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# GULF RESEARCH CENTER

## Newsletter

July 2022

### Gulf Research Center Signs MoU with the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf



In the presence of H.E. Dr. Nayef Falah M. Al-Hajraf - Secretary-General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, the Secretariat General of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf and the Gulf Research Center (GRC) signed a memorandum of understanding.

The Secretariat General was represented in signing this MoU by the Assistant Secretary for Legal and Legislative Affairs, Counselor Sultan bin Nasser Al-

Suwaidi, while the GRC was represented by its Chairman, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager. Dr. Sager explained that this MoU comes within the framework of strengthening the relationship with various organizations as well as with government and private agencies, to advance research work and to enhance the approach of the GRC in making research-based knowledge available in a way that contributes to serving the countries and peoples of the Arab Gulf region.

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July 2022

## Gulf Research Center MoU with the University of St. Andrews



The GRC signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Institute of Middle East, Central Asia, and Caucasus Studies (MECACS) at the University of St. Andrews. This agreement came into effect as of June 2022. The MoU strives to stimulate cooperation between the GRC and MECACS on matters related to the economy, security, energy, environment, and politics of the Gulf countries, and the wider Middle East. This collaboration will take the shape of joint webinars, and other forms of collaborative knowledge production.

## Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung



The Gulf Research Center and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) Regional Program for Gulf States signed an MoU to work together in pursuit of strengthening relations between the Gulf States and Europe by focusing on the common objectives between them, including advancing mutual understanding on regional issues; supporting peace and security; promoting socio-economic development; and creating international awareness on issues pertaining to the Gulf region and Europe.

## Global Major Groups Open Dialogue on Stockholm+50

June 2, 2022

### Organizers



Major Groups (constituencies) play a key role in shaping environmental and sustainability agendas. They bring new ideas to the table. It is very important that Major Groups interact with each other as well as with various stakeholders (business, science, media, governments, etc.) globally. Only by an open dialogue can one agree on collective actions to overcome various environmental crises that we are facing today and make sure that humanity is on the right sustainability track. The objective of this event was to have an open dialogue session on various topics related to Stockholm+50 between global Major Groups, local CSOs, environmental activists, media, businesses, science, governments etc.

### Speakers:

1. Mr. Ahmed Fathy, chair of the Youth Love Egypt Foundation

2. Ms. Helena Lindemark, founder & board member, 2022 Initiative Foundation

3. Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, co-chair of Major groups at UNEP

4. Dr. Martin Brocklehurst, chair interim board, Global Citizen Science Partnership

5. Mr. David Coleman, CEO, Defugo

6. Anne Marie Chavanon, the committee on Environmental and Health Crisis, chair in the Council of Europe.

The discussions revolved around the role of citizen science and how it can help solve environmental problems. Experts discussed the role of Major Groups and how they can be better engaged in future, what is needed from governments and the UN to better engage Major

Groups. The role of environmental laws and how it can improve environmental governance also came under discussion. Other topics that were highlighted included the importance of the environment in realizing sustainable development goals, role of youth and what they plan for the next climate talks in COP27 and COP28. Speakers also discussed food security and the role of the private sector. It was agreed that such dialogue would be repeated in near future especially between Nairobi and New York mechanisms of Major Groups to discuss their engagement in the international forum for environment and sustainable development goals.



## The Crisis of Ukraine in the Gulf: Security, Economic, and Energy Repercussions

March 17, 2022

The ongoing war in Ukraine has affected the entire world. For the Middle East and the Gulf, the conflict comes when the region itself is in a precarious state. On the one hand, conflicts are already raging in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen. On the other hand, geopolitical, economic, and energy issues play a significant role in evaluating the repercussions of the Ukraine crisis in the Gulf region. On March 17, 2022, the Gulf Research Center (GRC) held a webinar regarding the geopolitical, economic, and energy repercussions of the Ukraine crisis in the Gulf region. Dr. Christian Koch, Director of Research at the GRC, moderated the webinar.

Explaining the geopolitical dimension of the issue, Dr. Mustafa Alani, head of the Defense and Security Program at the GRC, said that the Ukraine crisis is not an immediate and strategic threat. Therefore, the GCC will continue to take a neutral stance. He was of the view that the GCC countries will continue to maintain their ties with Russia diplomatically as they have done in the last five years without taking an opposing stance against the US and the West. Dr. Alani, however, said it remains to be seen how long the GCC can maintain a neutral position. Given that ultimately Russia is not an alternative to the present US security role in the region, one

can expect that the GCC states will increasingly side with the US and the West as the war in Ukraine continues, he added.

On the economic front, Dr. John Sfakianakis, the chief economist and head of Economic Research at the GRC, stated that the GCC states are benefitting at the moment from the crisis as higher oil prices have led to higher state revenue, a higher gross domestic product, and less demand to issue debt. He said the crisis began at a time when the GCC countries were already taking steps to reduce expenditures and diversify income resources with stress on increasing savings. Saudi Arabia

### The Crisis of Ukraine in the Gulf: Security, Economic, and Energy Repercussions



**Dr. Christian Koch**  
Director of Research  
Gulf Research Center



**Dr. Mustafa Alani**  
Head of Defense and Security Program  
Gulf Research Center



**Dr. John Sfakianakis**  
Head of Economic Research and Chief Economist  
Gulf Research Center



**Professor Giacinto Loiodice**  
Member of the Board of Trustees  
Gulf Research Centre Foundation

March 17, 2022  
3:00 - 4:00 PM Saudi Arabia



and Qatar, particularly, have the lowest capital expenditure and will maintain a disciplined approach to spending, both inside and outside of the country, Dr. Sfakianakis said. However, he pointed out that the issue lies outside the region, as there is an acute concern about a global recession. In addition, the region is getting less affluent in terms of purchasing power parity. In conclusion, there is a positive short-term development because of the high oil prices, but this needs to be balanced against various

uncertain factors in the medium term.

Prof. Giacomo Luciani, a member of the board of trustees at the GRC Foundation, maintained that the Ukraine crisis is mainly political and only partially an energy crisis. He argued that the energy crisis developed before the Ukraine crisis due to insufficient investment in the oil and gas sector. With the decision now to not only drastically reduce the dependence of Europe on Russian oil and gas but also

to undo the process of economic interrelationship, the repercussions could be significant. Prof. Luciani explained that cutting dependence on Russian gas can only come at a high cost because, at the present moment, it is challenging to find proper alternatives. Nevertheless, alternatives are coming up, such as new liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects in the US and Qatar.

The recording of the webinar can be found [here](#)



Participants of the webinar discuss the Ukraine crisis and its implication on the Gulf region.

## Providing Maritime Security in the Gulf Region

February 23, 2022

The GRC organized a webinar to discuss the fragile security environment in the Arabian Gulf, Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden, and the Southern Red Sea. Moderating the webinar, **Dr. Christian Koch, Director of Research at the GRC**, explained that the increase in attacks by Houthi rebels in Yemen led to several regional and international responses. On the regional level, the UAE discussed maritime border cooperation and the flow of shipping traffic with Iran.

Internationally, there have been deployments of two maritime missions to the region: First, the US created the International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC), and its operational arm, Coalition Task Force (CTF) SENTINEL, to protect

commercial ships in the gulf, with the support of Bahrain, the base of the US Fifth Fleet, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Australia, and the UK; and second, the European-led Maritime Awareness in the Strait of Hormuz (EMASOH) and its military arm AGENOR, operating out of a French naval base in Abu Dhabi that also aims to ensure freedom of navigation.

**Dr. Mustafa Alani, head of the Defense and Security Program at the GRC**, explained that there are four forms of threats to maritime security in the region: State threats (for example, Iran and Israel), attacks by state-sponsored militias (e.g., Houthis), terrorist activities (such as those carried out by Al-Qaeda), and organized criminal activities (piracy). To deal with

these threats, there is both a lack of capacity within the region and a lack of sufficient responses from the international community, Dr. Alani said.

**Ambassador Jakob Tange, senior civilian representative in the European Mission for the Strait of Hormuz (EMASOH)**, explained that EMASOH aims to ensure freedom of navigation. It has nine members: France, Greece, Portugal, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Denmark, and Norway. Ambassador Tange explained that EMASOH has two tracks: A diplomatic track headed by Denmark that seeks to de-escalate tensions in the region through dialogue and a military track headquartered in Abu Dhabi on the French naval

## Providing Maritime Security in the Gulf Region

Moderator



**Dr. Christian Koch**  
Director of Research  
Gulf Research Center

Speakers



**Dr. Mustafa Alani**  
Head of Defense and Security Program  
Gulf Research Center



**Ambassador Jakob Tange**  
Senior Civilian Representative  
European Mission for the Strait of Hormuz (EMASOH)



**Jeffrey Payne**  
Assistant Professor  
Near East-South Asia Center for Strategic Studies  
National Defense University, Washington D.C.

February 23, 2022  
4:00 - 5:00PM, Saudi Arabia



base. EMASOH follows the principles of neutrality, dialogue, and de-escalation. It follows a light footprint approach: Observe and monitor, but does not engage. Ambassador Tange concluded by stating that decreasing tensions with Iran continues to be an issue but he pinned hopes on the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action) to improve the situation.

**Jeffrey Payne, an assistant professor at Near East South Asia**

**Center for Strategic Studies at the National Defense University, Washington, DC,** stated the main structural problem is that for a region that is comprehensively reliant on maritime trade for its economic well-being, there is a pervasiveness of sea blindness throughout the Middle East and the Arabian Peninsula. He said the scale of the challenges in the water is immense, and it is often hidden and asymmetric in operation. He explained that navies, the US Navy,

in particular, will need to expand their operational comfort zones, such as drug interdiction, arms interdiction, and human trafficking. He concluded by stating that coast guards and other law enforcement and maritime constabularies will be critical leaders because they are inherently built to address some of these asymmetric operations since their orientation is toward the non-state actors.

The recording of the webinar can be [found here](#)



*Experts discuss maritime security issues in the region.*

## Green Mobility in the GCC: Opportunities and Challenges

January 12, 2022

On Jan. 12, 2022, the Gulf Research Center held a webinar discussion titled “Green Mobility in the GCC: Opportunities and Challenges.” The event sought to examine the status of green mobility in the GCC countries, and look into recent innovations and business development activities for electromobility solutions in transport and automotive industries across the GCC countries. It aimed at evaluating the pros and cons of different green mobility solutions and what is best for the region. The webinar tried to identify the obstacles facing green mobility in the GCC, and better understand the role of green mobility to help achieve carbon neutrality in the region. Dr. Christian Koch, director of research at the GRC, welcomed the participants, while Dr.

Mohamed Abdelraouf, manager of the Environmental Security and Sustainability Research Program at the GRC, moderated the discussion.

**Urška Skrt, mobility manager at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development**, started by highlighting many key transitions in the transportation and mobility sector, such as advances in battery technology, the introduction of low carbon fuel, and efficiency innovation to decarbonize transportation. She then presented several action areas for businesses in transportation and mobility and presented a transport decarbonization roadmap in line with the International Energy Agency’s net-zero plan. She highlighted the challenges facing the plan, such as the speed of

deployment and grid integration. At the end of her talk, she presented several recommendations for faster technology deployment of green mobility technologies.

**Dr. Rubal Dua, research fellow at the King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Center in Riyadh**, said led by the Saudi Energy Efficiency Center, the Kingdom was among the first GCC countries to adopt fuel economy standards. He said the demand-side policies are costly and difficult to justify in countries without a local electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing industry, as is currently the case with the GCC countries. In addition, market barriers to EVs in the GCC region are exacerbated by policies that tend to favor the use of hydrocarbon fuel. An alternative approach for the GCC region is



Experts discuss 'green mobility' in the GCC.



to emphasize technology-neutral supply-side policies, such as fuel economy standards. Such policies are based on a combination of more stringent technology-neutral performance standards and credit-based mechanisms to incentivize the uptake of lower emission vehicles, he said.

**Balqeas Al-Daghar, e-mobility solutions manager at ABB in the UAE**, briefed the participants about the current status of green mobility in the GCC countries. She explained the difference between

AC and DC charging options and the benefits of DC charging that can compete with traditional fuel stations and presented different car models. She then discussed the potential impacts on power systems and the evolution of the grid reaching virtual power plants.

Several questions about the negative impacts of EVs spread, such as natural resources usage and batteries disposal, dominated the subsequent discussion. In addition, the role of subsidies in GCC countries and how they can

hinder or encourage the promotion of green transportation was also mentioned. It was noted that one of the challenges is the usage of resources. Here, technology is developing very fast, and recycling materials is one solution to maximize the use of available resources. Meanwhile, the role of subsidies in the GCC countries and their lifting is seen as having a minimal impact on private cars usage.

The recording of the webinar can be [found here](#)

## Green Mobility in the GCC: Challenges and Opportunities

### Roundtable Webinar

#### Moderator



**Mohamed Abdelraouf**  
Environmental Security and  
Sustainability Research Program Director  
Gulf Research Center (GRC)  
KSA

#### Speakers



**Urška Skrt**  
Mobility Manager  
World Business Council for  
Sustainable Development (WBCSD)  
Switzerland



**Rubal Dua**  
Research Fellow  
The King Abdullah Petroleum Studies  
and Research Center (KAPSARC)  
KSA



**Balqeas Al-Daghar**  
E-Mobility Solutions  
Manager, ABB  
UAE

January 12, 2022  
16:00 – 17:15 KSA



# GRC Upcoming Events

## Annual Gulf Research Meeting

The 12th Annual Gulf Research Meeting 2022 will take place in Cambridge, UK, from

July 14 - 16



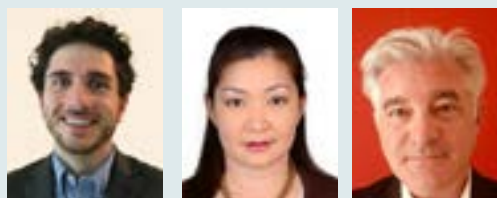
This year's GRM workshops will cover a wide range of issues in politics, economics, energy, security, and the wider social sciences related to the wider Gulf region (GCC countries and Iraq and Yemen). More details on the meeting can be found on the [GRM website](#).

### GRM 2022 Workshops:



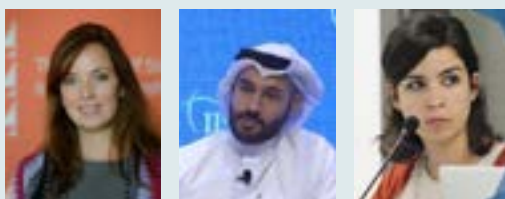
#### **Workshop 1 - Carbon Neutrality in the GCC: Between good-intentioned pledges and the harsh reality**

Directors: Dr. Ahmed Badran, Dr. Elie Azar, Dr. Wael A. Samad



#### **Workshop 2- Gulf States and the Indo-Pacific: Agents or Objects of Geopolitical Competition?**

Directors: Dr. Jean-Loup Samaan, Dr. Li-Chen Sim, Dr. Jonathan Fulton



#### **Workshop 4 - Economic Statecraft, Coercion, and Resilience in the Gulf**

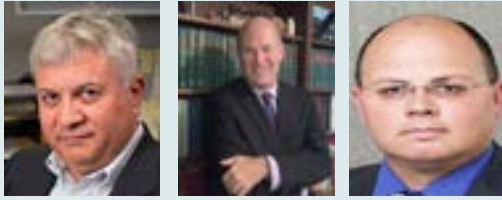
Directors: Dr. Karen E. Young, Dr. Hasan T. Alhasan, Camille Lons



#### **Workshop 5 - Women in the GCC: Socio-economic Contributions to the Urbanisation of Gulf Countries: Status, Challenges, Aspirations**

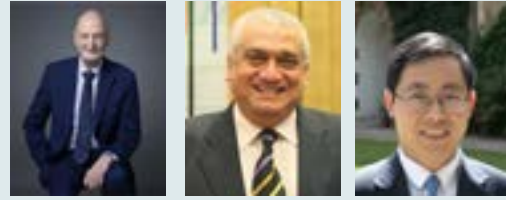
Directors: Dr. Daniela A. Ottmann, Adina Hempel

## GRM 2022 Workshops:



### **Workshop 6 - Challenges of Change and Transformation in the Gulf During COVID Times: Social, Economic and Political Dimensions**

Directors: Dr. Amr Al Azm, Professor David Des Roches, Dr. Nikolay Kozhanov



### **Workshop 7 - Living Together Separately: Social and Cultural Implications of Migration to the GCC Countries**

Directors: Professor Tim Niblock, Ambassador Talmiz Ahmad, Professor Degang Sun



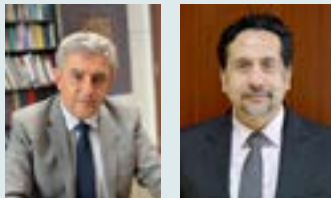
### **Workshop 8 - Tourism, Economic Diversification and Economic Diplomacy: Lessons from the Arabian Gulf**

Directors: Dr. Magdalena Karolak, Dr. Omar Moufakkir



### **Workshop 9 - Challenges in the COVID Environment: Lessons for Higher Education Reform in the Gulf**

Directors: Dr. Reynaldo Gacho Segumpan, Dr. John McAlaney



### **Workshop 10 - Gulf State Donors Across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus**

Directors: Professor Sultan Barakat, Dr. Ghassan Elkahlout

## TAFAHUM wa TABADUL Project



On Dec. 1, 2021, the Tafahum project of the Gulf Research Center Foundation (GRCF) and the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO) entered its second phase. The aim of this stage, now called “Tafahum wa Tabadul,” is to translate the shared understanding achieved in the previous phase into concrete exchange and cooperation mechanisms.

The basic objective of the Tafahum wa Tabadul project is to outline a process for regional security in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula - a region that includes the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Iran, Iraq, and Yemen. It aims to generate an overall “understanding” (tafahum) among regional stakeholders on a joined process toward regional security followed by the identification and implementation of concrete areas of “exchange” (or tabadul). The project is funded by the German Federal Foreign Office

and implemented by the CARPO and the GRCF.

As part of the second phase, two key events were held in early 2022. In February 2022, the GRC and the CARPO hosted an event on the sidelines of the **Munich Security Conference 2022** to discuss prospects for a Gulf regional dialogue.

Participants, which included senior officials and analysts, discussed the current dynamics of the region and ways to explore how recent bids for de-escalation, such as the Al-Ula GCC Summit in January 2021, talks between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and the Baghdad Conference for Cooperation and Partnership, can be built upon and how Europe and the international community can assist in promoting dialogue for regional peace and stability.

On March 29 and 30, 2022, the project organized a workshop titled “**Regional Networks for Women in Peace and Security Issues: Creating Spaces for Exchange Within the West Asia**

**and Arabian Peninsula (WAAP) Regional Setting”** in Bonn, Germany. The event discussed ways for regional networks for women to become operational and effective in peace and security matters and focused on how viable exchanges can be started and advanced within the region. The workshop discussed ways to promote capacity building and training for women in peacebuilding and measures to increase awareness.

On May 18 and 19, 2022, a workshop was held on “**The Climate-Energy-Health-Nexus: Sustainability in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula (WAAP)**” also in Bonn, Germany. The event focused on how regional cooperation could be fostered for sustainable economic growth with the use of renewable and low-emission energy and improved energy efficiency. It discussed ways for environmental protection in terms of conserving and safeguarding ecosystem integrity and climate systems.

On June 20 and 23, 2022, the Tafahum wa Tabadul team conducted a coordination project meeting in Düsseldorf, Germany.



Tafahum Team Project Coordination Meeting in Düsseldorf, Germany.

## Research on Saudi Arabia's Regional and Global (Re) Positioning: Current Status and New Trends



As part of a contract with the UN office in Saudi Arabia, the Gulf Research Center is conducting an assessment of the Kingdom's regional and global positioning, considering the key trends and ongoing shift in the country's relationships with major players at both levels. The research aims to

help the UN better understand the current changes in Saudi Arabia's approach to regional issues.

As part of the project, 10 research papers on Saudi Arabia's diplomatic (re)positioning are being produced. Each report is thematically focused and includes

sections on the contextual analysis, the state of current affairs, and the key trends. The papers will also identify the potential challenges and opportunities for the UN system.

### Following are the titles of the research papers:

- The ongoing reforms in Saudi Arabia: Scope and challenges from a "leaving no one behind" perspective
- The gender and youth empowerment initiatives in Saudi Arabia and their potential contribution to building a more inclusive development model
- The Saudi reform plan and its potential impact on social contract
- The Saudi involvement in international organizations (with a focus on the UN system)
- The relationship between KSA, Iran and their regional implications
- KSA and Turkey relationships in a changing environment: Back to the realpolitik?
- Saudi Arabia and its Arab environment: The search for regional leadership
- KSA and Africa (with a focus on the Horn of Africa and the Sahel)
- KSA and the Biden administration: Scope and limits of the ongoing "recalibration"
- KSA and other global powers (China, Russia): An alternative to the US alliance?

## NEOM Situational Analysis Project



The GRC is providing a team of researchers to NEOM tasked with developing a situational analysis report on an area surrounding NEOM.

The project seeks to conduct a comprehensive situational analysis report to determine the status of the region and provide recommendations.



## The Gulf Research Center Environmental Security and Sustainability Program

**Director of Program: Dr. Mohamad Abdulraouf**

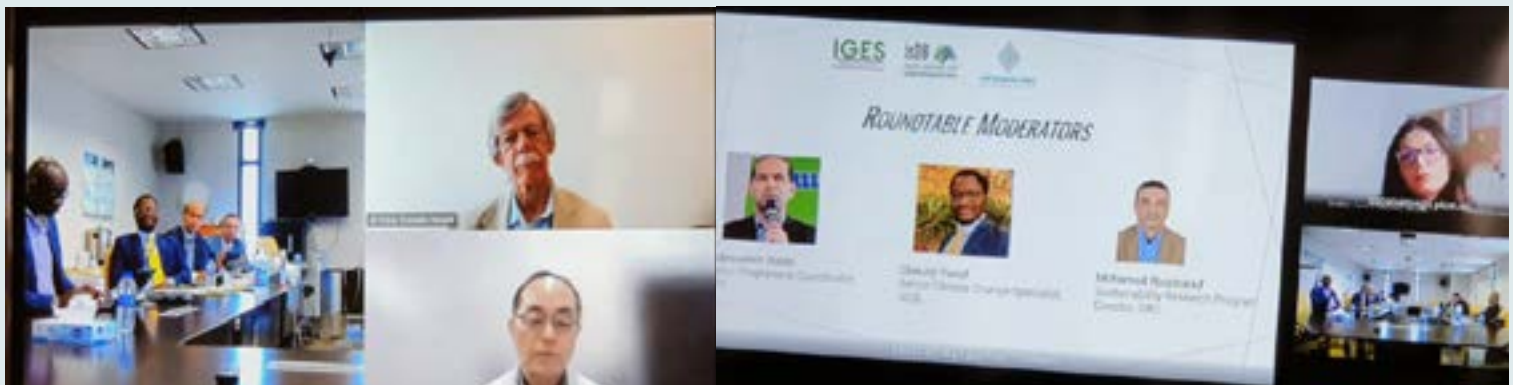
The GRC Environment Security and Sustainability Research Program looks at environmental issues in the Gulf region and seeks to document information about specific concerns related to the area to increase awareness about the following key environmental issues:

- 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 as well as climate change, and C&D debris

More information about the Environment Security & Sustainability Program can be found on the [GRC website](#)

### Latest updates

- On March 16th, the Institute for the Global Environmental Strategies – IGES (Japan), Islamic Development Bank IsDB, and the Gulf Research Center GRC partnered to conduct a study “Examining the need and the potential for win-win cooperation between Japan and IsDB’s member countries in the MENA region toward net-zero emission economies”. The focus of this pioneering study is on three MENA countries (KSA, Egypt and KSA). The project included a desk study, interviews, and an expert roundtable held on June 22nd at IsDB headquarters in Jeddah, KSA.



Expert Roundtable at the IsDB Headquarters held in Jeddah, KSA

- Hosted by the UN Environment Programme, the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) brought together representatives of the 193 member states of the UN, businesses, civil society, and other stakeholders to agree on policies to address the world’s most pressing environmental challenges.
- Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, director of the GRC Environmental Security and Sustainability Program, participated in the fifth meeting of the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR-5) of the resumed fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA 5.2), which took place at UN Environment Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya .

# News from GRC Research Programs

- The Gulf Research Center participated in the meeting in its current capacity as the co-chair of the Major Groups Facilitating Committee (MGFC), representing the Science and Technology Major Group of UN Environment.

As part of the meeting, Dr. Abdulraouf co-organized and co-chaired the dialogue sessions with the following:

- UNEP Executive Director Mr. Inger Anderson
- H.E. Espen Barth Eide, Norway's minister of environment and climate and president of UN Environment Assembly 5.2
- Major Groups Press Conference



*Dr. Abdulraouf chairing the various sessions in Nairobi, Kenya*



## The Gulf Labour Markets, Migration and Population (GLMM)



GLMM is an international independent, non-partisan, non-profit joint programme at GRC. The program provides data, analyses, and recommendations contributing to the improvement of

understanding and management of Gulf labor migration, population, and labor markets, engaging with and respecting the viewpoints of all stakeholders.

Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE as well as Iraq, Yemen, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, and Syria. The project will publish 12 country reports as well as a regional report that will be available in the summer in English and Arabic. Their publication will be followed by blogs and webinars.



**GLMM Scientific Directors:**  
Philippe Fargues (Scientific director GLMM)

Nasra M. Shah (Professor, Lahore School of Economics)



**Managing Director:**  
Imco Brower (Gulf Research Center Foundation - GRCF)



**Scientific Coordinators:**  
Françoise de Bel-Air (Demographic Module)

Usamah Alfarhan (Economic Module)

The GLMM website has been moved to the GRC server and since early 2022 can be found at

<https://gulfmigration.grc.net/>.

The website contains:

-Statistical database GCC countries & GCC:

<https://gulfmigration.grc.net/glmm-database/demographic-and-economic-module/?search=1&cmct=>

-Legal database:

<https://gulfmigration.grc.net/glmm-database/legal-module/>

-Publications:

<https://gulfmigration.grc.net/publications/>

### **Project: Assessed the labor migration statistics**

GLMM along with the International Labor Organization's Regional Office for the Arab States (ILO ROAS, Beirut) has assessed the labor migration statistics for 12 Arab Mashreq countries, the six GCC countries Bahrain, Kuwait,

### **Recent Publications**

Usamah Alfarhan, "Layers of Segmentation in GCC's Labour Markets: How Well Do Migrant Women Fare?," Explanatory Note No. 2/2022

Françoise De Bel-Air, "Measuring the impact of COVID-19 on migrant workers in the GCC and Jordan using Gulf states and Jordanian national data," Explanatory Note No.3/2022

Sophia Kagan, Ryszard Cholewinski, "Reforming the sponsorship system in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries: Opportunities and challenges as a result of Covid-19 and the fiscal crisis," Explanatory Note 1/2022

# Gulf Research Center Foundation (GRCF) - Geneva

The Gulf Research Center Foundation was established in 2007 in Geneva as a Swiss not-for-profit organization, with the aim of spreading knowledge about the Gulf region and enhancing

cooperation with international Geneva. Geneva is home to the headquarters of some 36 international organizations, over 300 NGOs, and over 200 diplomatic missions, in addition to hosting the

regional or global headquarters of 140 multinational companies. The Foundation also strives to engage with the academic, public, and private sectors of Switzerland with a view to enriching Swiss-Gulf relations.



## Exchange of Letters of Intent for Collaboration with International Trade Centre (UN/WTO)



In March and April of 2022, the Gulf Research Center Foundation and the International Trade Centre exchanged Letters of Intent to initiate cooperation between the two entities to support enterprises and institutions to benefit from trade opportunities in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

## GRCF Summer Internship Meet and Greet Session with Graduate Institute Students



On May 23, 2022, as part of its new Internship Program, the Gulf Research Center Foundation hosted a Meet and Greet Session for students from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. The aim of this joint event with the Graduate Institute was to raise awareness about the upcoming summer internship opportunities. The informational session was hosted by Dr. Oskar Ziemelis, Director of the GRCF, along with Dr. Vera Lalchevska, Senior Researcher at the GRCF, and Layal Niazy, Researcher at the GRC. During the meeting, the GRCF team explained its overall mission and discussed its recent activities in Geneva, and its other offices across the world. The session was a great success, with serious interest among the students, many of whom expressed significant knowledge about politics, society, economy, and security in the Gulf.

## Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Geneva



In June, 2022, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Gulf Research Center and the University of Geneva. The memorandum was signed by the Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, and the Directors of the Global Studies Institute (GSI), the Arabic Studies Section of the Department of Mediterranean, Slavonic and Oriental Studies and the Continuing Education Program. This memorandum confirmed the pronounced interest on both sides to collaborate with each other, which was crowned with the donation of the Gulf Research Meeting Collection to the University of Geneva.



## Global Leadership Programme on Global Security, Economics & Politics



The Gulf Research Center Foundation and the Geneva Centre for Security Policy confirmed the relaunch of the Global Leadership Program on Global Security, Economics & Politics, and started planning the courses in June 2022. The central aim of the program is to improve the leadership skills and knowledge of mid-level professionals concerned with crucial global issues. The target audience includes primarily the governmental sector where individuals require well-focused knowledge of the issues which define their professional careers. The program will focus on key

security, economic, and political challenges in an interactive format between participants and leading scholars in the respective fields, as well as senior officials from the public and private sectors. With the world experiencing an unprecedented degree of transition at all levels of the policy agenda, the course will provide unparalleled insight into the key topics defining international relations and interactions at present.

The relaunch of the Global Leadership Program is the fruit of the determination and commitment for cooperation of the leaders of

the two organizations, namely, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, and Ambassador Thomas Greminger, Director of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, who met on February 14, 2022 in Geneva. At the meeting, they reaffirmed their conviction in the need for cooperation, especially given the current regional and world security dynamics. The organizations have enjoyed collaboration for fifteen years, and look forward to developing this relationship further through the relaunch of the Global Leadership Program in 2023.

## Understanding the Gulf Lecture Series



In June, the Gulf Research Center Foundation joined forces with the University of Geneva to launch a lecture series and course entitled “Understanding the Gulf,” due

to begin in February 2023. The course will consist of ten lectures covering recent developments as well as the political, regional, international, economic, security,

energy, social, cultural and historic dimensions of the Gulf Cooperation Council Member States. It will also focus on the region’s vision plans, sustainable

development agenda, population dynamics, increased urbanization, diversification efforts, religious tourism, entrepreneurship, and specific sectors such as real estate, hospitality and construction.

Each 1.5-hour zoom lecture will feature two expert lecturers on the topic from the Gulf region, and will allow ample time for questions and discussion.

The aim of the series is to increase knowledge about the Gulf among

students and professionals in Switzerland. The inherent objective is to also enhance Swiss-Gulf academic relations and student exchange, and in general, to promote relations between the citizens of Switzerland and the Gulf.

The idea about the series came to fruit during the meeting in Geneva, on February 15, 2022 between Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, and

Professor Silvia Naef, Director of the Arabic Studies Section of the Department of Mediterranean, Slavonic and Oriental Studies, as well as with Ms. Esther Um, Coordinator of the series “Arab and Muslim Worlds: Language, Culture and Society.” One of the key interests of both parties is to ensure sustainability of and raise awareness about the Lecture Series on the Gulf.

## “Doing Business in the Gulf” Lecture Series



The Gulf Research Center Foundation, in partnership with the Geneva Chamber of Commerce Industry and Services and the Arab-Swiss Chamber of Commerce and Industry, planned the “Doing Business in and with the Gulf” Lecture Series.

The aim of the lecture series is to enhance economic and trade relations between Switzerland and the Gulf Cooperation Council Member States, bearing in mind the ever-greater importance these

play in today’s rapidly changing political and economic world environment.

The underlying mission of the lecture series is to build a forum for discussion and exchange of ideas relating to Small and Medium Enterprises, through which these key but often underrepresented players in international trade can build networks and start innovative corporate ventures.

The “Doing Business in and with

the Gulf” Lecture Series, was the fruit of a series of meetings and discussions between the leadership of the three organizations, who determined that the business communities in both Switzerland and the Gulf Cooperation Council Member States needed access to more information about each other’s economic environment, opportunities and needs, and lacked the venues through which this gap could be filled, where networks could be built, and where ideas could be launched.

## Empowerment of Saudi Women Through Trade



In April 2022, Gulf Research Center Foundation and International Trade Centre initiated the research phase for a possible future joint project entitled “The Empowerment of Saudi Women through Trade.” The ultimate aim of the project is to improve export potential and diversify the economy by building the capacity of Saudi women owners of small

and medium-sized businesses to successfully trade their goods and services in the international market. This would be accomplished by participating in training, providing assistance in obtaining licenses and credit, facilitating marketing and promotion of their products and services abroad, and helping to build their networks. This will contribute to Saudi Arabia’s

progress on Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals. The preliminary idea for the project was conceived during a meeting, on February 14, 2022, in Geneva, between Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, GRC Chairman, and Ms. Lilia Naas, Chief of the Office for the Middle East and North Africa of the International Trade Centre (ITC).

## Enhancing Geneva-Gulf Commercial Relations: Membership and Joint Projects with the Geneva Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services



On June 8, 2022, the Gulf Research Center Foundation formalized its membership with the Geneva Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services, at an official meeting

between Gulf Research Foundation Chairman, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager and Mr. Vincent Subilia, Director General of the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Services.

The aim of the membership is to promote knowledge about the Gulf among the Chamber’s members, and to enhance economic and trade relations between Geneva and the

Gulf Cooperation Council Member States, bearing in mind the ever-greater importance these play in today's rapidly changing political and economic world environment. The underlying mission of this cooperation is to boost and diversify the economies of the two partnering territories, while at the same time empowering their SMEs to play a greater role in international trade.

The following joint projects were discussed by the two leaders:

- “Doing Business in the Gulf” Lecture Series
- Swiss-GCC Trade Forum by and for SMEs
- “Market Focus Saudi Arabia” – a day of awareness on business opportunities in Saudi Arabia
- Partnership on the 13th World Chambers Congress, Geneva

on June 21-23, 2023, on the topic of the “Impact of Multilateralism on Trade”

- Country Visit to Saudi Arabia to enhance cooperation on business and trade in 2023
- Preparation of articles on GCC countries for the Chamber's Newsletter

## Enriching Swiss-Gulf Commercial Relations: Membership, Partnership & Joint Projects with the Arab-Swiss Chamber of Commerce and Industry



On June 3, 2022, the Gulf Research Center Foundation formalized its membership and partnership with the Arab-Swiss Chamber of Commerce and Industry, at an official meeting between Gulf Research Foundation Chairman, Dr. Abdulaziz Sager and Dr. Jean-Paul Vulli y, President of the Board of the Arab-Swiss Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The partnership aims to create the enabling environment for the exchange of information, building networks, and doing business between SMEs in Switzerland and in the Gulf Cooperation Council

Member States. Taking into account the critical need for cooperation and knowing that the impetus to do business with the other side is very strong, the two organizations discussed the following projects:

- “Doing Business in the Gulf” Lecture Series
- “Swiss-GCC Trade Forum” by and for SMEs
- Providing articles and economy-relevant information on GCC countries for the Arab-Swiss Chamber's website
- Facilitating outreach and building of networks and contacts on both sides
- Providing information about

Swiss industries, businesses, and markets to the GCC Member States.

Considering the increasing role economic relations play in today's rapidly changing world order, the inherent purpose of this cooperation is to enhance economic and trade relations, and diversify the economies of Switzerland and the Gulf Cooperation Council Member States. The double objective is to empower SMEs to play a greater role in international trade and in their own countries' sustainable economic development.

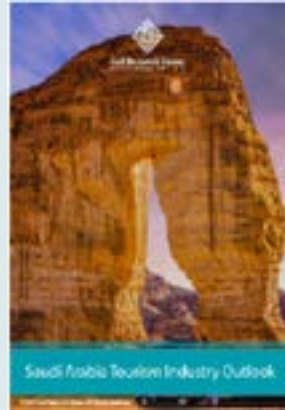
# GRC Recent Publications

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

## GRC Reports



**Saudi Arabia Renewable Energy Industry Outlook**  
May 2022  
Gulf Research Center



**Saudi Arabia Tourism Industry Outlook**  
May 2022  
Gulf Research Center



**Saudi Arabia Logistics Industry Outlook**  
May 2022  
Gulf Research Center



**Saudi Arabia Healthcare Industry Outlook**  
May 2022  
Gulf Research Center

## GRM Publication



**Saudi Arabia Banking & Finance Industry Outlook**  
May 2022  
Gulf Research Center



**Exploring Relations between the European Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council: a Structural Analysis**  
February 2022  
Matteo Moretti

## Commentary and Analysis



**Thaw in Saudi-Iran Relations and the Way Forward**  
June 2022  
Layla Ali



**Tumultuous Yet Promising: The Evolution of GCC-Iraq Relations**  
June 2022  
Layal Niazy





**U.S.-GCC Changing Energy Relations**  
June 2022  
Amnah Mosly



**GCC Women in Sports**  
June 2022  
Amnah Mosly



**EU-GCC Relations: Turning a New Page?**  
June 2022  
Dr. Christian Koch



**Assessment of Saudi Policy in the Horn of Africa**  
April 2022  
Ghassan Shams



**Saudi Arabia's Foreign Policies**  
April 2022  
Amnah Mosly



**The Role of Think Tanks in Public Policy: The Case of the Gulf WMD Free Zone Project**  
March 2022  
Dr. Christian Koch, Ghassan Shams, Layla Ali



**U.S.-Saudi Relations: Recalibrations**  
February 2022  
Amnah Mosly



**GCC-China Relations and the Visit of the Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain to China**  
February 2022  
Ghassan Shams

## GRC GCC-Country Updates



**To Overcome the Flaws of the JCPOA, a Gulf WMD Free Zone should be pursued**  
January 2022  
Mustafa Alani and  
Christian Koch



**Saudi-Iranian Relations: Regional Implications**  
January 2022  
Layla Ali



**Egypt-GCC Relations**  
June 2022



**UK-GCC Relations**  
June 2022

## Araa Magazine



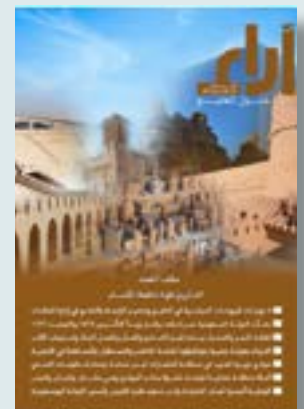
**Brazil-GCC Relations**  
June 2022



**U.S.-GCC Relations**  
June 2022



**# 174 (June 2022):**  
Gulf States and the  
Russia-Ukraine War



**# 173 (May 2022):**  
Highlights in the History  
of the Arabian Peninsula

# GRC Recent Publications



**# 172 (April 2022):**  
Saudi Arabia's Strategic  
Security Priorities



**# 171 (March 2022):**  
Investing in the  
Countries of the Gulf  
Cooperation Council:  
Challenges and  
Incentives



**#170 (February 2022):**  
Education in the  
Countries of the Gulf  
Cooperation Council:  
Reality and Hopes



**#169 (January 2022 ):**  
A Year's Dedication  
Complete, and  
the New Year's  
Commitment

# GRC Participations

Between January and June 2022, the GRC participated in numerous international – both online and in-person – events tackling issues pertaining to the developments in the Gulf region and its wider neighborhood. The GRC lays great emphasis on taking part in such events, as it allows for the inclusion of a regional perspective in the overall debate. The following is an overview of the key events that the GRC participated in.

## June 30, 2022

Dr. Mohamed Abdelroauf, Director of the GRC Environmental Security and Sustainability Program, and Dr. Vera Lalchevska, senior researcher at GRCF, attended a roundtable discussion titled, “Is there a Sustainable Future for the Gulf Countries?”



## June 23, 2022

Dr. Christian Koch, GRC Director of Research, participated in the conference organized by the NATO Defence College Foundation in cooperation with the Fondazione Campagna di San Paolo in Rome and spoke in a panel session on ‘Balancing Threats and Opportunities’



## June 19, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz, GRC Chairman, participated in a session on ‘Erem News’ channel titled ‘What are the options for the Gulf States to confront the Iranian nuclear weapon’.



## June 19, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz, GRC Chairman, wrote an article titled ‘The Saudi-US Summit is an Extension of 80 Years of Strategic Relations’ for Okaz Newspaper. Click here to read the full article:

<https://www.okaz.com.sa/news/local/2108040>



## June 17-19, 2022

Researcher Ghassan Shams participated in the Yemen International Forum in Stockholm organized by the Sana’a Center and the Folke Bernadotte Academy- Swedish Agency for peace, security and development



## June 16, 2022

Dr. Hesham Al-Ghannam participated in a closed briefing organized by the European Leadership Network in London, UK



## June 15, 2022

Dr. Hesham Al-Ghannam participated in a workshop at the Anglo-Omani Society on climate change in the Arabian Gulf in London, UK.



everyone that the UN had been built on three pillars: 1) Peace and security; 2) Development; and 3) Human rights. He continued by stating that world leaders needed to ensure that human rights were taken into consideration in everything they did, and specifically, that the rights of women were addressed. It was unacceptable that out of 76 presidents of the General Assembly, only four had been women. This was why, during his presidency, he had created a platform to promote the voices of women.



## June 15, 2022

The Gulf Research Center Foundation (GRCF) participated in the meeting of the President of the UN General Assembly, His Excellency Abdulla Shahid, with civil society organizations on June 15, 2022, in the UN Office in Geneva. The GRCF was represented by Dr. Vera Lalchevska, senior researcher, Amnah Mosly, researcher, and Chanisse Sellak, research intern. The meeting was held at the request of the President of the General Assembly, at the margins of the high-level commemorative event on the occasion of the 50th session of the Human Rights Council. Over 150 NGOs registered for this exclusive meeting, where Mr. Shahid shared his vision and priorities of his “Presidency of Hope,” and emphasized the importance of giving youth, women and civil society a greater voice in multilateralism.



The GRCF, in its statement written by researcher Amnah Mosly, emphasized the importance of the Gulf region, and explained the GRCF mission to promote knowledge for all, through research, conferences, workshops, and dialogue. In his remarks, Mr. Shahid called for more equality, and for an end to nationalism on the multilateral level. The COVID-19 pandemic had highlighted that while only one third of the Africans had been vaccinated, the Europeans were receiving their third jab. Mr. Shahid also reminded

## June 14, 2022

Dr. Christian Koch, GRC Director of Research, participated in the closed GCC-EU Strategy Meeting held by the European Council on Foreign Relations in Brussels. The focus was on next steps in the EU-GCC Joint Cooperation Partnership.



## June 14, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager gave an exclusive interview to the “Reconnaissance Center for Research and Studies.” It focused on the topic of “visual communication” and discussed the dangers it poses in terms of Iranian projects in the region.

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



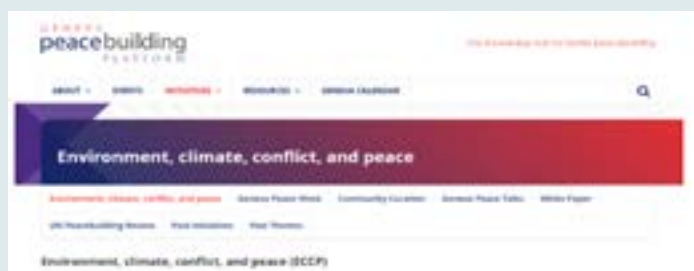
## June 6, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Dr. Christian Koch and Layla Ali participated virtually in the 11th annual conference of the Council of Councils organized by the Council on Foreign Relations.



## June 14, 2022

Dr. Vera Lalchevska, GRCF senior researcher, and Amnah Mosly, researcher at GRCF, participated in the Geneva Dialogue on Environment, Climate, Conflict, and Peace (ECCP) meeting organized by the Geneva Peace-Building Platform (GPP).



## June 3, 2022

Dr. Mohamed Abdelroauf spoke at an official side event on the sidelines of Stockholm+50 in Stockholm, Sweden titled “Youth Voices – From Paris and Stockholm to Sharm El-Sheikh and Abu Dhabi.” Dr. Raouf Spoke about “the role of Major Groups and especially youth in climate talks.”



## June 7-8, 2022

Ghassan Shams and Dr. Hesham Al-Ghannam, represented the GRC at the workshop titled “Regional Perspectives on the future of Yemen component” organized by the Berghof Foundation in Berlin, Germany.



## June 2-3, 2022

Dr. Mohamed Abdelroauf participated in the Stockholm+50 international meeting from June 2-3 in Stockholm, Sweden. The meeting was held to commemorate 50 years of environmental multilateralism and the first Stockholm conference on environment and development in 1972.



## June 2, 2022

Dr. Christian Koch, GRC Director of Research, took part in a discussion with the UAE's Minister of State for Artificial Intelligence Omar Sultan AlOlama at the Museum of the Future. The meeting was organized by the German-Arab Friendship Association and the Emirate Policy Center.

## June 2, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, GRC chairman, wrote an article titled "A Gulf-Russian meeting in Riyadh to strengthen relations and discuss the Ukraine crisis," which was published in "Asharq Al-Awsat" newspaper.

## June 1, 2022

Dr. Hesham Al-Ghannam, GRC senior fellow, participated in a closed panel discussion organized by the Center for European Studies at the Prince Saud Al-Faisal Institute in partnership with the Italian Center for Geopolitical Studies.



## May 31 - June 4 2022

Dr. Mohamed Abdelroauf, director of the GRC's Environmental Security and Sustainability Program, participated in the fourth high-level global session from May 31-June 4, 2022, in Stockholm, Sweden. Dr. Raouf spoke at the high-level closing session at Stockholm+100 about the role of the Major Groups in multilateralism.



## May 31, 2022

Dr. Christian Koch, GRC Director of Research, took part in a workshop organized by the German-Arab Friendship Association and the Emirate Policy Center on "UAE-Germany Relations: Looking towards the Future." The event featured discussions on the foreign policy, economic, energy, environment, defense and cultural relations between the two countries

## May 25, 2022

Dr. Christian Koch, GRC Director of Research, participated in a discussion with the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Belgium and the EU, Jassem Al-Budaiwi. It was hosted by the Arab-Belgium-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce (ABLCC) on May 25 in Brussels. The meeting focused on expanding EU-GCC trade and investment opportunities.

## May 19, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated as speaker in the roundtable discussion titled "The Russia-Ukraine War and its impact on the Arabian Gulf" hosted by the NATO-Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) Regional Centre (NIRC) in Kuwait in cooperation with Institut de Recherche Stratégique de l'Ecole Militaire (IRSEM) and the Fondation Méditerranéenne d'Etudes Stratégiques (FMES).



## May 9, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, GRC Chairman, received the director of the Institute for Strategic Research (IRSEM) at the French Ministry for the Armed Forces, Dr. Jean-Baptiste Jeangène Vilmer and his accompanying delegation. During the meeting, the two sides discussed the bilateral relations between Saudi Arabia and France, and ways to enhance them in all aspects to serve the aspirations of the two countries.



# GRC Participations

**May 14, 2022**

Dr. Vera Lalchevska, GRCF senior researcher, and Amnah Mosly, researcher at GRCF and research intern Chanisse Sellak participated in the Geneva Dialogue on Environment, Climate, Conflict, and Peace (ECCP) organized by the Geneva Peace-Building Platform.



**May 2, 2022**

Noriko Suzuki, senior adviser at the Gulf Research Center, was interviewed by Toranomon TV's Miki Otaka. The interview focused on Saudi Arabia's perspectives on future relations with the US, Japan, Russian Federation and China following the Ukraine conflict.



**May 1, 2022**

Noriko Suzuki, senior adviser at the Gulf Research Center, with the director and board members of the Japan Society of Security and Crisis Management (chairman is former Prime Minister Shizo Abe) at the annual general assembly.



**April 1, 2022**

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, was a guest on the Al-Monitor weekly podcast "On the Middle East" hosted by Andrew Parasiliti.



**March 30, 2022**

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, participated in the Council of Councils fifth virtual conference via Zoom organized by the Council on Foreign Relations.



**March 28-29, 2022**

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the Gulf Research Center, attended the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) Doha Workshop titled "Geopolitics, Nuclear Issues, and the Middle East," which was held in Doha.





# GRC Participations

**March 27, 2022**

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, chairman of the Gulf Research Center, was a guest on the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) weekly podcast, “Mark Leonard’s World in 30 Minutes,” hosted by Mark Leonard.



**March 27, 2022**

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, chairman of the GRC, participated as a speaker at the Doha Forum and Chatham House closed-door workshop, titled “De-Escalation in Yemen: The Role of Iran and the GCC in Brokering Peace” at the 20th Doha Forum.



**March 27, 2022**

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, GRC chairman, took part in the Doha Forum and RAND Corporation closed-door roundtable as a speaker. The event titled “The Evolving US-Mideast Security Partnership,” was held at the 20th Doha Forum.

**March 23, 2022**

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, GRC chief, participated virtually in the dialogue meeting on Yemen titled “Recent Developments, Evolving Strategies & Options for De-escalation,” organized by The Berghof Foundation.



**March 23, 2022**

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, chairman of the Gulf Research Center, attended the third session titled “Gulf security from the world’s security?” in the virtual roundtable titled: “Security of the Gulf Region: Threats, Repercussions and Solutions,” organized by the European Assembly Against Extremism and Terrorism in collaboration with the office of H.E. Minister Prof. Jamal Sanad Al-Suwaidi of the UAE.



**March 22, 2022**

Dr. Christian Koch, director of research at GRC, spoke at the European Parliament Committee on Foreign Affairs discussing a strategic partnership with the Gulf.



# GRC Participations

## March 16, 2022

Ghassan Shams, GRC researcher, participated in a conference titled “Social Networking Sites: Theoretical Frameworks and Application Problems” organized by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung Foundation, in cooperation with the Department of Philosophy at the College of Arts at Kuwait University in Kuwait.



## March 10, 2022

Dr. Christian Koch met with Carsten Wilms, permanent representative at the German Embassy in Abu Dhabi. They discussed recent developments, and Dr. Koch updated him on the status of the Tafahum wa Tabadul research project.

## March 10, 2022

Dr. Koch also met with Dr. Khalid Al-Mezaini, a professor at Zayed University in the UAE, and participated in teaching a graduate seminar on the UAE foreign policy. He met with N. Janardhan, a senior research fellow at the Emirates Diplomatic Academy, to discuss developments in Gulf-Asia relations.

## March 8, 2022

Dr. Christian Koch met in Riyadh with Patrick Simonnet, head of the EU Delegation to Bahrain, Oman, and Saudi Arabia, to discuss recent developments in EU-GCC ties.

## March 6, 2022

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, GRC chairman, participated as a speaker in the closed workshop titled “Foreign and Security Policy in the framework of the German-Arab Gulf Dialogue on Security and Cooperation.” It was organized by the German-Arab Friendship Association (DAFG) and the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies (KFCRIS).



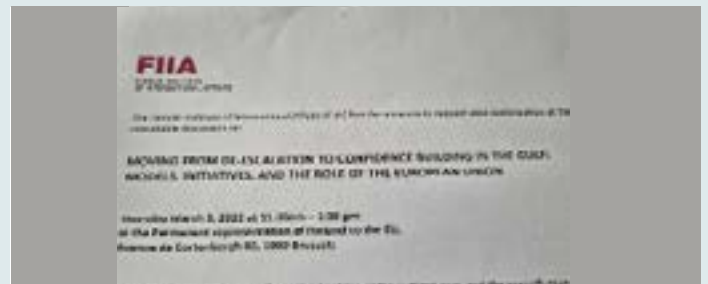
## March 4, 2022

Dr. Christian Koch, director of research at the GRC, was part of a German delegation that visited the Kingdom. The visit was sponsored by the German-Arab Friendship Association.



## March 3, 2022

Dr. Christian Koch, participated in a discussion titled “Moving from De-Escalation to Confidence-Building in the Gulf: Models, Initiatives, and the Role of the European Union” held by the Finnish Institute for International Affairs at the permanent representation of Finland to the EU.



## February 28, 2022

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, director of the GRC’s Environmental Security and Sustainability Program, participated in the resumed session of the fifth UN Environment Assembly (UNEA 5.2), which took place at UN Environment Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.



# GRC Participations

**February 27, 2022**

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, chairman of the GRC, participated as a speaker in the seminar titled “Saudi historians and anniversary of the Founding Day,” organized by the Eastern Province Literary Club (EPLC) in Dammam.



**February 23, 2022**

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager participated as a speaker in the virtual event “The role of think tanks in the foreign policymaking process” organized by the British International Studies Association.



**February, 21 2022**

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, director – GRC Environmental Security and Sustainability Program, participated in the fifth meeting of the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives (OECPR-5) of the resumed fifth session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA 5.2), which took place at UN Environment Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya on Feb. 21-25.



**February 18-20, 2022**

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager participated in the 58th Munich Security Conference in Munich.



**January 27, 2022**

Dr. Christian Koch, took part in an expert roundtable on “EU-Gulf Relations” organized by the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) along with the European External Action Service (EEAS).



**January 27, 2022**

Dr. Christian Koch spoke at an event organized by the UK’s Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office on the GCC’s external engagement with third countries/ other regional organizations, the balance between multilateral and bilateral ties, the impact of the intra-GCC disputes on likely future prospects.



**January 27, 2022**

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager participated as a speaker in the virtual round table “Qatar 2022 – The World Cup in the Middle East for the first time: What is at stake for the host country and the region?” It was organized by the Center for Continuing and Distance Education of the University of Geneva.



**January 24, 2022**

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager attended the Saudi-Iraqi Business Forum, organized by the Federation of Saudi Chamber at its headquarters.



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

## Recent Media Participations



Dr. Hesham Al-Ghannam took part in a program on the Al Arabiya news channel and discussed US President Joe Biden's misleading expectations on Iranian-American relations, and how the gap between the two countries is actually widening.



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager participated on the Al-Akhabariyah news channel and discussed the diplomatic efforts for the GCC countries to hold consultations with the Houthis



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager participated in a program on the Al-Akhabariyah news channel and discussed Prince Khalid bin Salman's role in Washington D.C.



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager appeared on the AlSharq news channel and discussed the Ukraine crisis.



Dr. Mustafa Alani, Director of the Security and Defence Program participated on the Al-Hadath news channel and talked about the repercussions of the Houthi militia targeting Saudi Arabia



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager appeared on the France 24 news channel and discussed the explosion of the three fuel tanks in the UAE.



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager took part in a program on the Al-Hadath news channel and discussed Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's interview with the Atlantic magazine.



Dr. Abdulziz Sager participated in a program on the Al-Hadth news channel and discussed the classification of the Houthi group as a "terrorist organization."



## **Dr. Vera Lalchevska**

**Senior Researcher**

Dr. Lalchevska holds a Ph.D. in development studies from the Graduate Institute, Geneva, and is co-founder of three nongovernmental organizations. In her 20-year career, she has held diverse positions such as the deputy national coordinator for the Francophonie in the Macedonian government, and human rights officer for the UN in Geneva. Currently, she builds partnerships and conducts geostrategic policy-relevant research, which aims to promote positive peace, human rights, and sustainable development.



## **Layal Niazy**

**Researcher**

Layal Niazy did her master's in international relations from the University of St. Andrews. She first joined the GRC as an intern during the summer of 2020 and again as a researcher in August 2021. Her research interests lie in social issues, geopolitics, and conflict analysis, particularly within the MENA region.



## **Amnah Mosly**

**Researcher**

Amnah Mosly is a researcher at the Gulf Research Center. She obtained a master's degree in political science at Columbia University in New York City and a bachelor's degree in the same subject at George Washington University in Washington, DC. Her research interests lie in US-GCC relations, international organizations, and conflict analysis.



## **Sabrina Coppo**

**Research Intern**

Sabrina Coppo is a research assistant associated with the Gulf Research Center. She graduated from the American University of Richmond in London with a master's degree in international relations and diplomacy. Sabrina obtained a bachelor's degree in political science at the University of Richmond in the UK. Before the GRC, Sabrina joined the Arab League and successfully managed three projects relating to foreign policy issues during the first half of 2019. Sabrina's current areas of interest are exploring various disciplines to broaden her artistic pursuits.



## **Chanisse Sellak**

**Research Intern**

After having lived in Abu Dhabi for five years and traveling around the Gulf countries, Chanisse is now enrolled in a master's program in Middle East Studies at the University of Geneva. Chanisse is also undergoing an internship with the GRC to pursue research in this field.



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Knowledge for All

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