articles



The Naval Forces of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard: Structure, Doctrine, and the Function of Maritime Denial

Naval Admiral Staff (Retd) Abdullah Jaber AlZaidi

How Did the World Avoid the Nuclear Taboo? A Reading of a Turning Point: From Vance's Threat to the Ceasefire

Gulf Research Center

Hormuz: "The Knot and the Solution" How the Strait Revived Geopolitics in Shaping the Outcomes of Wars

Dr. Abderrezzaq Gherraf



The Security Equation with the United States and the Enhancement of Gulf Strategic Autonomy

Rear Admiral (Retd) Eng. Saleh Sunaydih Alotaibi Senior Advisor, Defense and Security Studies

An Endless War and Strategic Doubts in an Age of Power. How Leading Israeli Think Tanks and Experts Read the War with Iran and Its Unresolved Trajectory

Mohammad S. Alzou'bi

U.S. Military Bases in the Gulf and the Advantages of Granting Gulf States Major Non-NATO Ally Status

Prof. Joudat Bahgat



Selected Arabic Articles



The Gulf Between Dependence and Hedging: From Alliance Lessons to the Engineering of Balance

Gulf Research Center



The Need for Gas Export Pipelines Beyond the Strait of Hormuz: Projects and Challenges

Dr. Naji Abi-Aad



The Failure of U.S.-Iran Negotiations in Islamabad (April 2026): From De-escalation Management to the Reproduction of Conflict

Yousef Kamil Khattab



Reshaping the Middle East or Reproducing Conflict? A Strategic Assessment of the War on Iran and Its Regional Implications

Gulf Research Center



Hormuz Blockade: Structural Implications for the International System

Mohammad S. Alzou'bi



Iran and Washington in Islamabad... Managing the Conflict, Not Resolving It

Dr. Houda Raouf

Selected Arabic Articles



The Truce: End of the Conflict or a Stop in an Ongoing Cycle? The Gap Between U.S. Interests and the Israeli Vision in the Middle East

Gulf Research Center



The Logic of the Dominant Superpower. Why Are America's Rivals Unable to Match Its Unconstrained Exercise of Power?

Dr. Abdurreszaq Gherraf



An Analytical Reading of the U.S.-Israeli War on Iran

Rear Admiral (Retd) Eng. Saleh Sunaydih Alotaibi



Even with the Reopening of Hormuz - More Oil Export Pipelines are Urgently Needed in the Gulf

Dr. Naji Abi-Aad



Strait of Hormuz as a Strategic Bargaining Tool: From a Maritime Chokepoint to Managing Escalation Under Pressure

Naval Admiral Staff (Retd) Abdullah Jaber AlZaidi



GCC States and Iran After the War: Formulating an Effective Strategy Under the Dominance of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps

Prof. Saleh Mohammed Al Khatlan

Selected Arabic Articles



After the Last Shot Is Fired: The World's Responsibilities in an Era of a Fragile Truce

Gulf Research Center



U.S - GCC Relations – 2026
Gulf Research Center



Finland - GCC Relations 2026
Gulf Research Center

Araa Magazine



Issue 220: (Security of Straits and Maritime Passages: Between Stabilizing Security and Escalating Crises)

To download the PDF version via the following link:

<https://araa.sa/d220.html>

To browse the issue online via the following link:

<https://araa.sa/w220.html>



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



GLMM

The Gulf Labour Markets, Migration, and Population (GLMM) Programme is an international independent, non-partisan, non-profit programme established in 2010 and 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. Visit the website [here](#).

Highly Skilled Migration to the Gulf States: Project and Publications

For two years, GLMM has been engaged in the project **Highly Skilled Migration to the Gulf States: How Do GCC Countries Fare in the Global Competition for Talent?** For a detailed description of the project, click [here](#).

The second phase of the project focused on **Transnational Migration Patterns of Non-Gulf Highly Skilled Workers from the GCC to Third Countries in the EU and North America, and Back**. The thirteen policy briefs and a bibliography will be published between the end of March and May 2026.

A second batch of two policy briefs is available here:

- [Sharique Umar: Migration Policy Reforms and Mobility Decision-Making High-Skilled Second-Generation Residents in Qatar, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia – Policy Brief No. 3](#)

- [Areej Jamal, Nasra M. Shah, Richa Shivakoti: Strategic Pathways for Highly Skilled South Asian Migrants in Saudi Arabia's Knowledge Economy – Policy Brief No. 4](#)

The first batch, which was previously published is available here:

- [Mouawiya AlAwad and Froilan Malit Jr: Beyond the Gulf: Rethinking Stepwise Migration, Citizenship Penalty, and Filipino Nurses in the UAE – Policy Brief No. 1](#)
- [Gennaro Errichiello: Second Generation Highly Skilled Pakistanis in Dubai Drivers of Secondary Migration – Policy Brief No. 2](#)

On the **impact of the US-Israel-Iran war on labour markets and migration**, GLMM has published:

- [Mohammad Amaan Siddiqui: The Iran War and the Noncitizen Question in the GCC: Policy Lessons and Reform Pathways Beyond Talent Attraction](#)
- [Françoise De Bel-Air: A Gulf Crisis Is Also a Migrant Crisis, GLMM/GRC Factsheet n°14, April 2026](#)

Earlier the first Policy Brief was published:

- [Françoise De Bel-Air: Conflict, Demographic Change, and Labor Restructuring in the GCC: Possible Effects of the 2026 War on Iran](#)

Recently, Françoise De Bel-Air published:

"Labour and migration policy reforms in the UAE: Filipino migrants at a crossroads," in Hosoda, N.; Watanabe, A. and Ishii, M. (Eds). *Filipino Migration to the United Arab Emirates: Trajectories of Navigating Permanent Temporariness*, Routledge/Taylor and Francis.



Data

For over a decade, GLMM has gathered, analysed, and republished official data related to labour and migration from multiple sources of all six GCC states. The database contains more than 1,100 tables. Every week, new data is added to the database.

Recently Published Data

- [Qatar: Employed population \(15 years and above\) by nationality \(Qatari/non-Qatari\) \(2006-2024\)](#)
- [Qatar: Employed population \(15 years and above\) by nationality \(Qatari/non-Qatari\) and sex \(2006-2024\)](#)
- [GCC: Population employed in the private sector and percentage of non-nationals in the sector in GCC countries \(2015-2024\)](#)
- [Qatar: Population aged 15 and above by nationality \(Qatari/non-Qatari\), sex and relation to labour force \(2024\)](#)
- [Qatar: Estimates of total population by sex and annual demographic growth rates \(1986-2024\)](#)
- [Qatar: Estimates of total population and annual demographic growth rates \(1986-2024\)](#)
- [GCC: Total populations in the six GCC states \(mid-year figures, 2010-2024\)](#)
- [GCC: Total population and percentage of nationals and non-nationals in GCC countries \(national statistics, mid-2024\)](#)

- [GCC: Total population and percentage of nationals and non-nationals in GCC countries, by sex \(national statistics, mid-2024\)](#)
- [Kuwait: Population by nationality \(Kuwaiti/non-Kuwaiti\) and sex \(1990-2024\)](#)
- [GCC: Foreign populations in the six GCC states \(mid-year figures, 2010-2024\)](#)
- [GCC: National populations in the six GCC states \(mid-year figures, 2010-2024\)](#)

GCC Regional Tables

GLMM constructs unique GCC regional tables based exclusively on the official country data [here](#).

All Country Tables

- [Bahrain](#)
- [Kuwait](#)
- [Oman](#)
- [Qatar](#)
- [Saudi Arabia](#)
- [UAE](#)

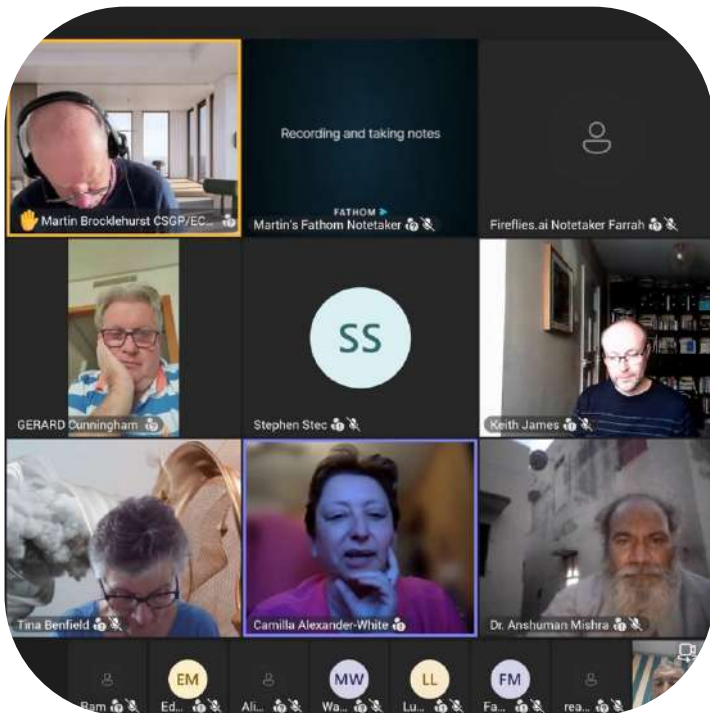
Contact: Mr. Imco Brouwer, GLMM Managing Director:
imco.brouwer@grc.net



Environmental Security and Sustainability Program

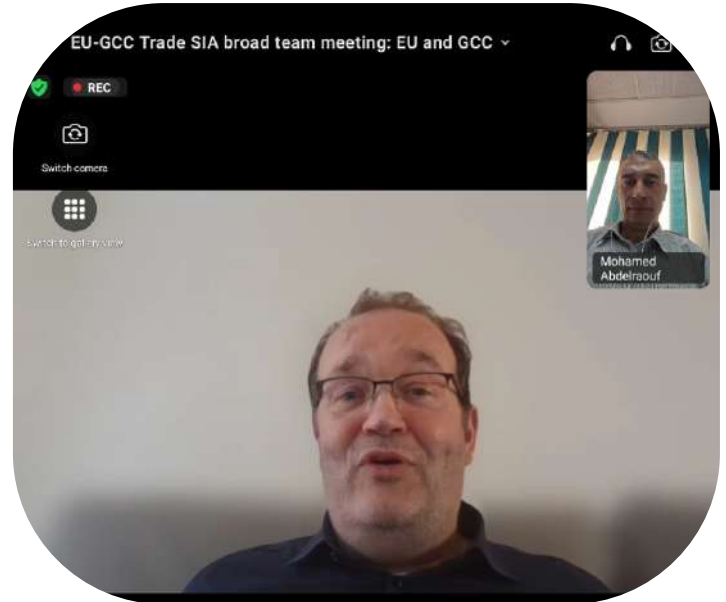
7 April 2026

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the monthly teleconference of the Science and Technology Major Group at UNEP. The call focused on UNEA 7 resolution follow-up, forming various scientific task forces within science and technology, such as the Solar Radiation Modification Task Force, ISP for Chemicals, Waste and Pollution Task Force, and the Funding Task Force, etc.



9 April 2026

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in a virtual call on the EU-GCC Trade Sustainable Impact Assessment (SIA) Project. The environmental program supports the environmental pillar of the project. The meeting served to give a brief overview of the roles and responsibilities of each of the pillar leaders, as well as to explain the project plan for 2026-2027.



13 April 2026

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center, participated in the monthly telecall of UNEP Major Groups. The call focused on UNEA 7 evaluation and resolution follow-up, MGFC monthly meetings, and planned webinars, as well as discussed the Major Groups plan for the intersessional period during 2026.

16 April 2026

As part of GRC's engagement with The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's project on climate change in the MENA region, Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program Director at the Gulf Research Center participated in a podcast by the Carnegie-Middle East program where he was interviewed by Dr. Amr Hamzawy, head of the Carnegie- Middle East program, on the environmental impacts of the US-Israel-Iran War on environmental resources in the region, as well as its implications on air, water, biodiversity, and climate change and what needs to be done to overcome the many negative environmental impacts.



Cultural & Media Program



مختبر الحوار بمركز الخليج للأبحاث
Gulf Research Center Dialogue Lab



GRC PODCAST
بودكاست مركز الخليج للأبحاث

Publications

12 April 2026



A cultural paper prepared by Dr. Nadia Saad Al-Din, researcher and lecturer in Political Science and Managing Editor at Al-Ghad newspaper, titled: "The Zionist Messianic Doctrine." Read the full paper [here](#).

episode of the program "Araa" titled: "The Importance of Maritime Security and the Strategy of Military Amphibious Operations." Watch the full episode [here](#).



20 April 2026



A cultural paper prepared by Dr. Zaid Alfadeil, Director of the Cultural and Media Program at the Gulf Research Center, titled: "The New Middle East: A Renewed Narrative." Read the full paper [here](#).

14 April 2026



GRC Podcast Activities

5 April 2026

The Gulf Research Center Podcast hosted Rear Admiral (Ret.) Abdullah Al-Zaidi, Senior Advisor for Defense and Security Studies at the Gulf Research Center, in an

"Wamda" episode on the Gulf Research Center Podcast titled: "The Strait of Hormuz: The Gateway to the Global Economy." Watch the full episode [here](#).



16 April 2026



The Gulf Research Center Podcast hosted Dr. Naji Abi-Aad, Senior Advisor for Energy Studies at the Gulf Research Center, in an episode of the program "Araa" titled: "Alternatives to the Strait of Hormuz: Projects and Challenges." Watch the full episode [here](#).

19 April 2026



The Gulf Research Center Podcast hosted Rear Admiral (Ret.) Eng. Saleh bin Sunaidah Al-Otaibi, Senior Advisor for Defense and Security Studies at the Gulf Research Center, in an episode of the program "Araa" titled: "From Electronic Warfare to Cyber Warfare." Watch the full episode [here](#).

مركز الخليج للأبحاث
الدراسات والبحوث

البرنامج الثقافي

بودكاست مختبر الحوار
بودكاست تفاصيل
بودكاست تجارب دبلوماسية
بودكاست آراء
عن المركز
برنامج ومضة

بودكاست مركز الخليج للأبحاث
Gulf Research Center Podcast

أحدث الحلقات

تجارب دبلوماسية | GRC Podcast

دوة الطاولة المستديرة | GRC Podcast

أبرز المضائق البحرية | GRC Podcast

من الحرب على إيران | GRC Podcast

حسان طيب || تفاصيل | GRC Podcast

برامج بودكاست مركز الخليج للأبحاث

موضة

مختبر الحوار بمركز الخليج للأبحاث
Gulf Research Center Dialogue Lab

تفاصيل

تجارب دبلوماسية

مركز الخليج للأبحاث



17 April 2026



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated as a speaker in a panel session titled "Clash of Hypocrisies and the Future of Global Order," at the Global Progressive Mobilization summit. The session took place in Barcelona on April 17, 2026. The panel featured distinguished speakers, including: H.E. José Manuel Albares Bueno, Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, Kingdom of Spain; H.E. Tanja Fajon, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Republic of Slovenia; Ms. Susana Malcorra, President of GWL Voices for Change and Inclusion, Former Foreign Minister of Argentina; Mr. Pedro Abramovay, Vice President for Programs, Open Society Foundations (OSF). During the session, Dr. Sager addressed the evolving structures of the global order and examined the implications of its fragmentation, particularly for the Middle East. He highlighted ongoing conflict zones across the region and underscored the growing role of violent non-state actors in shaping regional dynamics.

15 April 2026



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in an online seminar titled "Developments in the Strait of Hormuz: Between Geography and Global Energy Security," organized by the Bahrain Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies

(Derasat) held on April 15, 2026, with the participation of a distinguished group of experts and researchers. Dr. Sager's intervention focused on two main themes: the immediate repercussions of the crisis on global energy markets and its implications for the credibility of U.S. deterrence and the strategic orientations of Gulf states. He also explored potential scenarios for the next phase, particularly with regard to the future of energy security and the regional balance of power in light of developments related to the Strait of Hormuz.

14 April 2026



Dr. John Sfakianakis, GRC's Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research, contributed to the Council of Councils Global Perspectives article examining what the economic fallout from the Iran war reveals about shifting vulnerabilities in the international system. Read the full edition [here](#).

9 April 2026



Dr. Christian Koch, Executive Manager of the GRCFB, participated in a workshop organized by the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) entitled "View from the Gulf: Strategic Recalibration, Economic Exposure and EU/GCC Coopetition." Dr. Koch gave an initial input followed by engagement in the discussion. The workshop brought together representatives of the different EU institutions, in particular the European Council and the European External Action Service (EEAS).

9 April 2026



Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the Gulf Research Center (GRC),



participated as a speaker in a webinar organized by the Atlantic Council. Watch the full webinar [here](#).

9 April 2026



Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated as a speaker in a webinar organized by the National Council on US-Arab Relations titled "The Escalation/Exit Paradox: Managing the US-Israel-Iran War at the Tipping Point." Watch the full webinar [here](#).

6 April 2026



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, met with H.E. Mr. Shinchul Kang, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Mr. DaeHwan Kim, Minister Counsellor at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Saudi Arabia, along with their accompanying

delegation, at the GRC's office in Riyadh on April 6, 2026. During the meeting, discussions focused on areas of mutual interest and the latest developments in the region.

2 April 2026



Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the Gulf Research Center, participated as a speaker in a webinar organized by the Middle East Programme at Chatham House titled "How is the US-Israel war on Iran impacting energy and the global economy?" The discussion examined the war's implications for global energy markets, trade flows, and broader economic stability. Watch the full webinar [here](#).

2 April 2026



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, met with H.E. Mr. Oskar Wüstinger, Ambassador of Austria to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at the GRC's office in Riyadh on April 2, 2026. During the meeting, both sides discussed areas of mutual interest and the latest regional developments.



Access all the GRC's interviews on our YouTube channel [here](#)



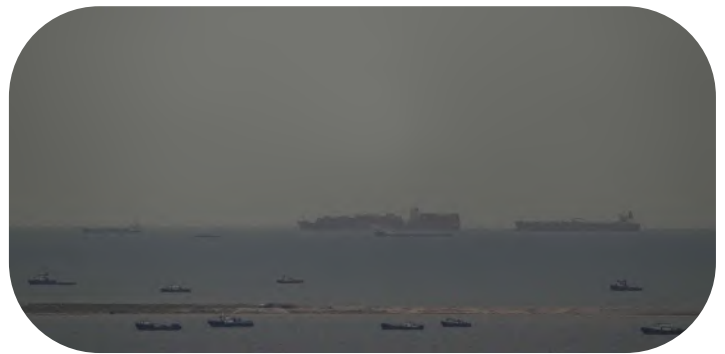
On 1 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated on Al Jazeera as part of the special coverage on the latest developments and impacts of the ongoing war in the region. Watch the full interview [here](#).



On 2 April 2026, Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the Gulf Research Center, participated as a speaker in a webinar organized by the Middle East Programme at Chatham House, titled "How is the US–Israel war on Iran impacting energy and the global economy?" examining its implications for global energy markets, trade flows, and broader economic stability. Watch the full webinar [here](#).



On 3 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, was quoted in an article by The Christian Science Monitor titled "Saudi Arabia hopes diplomacy works with Iran. It's also preparing for a military response," highlighting that while Saudi Arabia is unlikely to abandon diplomacy, it increasingly emphasizes the need for credible deterrence and stronger defense capabilities. Read the full piece here: <https://csmonitor.com/World/Middle-East/2026/0401/saudi-arabia-military-iran-war>.



On 2 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, was quoted in an article by The New York Times titled "A Bid to Use Force to Open Strait of Hormuz Hits Roadblocks at U.N. Security Council," emphasizing that any ceasefire must address Iran's capabilities to target Gulf states and control maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz. Read the full piece here: <https://nytimes.com/2026/04/02/world/middleeast/arab-iran-hormuz-force.html?rsrc=flt&smid=url-share>.



On 3 April 2026, Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the Gulf Research Center, participated in an interview with News18 as part of "The Right Stand" program. Watch the full interview here: <https://youtu.be/MWO2wgWi4HA>.



On 3 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated on Al Jazeera Mubasher as part of the special coverage on the latest developments and impacts of the ongoing war in the region. Watch the full segment here: <https://youtu.be/iwVN9c84dRs>.



On 3 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated on Al Arabiya as part of the special coverage on the latest developments and impacts of the ongoing war in the region, discussing remarks by former Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif calling for a "comprehensive" peace with the United States through mutual concessions. Watch the full segment here: <https://youtu.be/dTOQDg5jb0E>.



On 5 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated on One News as part of the special coverage on the US-Israeli war on Iran, discussing the 6 April deadline set by Donald Trump. Watch the full segment here: https://youtu.be/Dws_U26Zpeg.



On 5 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated on Kuwait News TV in the program "With Steadfastness and Determination," in an episode titled "Washington and Tehran: A Potential Agreement or Escalation Dragging the Region into the Unknown," as part of the special coverage on the ongoing war in the region. Watch the full segment here: <https://youtu.be/zyiJGt4fq7U>.



On 8 April 2026, Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the Gulf Research Center, participated in an interview with CNBC on "Access Middle East." Watch the full interview here: <https://youtu.be/qieXcrrvL08E>.



On 8 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated in an interview with Al Arabiya English, alongside Mujtaba Fardosi Bor, Iranian Ambassador to Egypt. Watch the full interview here: https://youtu.be/9FM4uYbVWFM?si=3aLUFLK1_COoCmtQ.



On 9 April 2026, Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the Gulf Research Center, participated as a speaker in a webinar organized by the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations titled "The Escalation/Exit Paradox: Managing the US-Israel-Iran War at the Tipping Point." ([National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations](#)) Watch the full webinar here: <https://youtu.be/Hvc7iiKXwGA>.



On 9 April 2026, Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the Gulf Research Center, participated as a speaker in a webinar organized by the Atlantic Council titled "IMEC During a Time of War." Watch the full webinar here: <https://youtu.be/G4-VEPRpVOI>.

the war with Iran, discussing the announcement of a ceasefire between the United States and Iran. Watch the full segment here: <https://youtu.be/r5udjbaCJDI>.



On 10 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated on Al Arabiya, discussing the anticipated US-Iran negotiations in Pakistan, emphasizing the need to halt military operations and attacks on Gulf states with credible guarantees, the importance of maritime security and keeping the Strait of Hormuz open, enhanced coordination among key regional powers, and strengthened collective Gulf defense and security cooperation. Watch the full segment here: <https://youtu.be/rxF2f9zGTDw>.



On 9 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated in an interview with LBC News, speaking with Steve Holden.

Listen to the full interview here: <https://youtu.be/YBnH5KWZn80?si=b6xuwfoctGpP4CG3>.



On 9 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated on Asharq News as part of the special coverage on



On 12 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated on Al Jazeera 2 in the program "Al Muqabala," in an episode titled "Gulf Security after Iran's Attacks." Watch the full episode here: <https://aljazeera360.com/video/944551?seriesId=2210&seasonId=29677>.



On 13 April 2026, Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist at the Gulf Research Center, participated in an interview on RT India, discussing the implications of the unfolding regional crisis amid heightened uncertainty over the future of the Strait of Hormuz. Watch the full interview here: <https://youtu.be/5zDymcGhTeA0>

On 13 April 2026, Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist at the Gulf Research Center, participated in an interview on Al Jazeera, discussing the economic and energy implications of the unfolding regional crisis amid heightened uncertainty over the future of the Strait of Hormuz. Watch the full interview here: <https://youtu.be/QeNQ-EiMsbQ>.



On 13 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated on Al Arabiya, discussing the United States' announcement of a naval blockade on Iranian ports. Watch the full segment here: <https://youtu.be/RwMb1hGRB8E>.



On 14 April 2026, Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the Gulf Research Center, participated on BBC World Service (Newshour), discussing the economic and energy implications of the US blockade and rising tensions in the Strait of Hormuz, highlighting risks to global markets and supply chains. Watch the full interview here: <https://youtu.be/eDr79Y1Bfb0>.



On 14 April 2026, Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the Gulf Research Center, participated in an interview with LBC News, speaking with Steve Holden. Listen to the full interview here: <https://youtu.be/3aHiX4WQXrs0>





On 15 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated on Al Jadeed TV in the segment "Al Mashhad Al Arabi," discussing the Saudi-Pakistani strategic defense agreement and the resumption of US-Iran negotiations. Watch the full segment here: <https://youtu.be/-GZJWiV-w-A>.



On 15 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated in the program "Dairat Al Sharq" on Asharq TV (Bloomberg), discussing the anticipated round of US-Iran talks amid economic pressures and military threats. Watch the full segment here: <https://youtu.be/98BgHcKeSA8>.



On 15 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated on TRT Arabi, discussing the intensive diplomatic tour launched by Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif across Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, within efforts to pave the way for a potential second round of US-Iran talks and explore new avenues for strategic partnerships. Watch the full segment here: <https://youtu.be/EADYRmv491E>.



On 20 April 2026, Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the Gulf Research Center, participated in an interview with Bloomberg. Watch the full interview here: https://youtu.be/To_tsG9M_bo.



On 20 April 2026, Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the Gulf Research Center, participated in an interview with BBC News. Watch the full interview here: <https://youtu.be/D1WouAsJ11w>.



On 22 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated in the fourth episode of the "Sout Al Fikr" podcast organized by Bahrain Center for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (Derasat), discussing the future of the region, shifting power balances, and Gulf strategic equilibrium. Watch the full episode here: <https://youtu.be/HhGzbW524NQ?si=cGJOJduMLWsytrmm>.



On 28 April 2026, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Founder and Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated on Al Arabiya as part of the special coverage of the extraordinary GCC consultative summit in Jeddah. Watch the full segment here: <https://youtu.be/CnpRGxTHxkU>.



On 28 April 2026, Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the Gulf Research Center, participated in an interview with BBC News. Watch the full interview here: <https://youtu.be/Z9l40x4qRB8>.



On 29 April 2026, Dr. John Sfakianakis, Chief Economist and Head of Economic Research at the Gulf Research Center, participated as a speaker in a webinar organized by the National Council on US-Arab Relations titled "Beyond the Truce: The Fragile US-Iran Ceasefire, Blockades, Economic Effects, and Peace Efforts." (X (formerly Twitter)). Watch the webinar here: <https://youtube.com/watch?v=hSsAFrDzmo4>.



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