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# Gulf Research Center Newsletter

Knowledge For All

Published by GRC

Issue no. 4 / January 2005

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## 'Gulf could be first step toward Middle East WMD-free zone'



The two-day workshop (Dec. 11-12) – Voices from the region: The Gulf as a Weapons of Mass Destruction-Free Zone (WMDFFZ) – ended with the understanding that such a project is intimately linked to the creation of a broader regional system that would promote mutual security and cooperation.

The event – based on the growing sentiment in the region for creating a WMDFFZ – was held under the auspices of GRC, and considered the experiences of other regions in creating such free zones, especially in Asia, Latin America and Africa.

The participants – regional, European, Latin American and South Asian experts – agreed that the Gulf, and, more broadly the Middle East, is a unique region which will require its own approaches.

GRC Chairman Abdulaziz Sager said: “The center’s vision is simple, logical and legitimate. It is focused, and revolves on promoting one objective – the basic right of the people in the Gulf region (six GCC countries, Iraq, Iran and Yemen) to live in a stable, peaceful and secure environment. We believe that everyone in this region and beyond shares our aspiration.

“We cannot achieve security or be part of an agreed regional security regime without first accepting and endorsing the basic principle of prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling, and the use of WMD in the region,” Sager added.

GRC committed itself to actively support research in this critical area and hoped to collaborate with other institutes on this topic.

Most of the Gulf countries were represented by high-ranking offi-

cials and the GCC States sent delegations drawn from their diplomatic and military establishments. Foreign attendees included delegates from the UN affiliate organizations concerned with WMD.

Among the main conclusion from the workshop were:

☞ The time is now ripe for serious consideration of this issue, both in the Gulf and the Middle East.

☞ This will be a long-term and step-by-step process that involves



Colonel Abdullah Al-Samdan (left) and General Ahmad Mahmoud Al-Rahmani of Kuwait

confidence-building initiatives and transparency.

☞ The creation of a WMDFZ is intimately linked to the creation of a broader regional system for cooperation and the promotion of mutual security.

☞ While the creation of a WMDFZ in the region will go hand in hand with a more general political rapprochement between countries, which is in turn tied to broader issues, it is important that regional institutes and experts begin an intensive process of discussion of WMDFZ issues, probably at the Track II level in the first instance.

☞ The experience of other regions indicates that the first step towards the creation of a WMDFZ in the Gulf, and the Middle East, will most likely come in the form of a few regional countries taking the lead and others joining it in due

course.

☞ The international non-proliferation regime forms the basis of efforts to create a regional WMDFZ, but the experience of other regions demonstrates that supplementary measures may be necessary in areas such like verification.

☞ There is a critical role for powers outside the Gulf and the Middle East in supporting the creation of a regional WMDFZ.



Iraqi Deputy Foreign Minister Dr. Hamid Al-Bayati and Dr. Stephen Klement

## List of Participants

### **Dr. Jozef Goldblat**

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### **Jan Prawtitz**

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### **Saeed Bin Ali Al-Rodhan**

Ministry of Defense, Saudi Arabia

### **Abdulaziz Sager**

Chairman, Gulf Research Center, Dubai

### **Dr. Ahmed Saif**

Program Director, Parliamentary Systems, Gulf Research Center, Dubai

### **Colonel Abdullah Al-Samdan**

Ministry of Defense, Kuwait

### **Lieutenant-Colonel Abdel Nasser Al-Sayegh**

Ministry of Defense, Kuwait

### **Air Commodore Jasjit Singh**

Former director, Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis, India

### **E. C. Whiteside**

Head of WMD Center, Nato Headquarters and Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary-General for WMD Policy, Brussels

### **Ambassador Adel Al-Khal**

Director of International Organizations, Conferences and Treaties Department, Ministry of Foreign affairs, Qatar



# 'Bridge education-labor market gap'

The workshop on “Labor market conditions and unemployment problem in the GCC countries” observed that the region’s education programs do not match modern developments and fail to cater to the requirements of the labor markets, both problems that can be overcome only if the “political will exists”.

The one-day event (Oct. 9) organized by GRC focused on labor issues and the adverse implications of unemployment for the political, security, and socio-economic conditions in the GCC countries, and analyzed the remedial policies deployed to overcome the dilemmas.

Among the prominent pool of economic experts, professors, labor officials and delegates representing the private sector and regional as well as international organizations attending the workshop were Director-General of the Cairo-based Arab Labor Organization (ALO) Dr. Ibrahim Quaider, representative of the Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Hussain Al-Shamrani, United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Saudi Arabia Dr. El-

Mustafa Benlamlah and Secretary-General of the Federation of the GCC Chambers Mohammed Al-Mulla.

Laying out the proposals for resolving the unemployment problem, the participants recommended building comprehensive and verifiable databases, expanding the productivity platforms of the GCC national economies, matching the number and quality of university graduates with the requirements of the labor markets, enhancing the role of the private sector, helping the youth recognize and inculcate work ethics and reassessing the current policies associated with nationalization.

The ALO director-general called

**“Unemployment problem can be solved if the political will exists”**

for bridging the gap between the quality of both university graduates and professional trainees and the real needs of the labor market. “It is possible to work out viable solutions for the unemployment problem if the political will exists and accurate statistical data on the labor market is available,” he said.

GRC Chairman Abdulaziz Sager drew attention to link between the imbalance in the labor markets and the resultant unemployment and crime, violence and extremism. He pointed out that “governments have so far failed to deploy the required efforts, especially in the fields of formulating well-defined and long-term policies that could be implemented within a determined timeframe.”

Sager added that “when it comes to existing policies, they have been largely focusing on cities and not rural areas where the population density is greater, as is the case in Saudi Arabia, Oman and Yemen. This approach has led to an exodus from rural areas towards urban centers in quest of jobs and public services.”

As a result, cities have been “ruralized”, unemployment figures have

### List of Participants

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**Mohammed Abdullah Al-Mulla**

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**Radi Al-Ajami**

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soared and urban infrastructure has come under enormous pressure, Sager said, adding that the private sector remains excluded from the policy-making and planning processes.


Pointing to the role that research centers and human resource funds could play in finding sustainable solutions to unemployment problems, Sager said: "We need to take advantage of the reports published by international organizations affiliated with the United Nations, international and Arab banks and international labor organizations.

Sager observed that "by 2010, the GCC countries are estimated to have nearly 5.5 million employable men and women. In order for us to confront this situation, we need to create a common framework of action by relying on systematized data on labor markets and launching a pan-GCC training organization.

### Lectures



 **Dr. Yezid Sayigh (left), former Palestinian adviser and negotiator, and currently visiting scholar at Pembroke College, Cambridge, delivered a lecture on "The implications of Arafat's death for Palestinian politics and the Peace Process" on Dec. 14.**

 **Prof. Ali Eldean Hilal (right), University of Cairo, delivered a lecture on the "Role of Arab research centers during the current phase" on Dec. 15.**

## Greater EU role sought



The two-day workshop (Nov. 23-25) organized by GRC and Bertelsmann Foundation of Germany called for greater engagement by the European Union in future Gulf security arrangements.

Under the title of “A new window of opportunity? Europe, Gulf security and aftermath of Iraq War,” the event brought together over 30 specialists, including representatives from all the GCC member states and numerous European Union countries, to discuss the impact of the Iraq War on the current security situation in the region and to outline the steps that can be taken by the EU to alleviate the resulting challenges.

Delegates were unanimous in their opinion that in light of recent developments as well as the continued omnipresence of the United States in all matters related to regional security, there is an urgent need for a different approach from the European Union (EU). It was argued that past attempts to bring

about a lasting security architecture by the United States, whether through the past twin-pillar, dual containment or preemptive policy approach did not succeed in bringing about a more stable arrangement.

In fact, as a result of the September 11 events and the US decision to oust Saddam Hussein’s regime, the security vulnerability has increased as evidenced by the mounting instability in Iraq, the subsequent possibility of a resurgent Iran taking advantage of the

Iraqi vacuum and the growing internal terrorist threat to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States.

While there is no question that the US will continue to play the dominant external security role in the Gulf for the foreseeable future, the participants agreed that there is an urgent need to involve the EU as an actor that can provide greater balance and objectivity on the broad range of issues that fall under the greater security umbrella within the region.

Among the concrete themes elaborated were the security prerogatives of the Gulf States, current situation in Iraq and Iran, applicability of various security models for the region and possibility of expanding the GCC-EU political dialogue on security matters. That the Gulf region could learn and benefit from the European integration process by looking at how Europe was able to overcome the historical differences among its member states was emphasized.

“ Participants stressed the need for a more inclusionary security system in the Gulf ”

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Numerous delegates argued strongly that the EU would be useful as a model in terms of institutionalizing dialogue and interaction, but it was agreed that this should not involve simply transferring structures and imposing them on the region. Instead, the emphasis was on selective borrowing based on practicality.

At the same time, participants urged the Gulf countries to also draw on other efforts at regional security structures such as the Association of South East Asian Nations, Asian Regional Forum, Helsinki Process and Final Act of 1975.

While participants agreed that Saddam’s ouster had removed one of the critical obstacles to a broader security dialogue in the region, thereby creating a “window of opportunity”, it had also left Iraq weak, rendering it incapable of playing a stabilizing role in the Gulf. The workshop stressed the urgent need to provide proper

security in Iraq and noted that the current US approach is unlikely to produce desired results. Much will depend on the whether the election process scheduled for January will lead to the establishment of a stable and legitimate Iraqi government, the delegates said.

Of equal concern to all attendees were the developments with regard to the Iranian nuclear program and how the possibility of Iran crossing the nuclear threshold might impact the regional security situation. It was mentioned that the

Gulf States were closely watching the current European Union negotiations with Iran and that the successful implementation of the current agreement would be significant in terms of establishing the European Union as a legitimate and serious security actor in Gulf issues.

European delegates cautioned from expecting too much from the current arrangement with Tehran, but argued that the matter is serious enough to mandate a speedy agreement. It was also mentioned



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that Iran has a responsible role to play in the region in terms of alleviating the concerns of the neighboring countries in relation to Iranian intentions.

It was argued that as far as the GCC States are concerned, neither the scenario of a nuclear-capable Iran nor the possibility of a US/Israeli preemptive strike is or should be accepted.

The workshop stressed the need for a more inclusionary security system in the Gulf where by all the states can interact more

regularly in a systematic manner to discuss security concerns, start a process to reduce existing threat perceptions and work on confidence-building measures that can serve as the foundation for a future security architecture. The EU is particularly well placed to take on the role of such a honest broker, it was felt, as it has a regular dialogue with all regional states unlike the United States which views Iran as diametrically opposed to any US involvement in the Gulf.

The key question considered was how the EU can begin to take on a more constructive role in light of its inability and reluctance to commit hard security assets to the region and to move into what is traditionally the US zone of influence. Participants cautioned about the US and Europe getting engaged in competition, although it was made clear that Europe would concentrate on what it does best, i.e. engaging in dialogue and offering a political alternative to existing disputes.

In conclusion, the Europeans urged the Gulf States to get more involved in initiating security discussions among themselves and to clearly express their intention to move away from the current cycle of instability. And, the Gulf States urged Europe to look at the Gulf as an integral part of their own security zone and to give the region the necessary attention that might provide for alternative approaches.



# Impact of US election on the Gulf and Middle East

As many commentators around the world have noted, the outcome of the recent American presidential election affects the entire world nearly as much as it does the United States. And the Middle East and the Gulf are likely to feel its impact the most.

The two most pressing Middle East issues facing the re-elected Bush administration are the situation in Iraq and Israeli-Palestinian strife. It is by no means certain that a Kerry administration would have made much headway in solving either problem. But it is also unlikely that a second-term Bush administration will have much luck in accomplishing its goals in the region either – particularly since it has its hands full with Iraq and appears intent on continuing to keep its distance from active intervention in Israel and Palestine.

Early indicators of the focus and direction of the administration's second term are for a continued and probably strengthened conservative approach. The resignation of Colin Powell as Secretary of State removes the last moderate – and moderating – senior government official in the foreign-policy equation. His successor, Condoleezza Rice, undoubtedly will take a more hardline posture on most issues and the State Department's complexion will change considerably more if, as is rumored, John Bolton is promoted from Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security to Deputy Secretary.

Changes at State are mirrored by the apparent politicization of the Central Intelligence Agency where Porter Goss, a Republican congressman recently appointed by Bush to head the agency, has

brought in staffers from his congressional office and the House Intelligence Committee. These moves have forced the resignation of the Deputy Director and senior figures in the Clandestine Service. Fears are being voiced that the house-cleaning at the agency will produce a more ideological CIA and one that is careful to serve narrow administration interests, instead of clashing over them as before the election.


With Rice's move to State, the National Security Council, to be headed by her present deputy Stephen Hadley, probably will have a reduced exposure, and policy in the Department of Defense is unlikely change unless the Secretary, Donald Rumsfeld, is removed, a move that is beginning to look increasingly unlikely.

Within a few short weeks of Bush's re-election, the outline of the administration's second-term policy towards the Middle East already has begun to appear. Only days after the election, the long-intimated and full-scale assault on Fallujah was launched and increasingly strong-arm techniques were employed against

other Sunni targets. American strategy seemed to be aimed not only at Islamist "insurgents" but at recalcitrant Sunnis who threatened a boycott of the planned Iraqi elections in January 2005.

Washington's emphasis on these elections, as well as their prompt holding at the planned time, have become a key litmus test for the administration's perceptions of success in its Iraq policy.

The second aspect of Middle Eastern policy began with British Prime Minister Tony Blair's visit to Washington. The death of Palestinian



**“ The next  
four years  
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more of the  
same for  
the Gulf ”**

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leader Yasir Arafat shortly after the election was seen as an unexpected opportunity to get matters rolling on the Middle East peace process front. Bush resisted Blair's pressure for the appointment of a special American envoy to re-engage Israelis and Palestinians in meaningful negotiations. The White House still seems committed to the absurd notion that the road to Israeli-Palestinian peace lies through Iraq. This suggests that as long as Iraq remains in a quagmire, which seems likely to persist for some time, Bush and company will keep their distance from Israel and Palestine. After Rice actually replaces Powell, American disengagement probably will look even more pronounced.

The most the Bush administration seems ready to countenance is gentle encouragement for almost inevitable moves on both sides. Washington applauded Sharon's decision to remove Jewish settlers from the Gaza Strip and it supports a fair and productive Palestinian election to replace Arafat. Neither development owes anything to American action and neither promises much payoff on its own. It has been months since the most recent buzzwords in the long-running saga, the "road map" and the "quartet," have been heard and the emergence of new initiatives, with or without accompanying buzzwords, seems rather unlikely for the time being.

The third piece of the puzzle coming into focus now is the increasing assertiveness of the administration on Iran and its allegations that Tehran is seeking to build nuclear weapons and delivery capabilities. On the one hand, this very public stance can be attributed to the "just in time" factor: while it is too late to prevent North Korea's nuclear arsenal, strong action now could stop Iran. At the same time, however, it should be remembered that American – and Israeli – animosity towards Tehran has existed since the revolution and tough talk and equally tough actions have emanated from

Washington for many years prior to the current dispute. Before the election, speculation was rife that Israel might act to take out Iran's nuclear reactor at Bushehr. More recent speculation centers on the possibility of Washington doing the job. Such a step may seem unlikely but then so did the idea of an American invasion of Iraq in 2000.

Because the lion's share of the Bush administration's attention is, not surprisingly, captured by Iraq, with the Israeli-Palestinian dilemma pushed into the shadows, there is little room left over for initiative elsewhere in the Middle East and particularly in the Gulf. The tattered American-Saudi relationship undoubtedly will limp on with both sides grateful for every day it escapes renewed public attention in either country. The arrest and trial of three reformists in Riyadh, an action that ought

to have raised a high-profile American protest, produced only a few muted noises from the State Department.

Similarly, the unbalanced and heavily security-related relationship between the United States and the smaller Gulf states continues without much attention from the higher levels of Washington officialdom. The uncertain course of Bahrain's reform process, the question of

women's voting rights in Kuwait, and the lack of elections in the United Arab Emirates, are all but ignored in Washington. The death of Shaikh Zayed, a seminal force behind the creation of the UAE and the country's only president until now, received scant notice in American media.

As far as the Gulf is concerned, the next four years look to be "more of the same." Oil and security are the driving factors in the relationships, especially so on the American side. And as long as Iraq is in turmoil and the future of Palestine is unsettled, the Bush administration will not roil the waters with its Gulf allies by pushing for internal change or readjusting its relations with the region's elites.



**“ The Bahraini reform process and women's voting rights in Kuwait are all but ignored ”**



John Pike



Dr. John Hulsman



Dr. Jon Alterman

## American polls and the region

The 2004 US presidential elections were unprecedented. They carried critical importance and could be regarded as one of the elections which would have far-reaching implications for the world, especially the Middle East. The conditions associated with the elections were unique, just as the choices that governed the campaigns were. These elections were the first to be held in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, events. They were also the first elections to be contested by a “war-mongering” president, who was promoting an agenda for an empire that seemed uninterested in respecting international law, on one hand. On the other, his rival candidate seemed qualified to put the brakes on pre-emptive wars, but without ruling out definitively the possibility of

resorting to them.

While it was disappointing that the first candidate won a second presidential term, it was worse that President George W. Bush lost no time in reaffirming the continuity of his policies during his second term, particularly his administration’s policies toward the Middle East.

Bush’s re-election triggered wide-ranging reactions across the globe – from a muted welcome, as was the case with Russia, to annoyance on the part of Europe, to cautious reservation, as was the case with a majority of Asian countries. Similar reactions were prevalent among US observers and analysts – Conservatives hailed Bush’s re-election, while liberals could not hide their fears and concerns. Others were divided into optimists who hoped that

the Bush administration would review its policies and skeptics who preferred to adopt a wait-and-see approach.

Victor Shaloub of Gulf in the Media, Gulf Research Center, interviewed three American academics on the impact of the US elections on the Middle East – Dr John Hulsman, Research fellow in European affairs, The Davis Institute for International Studies; Dr Jon Alterman, Director, Middle East Program, Center for Strategic and International Studies; and John Pike, Director, Global Security.org. The interviews focused on the impact of US elections on the region and the possibilities of the new administration changing its policies.

*The full text of the interview is available in English and Arabic under “Araa – Gulf Views” section at [www.gulfinthemedia.com](http://www.gulfinthemedia.com).*

**Making Headlines...**

'Gulf dinar' could be a boon for region: Study  
*Arab News, Saudi Arabia, Dec. 31*

GRC study list merits of GCC currency union  
*The Gulf Today, UAE, Dec. 30*

GRC releases policy paper on GCC currency union  
*Emirates News Agency, Dec. 29*

Arab reforms frustrated  
*The Saudi Gazette, Dec. 29*

US-Bahrain trade deal exposes GCC chinks  
*The Daily Star, Lebanon, Dec. 28*

US-Bahrain accord stirs Gulf trade partners  
*The New York Times, Dec. 24*

Gulf should be first step towards WMD-free zone  
*The Gulf Today, UAE, Dec. 14*

WMD-free zone urged  
*Khaleej Times, UAE, Dec. 14*

What Gulf states can do to promote collective security  
*Khaleej Times, Dec. 14*

Workshop on WMD threat  
*Khaleej Times, Dec. 12*

Workshop begins on Gulf as WMD-free zone  
*The Gulf Today, Dec. 11*

US must explore new Gulf security idea  
*The Daily Star, Lebanon, Dec. 7*

Energy supply systems likely to become more vulnerable  
*Gulf News, UAE, Nov. 30*

GRC workshop urges greater EU role in region  
*Emirates News Agency, Nov. 27*

GRC workshop urges greater EU role in region  
*AME Info, UAE, Nov. 27*

Greater EU role sought in the region  
*The Gulf Today, Nov. 27*

America's need to personalize the enemy is a tough challenge for Saudis  
*The Saudi American Forum Newsletter, USA, Nov. 23*

Election rules a good start  
*Saudi Gazette, Nov. 10*

Media woes in the Gulf  
*AsiaViews, Indonesia, Nov. 8*

'Nothing has changed,' observes rug dealer in Baghdad  
*The Globe and Mail, USA, Nov. 6*

Nato looks beyond Atlantic, seeks Middle East partners  
*Khaleej Times, Nov. 1*

GRC releases policy paper on Arab peace force  
*Emirates News Agency, Oct. 28*

Arab peace force proposed  
*Khaleej Times, Oct. 28*

Zarqawi adopts Al Qaeda brand for own ends  
*The Peninsula, Qatar, Oct. 26*

Arabs are big losers in non-military fields too  
*Arab News, Saudi Arabia, Oct. 26*

Oct. 26  
Iraq drug trade grows  
*bellacio.org, France, Oct. 25*

Education, labour market gap highlighted at GRC workshop  
*The Gulf Today, Oct. 24*

Exchange rises from the sand  
*International Herald Tribune, UAE, Oct. 22*

America's need to personalize the enemy is a tough challenge for Saudis  
*The Daily Star, Oct. 20*

The EU, GCC can help defuse nuclear tensions with Iran  
*The Daily Star, Oct. 15*

Sabotage an option against Iran's atomic plans: experts  
*Dawn, Pakistan, Oct. 11*

Oil and polemics of terror  
*Khaleej Times, Oct. 11*

Arab dialogue deficit  
*Khaleej Times, Oct. 9*

GRC holds workshop on GCC labor market  
*AME Info, Oct. 9*

GRC seminar on labour market today  
*The Gulf Today, Oct. 9*

'Gulfisation' of Gulf media is a must  
*Gulf News, Oct. 9*

The Arabs must dare to dialogue in world forums  
*The Daily Star, Oct. 7*

Arabs need to regain lost ground in battle of minds  
*The Peninsula, Oct. 5*

Dilemmas faced by the media in gulf outlined  
*Arab News, Oct. 3*

**Forthcoming events**

*Second Annual Conference - Jan. 5, 2005*

The conference features the release and presentation of the annual GRC Report "The Gulf in the Year 2004." This report, written by prominent scholars and experts, features an analytical overview of the year's major developments in the political, economic, defense, security and social areas.

*Future of GCC-US relations after elections - Jan. 5-6, 2005*

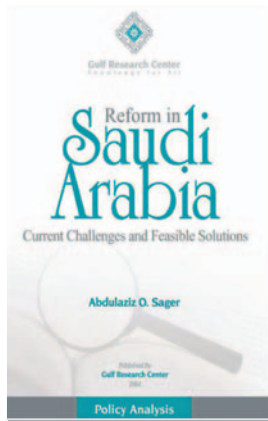
The workshop will hold in conjunction with GRC's Second Annual Conference.

*Iraq and its neighboring countries: Mutual visions - March 31, 2005*

The timing of the workshop coincides with the second anniversary of the outbreak of the war against Iraq and assesses post-election developments

*Social Sciences and Humanities Forum - April 14, 2005*

Educational technologies and methods in social sciences and humanities in the GCC States.



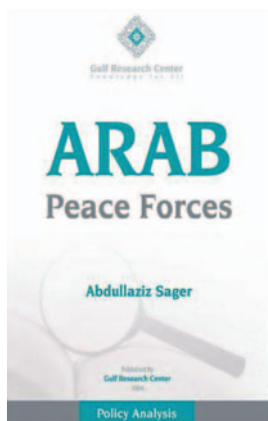
**Abdulaziz Sager**

Constructs a comprehensive agenda for reform through a rigorous deconstruction of the multiple factors that prompt, hamper or facilitate reform. National challenges, such as terrorism, religious opposition, budget deficit, population growth, etc., are addressed.



**Elizabeth Stephens**

Attempts to trace, through a political economic perspective, the major developments and transformations that have unraveled in the GCC-EU relations.



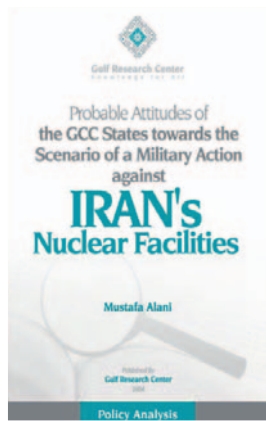
**Abdulaziz Sager**

Aims to generate a discourse on finding an alternative to the deployment of UN peacekeeping forces in the Middle East. It discusses the possibility of establishing an Arab Peace Force capable of contributing to peace and stability in the region.



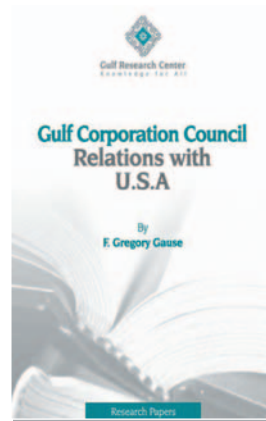
**Issue 4**

**Araa – Gulf Views**  
The non-refereed, Arabic, monthly magazine bears a collection of social, economic, security and political articles related to the Gulf and reflects regional opinion. Written by Arab and international experts, it is electronically available in Arabic and English at [www.grc.ae](http://www.grc.ae) and [www.gulfintimedia.com](http://www.gulfintimedia.com)



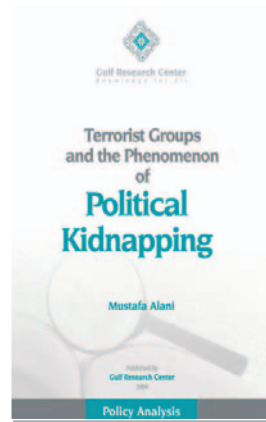
**Mustafa Alani**

Attempts to examine and predict the Gulf States' reactions towards two possible scenarios that could have a great impact on the regional security and stability: Iran's possession of an atomic bomb and/or an external military action against Iran.



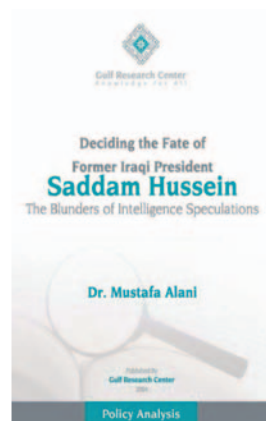
**Gregory Gause**

Explores the strategic relations between the United States and the GCC States, and the American political, economic and strategic interests in the Gulf region. It delves into how the September 11, 2001, events marked a turning point in the bilateral relations between the US and the GCC States, the security issues in the Gulf region, and the US policy towards Iraq.



**Mustafa Alani**

Sheds light on how militant groups in Iraq and some other Arab countries are increasingly resorting to political kidnapping as a weapon to embarrass local authorities, pressure foreign governments, exhort funds, and, last but not least, win cheap publicity.



**Mustafa Alani**

Deals with what promises to become a unique case in contemporary world history: The legal process of a head of state, captured by an invading foreign force and declared as a prisoner of war.

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Book Fairs – Frankfurt, Jeddah and Sharjah



Dr. Christian Koch briefs a visitor at the GRC stall in Frankfurt

GRC participated for the first time in the Frankfurt (October), Jeddah and Sharjah (December) book fairs.

At Frankfurt, GRC successfully began discussions with major international publishers and distributors to market GRC books, research and policy papers to readers around the world. The fair, which recorded over 300,000 visitors, gave GRC the opportunity to publicize its work and establish contact with individuals and organizations involved in publishing. It also served as a forum to further expand regional and international awareness about the research and policy analysis undertaken by the center on the Gulf region. Since the Middle East was the

main focus of this year’s book fair, the Arab World — represented by 22 members of the Arab League — was invited as the ‘Guest of Honor’.

The Frankfurt Book Fair is the world’s biggest – more than 6,800 exhibitors from more than 100 countries showcased 335,000 books and electronic media publications.

As an independent publisher, GRC had stands in both the Specialized Publishers and Arab World delegation halls.

The GRC stalls at the Sharjah and Jeddah book fairs received enthusiastic response from the public for the center’s publications and served as a platform to showcase the center’s activities and achievements.



Emir of Makkah Prince Abdulmajid Bin Abdulaziz visits GRC stall in Jeddah

GRC participation and presentations

Dec. 27 GRC Chairman Abdulaziz Sager participated in a workshop on terrorism organized by the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Riyadh

Dec. 3-5 GRC attended the first International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) conference on Gulf security in Manama.

Nov. 29 Dr. Christian Koch, Program director, GCC-EU Relations, made a presentation to the Netherlands Helsinki Committee entitled “Towards Cooperative Gulf Security: Challenges Ahead”. The meeting was held as a roundtable under the banner “Elements of the Helsinki Process as Inspiration for the Gulf” and had participants from government, various NGOs in the Netherlands and other parts of Europe, the human rights community and various other organizations.

The discussions focused on the possibility, timing and value of implementing a regional security architecture similar to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

October 2-3 Mr Sager attended the International Symposium on “Civilization and Harmony: Values and Mechanisms of the Global Order” hosted by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Istanbul.

October 4-6 GRC presented a paper entitled “The wider Middle East, Iraq and the war on terror” at the 6th International Security Forum (ISF) workshop hosted by the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces in Montreux, Switzerland.

Partnership – Research trainee

Andrea Qualiano, a student in *International Diplomatic Sciences at the Bologna University, Italy*, completed a one-month research stint at the GRC. While in Dubai, Andrea worked on collecting material for his BA thesis focusing on Qatar LNG production and exports. His interest centers around evaluating how Qatar has achieved real economic growth by exploiting its natural resources, above all natural gas. Andrea used the GRC facilities and database to accumulate relevant literature about Qatar’s economic and energy sectors. He also conducted a number of interviews with officials associated with the Dolphin project in Abu Dhabi.





*Mr Sager escorts Prince Turki on a tour of GRC*



*The visiting Asian journalists listen to a GRC presentation*

**Dec. 13 –**

Saudi Ambassador to the United Kingdom Prince Turki Al-Faisal Al-Saud

**Dec. 5 –**

First Secretary (Political) at the British Embassy in Dubai Alex Younger discussed areas of possible cooperation between GRC and the embassy.

**Nov. 30 –**

South African Ambassador to the UAE Dikgang Moopeloa held talks on improving coordination between GRC and the South African embassy and government.

**Nov. 21 –**

A Swedish delegation led by Peter Tejler - Deputy Director-General, Middle East and North Africa Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Eva Tarselius Hallgren - Senior Advisor, Middle East and North Africa Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Lars-Erik Grundell - Swedish Ambassador to the UAE, discussed regional developments, especially the Iranian nuclear issue, political reform in the Gulf, and the European Union's role in promoting reform and security.

**Nov. 1 –**

Christian Chaise, Bureau Chief, Agence France-Presse

**Oct.13 –**

Spanish Ambassador to the UAE Fernando de Galainena discussed international developments, the shift of the Spanish government's position on Iraq following the Madrid bombings and elections, and the future of European politics in the region. The GRC team gave the ambassador an introduction to GRC activities and the GCC-EU portal. Mr De Galainena agreed to help establish close cooperation between GRC and relevant Spanish institutions as well as individuals working on Spain-Gulf issues.

**Oct. 12 –**

Canadian Ambassador to the UAE W. David Hutton and Isabelle Martin, Head of Political Affairs Program at the embassy, discussed with the GRC issues relating to the promotion of a



*Eriko Tada (left) and Ishizuka Tetsuya of SPF*

regional security charter, an idea originally supported by the Canadian and Danish governments; looking at ways to promote the Canadian role in the region by focusing more on humanitarian aspects, promoting institutional relations between GRC and Canada; and exchanging information for the GRC Web portal on GCC-Canada relations.

**Oct. 1 –**

Reizo Utogawa, Distinguished Fellow, Tokyo Foundation; Prof. Isami Takeda, Faculty of Foreign Studies, Dokkyo University; Dajji Sadamori, Editor, Ashi Shimbun Inc.; Goto Yasuhiro, Editor, Nihon Keizai Shimbun Inc.; Yoshiki Hatanaka, Director, Energy and Environment Program, International Development Center of Japan; Dr. Akira Matsunaga, Program Officer, Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF); Eriko Tada, Associate Program Officer, SPF; and Ishizuka Tetsuya, Associate Program Officer, SPF.

**Oct. 1 –**

Mano Sabnani, Chief Executive Officer, MediaCorp Inc., Singapore; Ismartono Yul, Editor-in-Chief, Asia Views, Jakarta; Raj Charles, Editor, Malaysian Business; and Gloria Glenda, Newsbreak magazine, the Philippines.

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Based in Dubai, UAE, GRC began its activity in 2000 as a privately-funded, non-partisan think-tank, education provider and consultancy specializing in the Gulf region.

GRC produces recognized research from a Gulf perspective, redressing the current imbalance in Gulf area studies, where regional opinions and interests are underrepresented.

At GRC, we believe that the Gulf Cooperation Council has transcended the initial reasons for its establishment, to become a fundamental right of its citizens in the development of the region. GRC seeks to further this belief by being an institution of distinction and innovative research that advances different aspects of development to ultimately benefit the people of the region.



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