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GULF RESEARCH CENTER Newsletter

February 2023

GRC Project

GCC-EU Relations: Toward the Strategic Partnership Webinar Series

Panel Session 5: Environmental Sustainability



The Gulf Research Center (GRC) held the fifth session of its GCC-EU webinar series entitled “Environmental Sustainability” on February 14, 2023. The event focused on the status of relations and the environmental priorities of both regions related to the EU’s Joint Communication on a “Strategic Partnership with the Gulf,” launched in May 2022. The speakers of the session were Mr. Patrick Wegerdt, International Relations Officer, Regional and Bilateral Environmental Cooperation, DG Environment, at the European Commission; Prof. Asma Abahussain, Professor of Earth Sciences and Environment in the Ph.D. Program of Environment and Sustainability, University of Bahrain; and Dr. Tobias Zumbrägel, Researcher at the University of Heidelberg. Dr.

Mohammed Raouf, Head of the Environmental Research Program at the GRC, provided closing remarks. Dr. Christian Koch, the Director of Research at the GRC, moderated the session.

Key priorities for the GCC and EU that were identified from an environmental point of view include the circular economy (resource efficiency and sustainable waste management), sustainable water management (especially pertaining to water reuse and food security), and biodiversity (sustainable land management and tree planting). Other items included environmental monitoring, efficiency standards in buildings, transportation and industry, green mobility as well as climate mitigation and adaptation.

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Gulf Dialogue Lab



Webinar 1: The Concerns of Gulf Actors

On February 20, 2023, the Gulf Dialogue Lab, created by the GRC's Cultural and Media Program, launched its first workshop, 'The Concerns of Gulf Actors.'



Webinar 2: Arts in the Arab Gulf Heritage

On February 25, 2023, the Gulf Dialogue Lab hosted its second workshop, 'Arts in the Arab Gulf Heritage.'



Webinar 3: Arabic Calligraphy, Unconventional Spaces

On February 28, 2023, the Gulf Dialogue Lab hosted its third workshop, 'Arabic Calligraphy, Unconventional Spaces.'



Webinar 4: The Boom of Story Novels

On February 28, 2023, the Gulf Dialogue Lab, hosted its fourth workshop entitled 'The Boom of Story Novels.'

Gulf Research Center (GRC) Podcast



GRC Podcast Episode 1 & 2 Series: KSA Founding Day, Day of Pride

With the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia celebrating its Founding Day on February 22, 2023, the GRC launched the first episodes of its 'GRC Podcast' series. The speaker for the first episode was Prince Dr. Faisal bin Muhammad bin Saad, who discussed in-depth the importance of celebrating Saudi Arabia's Founding Day.

Click [here](#) to access the GRC's podcast.

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



Activities February 2023 Publications



GLMM Factsheet No. 3:
“Five Decades of Semi- and Unskilled Labour Migration from Pakistan”,
by Nasra M. Shah –
February 2023. Click [here](#)
to access the paper.



GLMM Factsheet No. 4:
“Qataris Make Up Only a Quarter of All Births”,
by Françoise De Bel-Air –
February 2023. Click [here](#)
to access the paper.

Non-Resident Fellow

In February, GLMM welcomed its first non-resident fellow, Dr. Magdalena Karolak.



Dr. Karolak is an Associate Professor of Humanities and Social Sciences at Zayed University, UAE. She received her Ph.D. in Linguistics, M.A. in Political Science, M.A. in Latin American Studies, and B.A. in French Language. Prior to working at ZU, Dr. Karolak held Assistant Professor positions in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. In 2014-15, she was an American Political Science Association MENA Fellow. Her research interests include transformations of societies in the MENA region and comparative linguistics. Dr. Karolak has published more than 50 journal articles and book chapters on the shifting gender relations, social media, culture and identity, and political system transformations in MENA countries. She is the author of three scholarly monographs.

For Dr. Karolak and other GLMM staff, click [here](#)

As GLMM Non-Resident Fellow, she will write a series of policy briefs on key topics concerning labour and migration to the UAE and the wider GCC.

For more information on GLMM Non-resident Fellowships, please click [here](#).

GRM 2023 Workshop

GLMM organizes a workshop in the framework of the 13th Gulf Research Meeting (GRM, Cambridge 11-3 July 2023) on “Recent Labour and Migration Reforms and Policies in the Gulf: Impact on Economies and Societies” at the 13th annual Gulf Research Meeting. The deadline for applications for paper presenters has passed. Over fifty paper proposals were received. Limited places are available for non-paper presenters against a fee.

GLMMs Public Databases

GCC demographic-economic database, access [here](#).

GCC legal database, access [here](#).

GRC Publications

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

Commentary & Analysis



Football as a Key Component in Saudi Arabia's Sports Strategy
February 2023
Amnah Mosly



GCC's Economic Agenda
February 2023
Abdullah Almutabagani

Selected Arabic Articles



The strategic partnership between European urgency and the Gulf slowdown
February 2023
Yousef Kamil Khattab

Country Updates



Canada - GCC Relations
February 2023



South Africa - GCC Relations
February 2023

Araa Magazine



South Africa - GCC Relations
February 2023

GRC Participations

In February 2023, the GRC participated in numerous international events — both online and in-person — tackling issues pertaining to the developments in the Gulf region and its broader neighborhood. The GRC emphasizes participating in such events, as it allows for the inclusion of a regional perspective in the debate. The following is an overview of the critical events in which the GRC participated.



February 28, 2023

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, met with Dr. Joseph Kechichian, Lebanese researcher, and Dr. Louis Blin, Director of the Middle East Program at the European University in France. Dr. Zaid Al-Fadhil, Director of the GRC's Cultural and Media Program attended the meeting at the GRC's office in Riyadh.



February 27, 2023

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, participated as a keynote speaker and delivered a speech on the regional and global role of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia at the Swiss Business Network in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

GRC Participations



February 27, 2023

Dr. Oskar Zimielis, Director of the Gulf Research Center Foundation (GRCF), participated in the Town Hall Meeting with the President of the UN General Assembly, H.E. Csaba Kőrösi in Geneva, Switzerland. The session was specifically for NGO representatives.



February 23, 2023

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), contributed to the Council of Councils' global memo on 'The Invasion That Shook the World.' Click [here](#) to access the full report.



February 23, 2023

The French researcher and historian Dr. Louis Blin, Director of the Middle East Program at the European University Foundation in France, visited the GRC's office in Jeddah and met with Dr. Zaid Al-Fadhil, Director of the GRC's Cultural & Media Program.



February 21, 2023

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, visited H.E. Mr. Jassim Al-Budaiwi, the Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), at the headquarters of the General Secretariat in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to congratulate him on his new position as the seventh secretary-general of the GCC. Many common issues were discussed between the GCC and the GRC based on the MoU signed between both sides.

GRC Participations



February 20, 2023

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, participated in the Media Forum as a speaker in a panel session entitled ‘Think Tanks and Media Institutions....Diagnosing Crises and Facing Challenges’.



February 19 - 20, 2023

The GRC jointly hosted an event titled the ‘Gulf Cultural Forum’ in Dammam, Saudi Arabia. Dr. Zaid Al-Fadhil, Director of the GRC’s Cultural & Media Program, represented the GRC at the forum.



February 17-19, 2023

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the Gulf Research Center (GRC), participated in the 59th session of the Munich Security Conference. This year’s conference session coincides with the one-year mark of the Russian-Ukrainian war. During the panel session titled ‘Whole, Free, and at Peace: Visions for Ukraine,’ Dr. Sager posed a question to U.S. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken. Click here to watch the session.



February 12, 2023

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, participated as a member of the Board of Trustees of Prince Muqrin bin Abdulaziz University in the first meeting of the Board of Trustees for the 2022-2023 academic year. The meeting was chaired by Prince Turki bin Muqrin bin Abdulaziz, Chairman of the University’s Board of Trustees.



February 11, 2023

GRC researchers Amnah Mosly and Christine Williams attended the reception in honor of the visit of the State Secretary and Special Envoy for International Climate Action at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, Ms. Jennifer Lee Morgan. The reception was held at the Consul General Dr. Eltje Aderhold’s residence in Jeddah and brought together like-minded academics, practitioners, and policymakers with a specific interest in environmental sustainability. The purpose of Ms. Morgan’s visit to Saudi Arabia was to meet with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Climate Envoy H.E. Adel Al-Jubeir to discuss areas of cooperation in climate change and environmental sustainability and to review the Saudi Green Initiative and the Middle East Green Initiative, as well as Saudi Arabia’s particular effort in regard to climate action. Accompanying Ms. Morgan on her visit were members of her team at the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety, and Consumer Protection for Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Africa, and the Middle East division.



February 9, 2023

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, met with the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, H.E. Ambassador Thomas Lid Ball, at GRC's office in Riyadh. During the meeting, both sides discussed the Norwegian-Saudi relationship.



February 9, 2023

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, met with the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Denmark to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, H.E. Liselotte Kjærsgaard Plesner, at the GRC's office in Riyadh. During the meeting, both sides discussed the Danish-Saudi relationship and its various fields of development.



February 7, 2023

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, met with H.E. Ambassador Peter Semneby, Sweden's Special Envoy for Yemen, at the GRC's office in Riyadh on February 7, 2023. Both sides discussed the situation in Yemen and current developments.



February 7, 2023

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, participated in a workshop organized by the Center for Strategic Studies at the Prince Saud Al-Faisal Institute for Diplomatic Studies, in cooperation with the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Riyadh. The session's title is 'The Return of Great Power Policies and the Geostrategic Repercussions on the Arab Gulf and Europe,' in which Dr. Abdulaziz discussed the escalation of conflict between the major powers.



February 6, 2023

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, received at the GRC's office in Riyadh on February 6, 2023, the Italian Minister Plenipotentiary and Special Envoy for the Syrian Crisis, Mr. Stefano Ravagnan. During the meeting, the Syrian crisis and developments in Syria were discussed.

GRC Participations



February 5 - 6, 2023

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, participated as a speaker in the MENA Think Tank Roundtable ‘Improving relevance and impact at a time of global uncertainty’ organized by the Middle East Council on Global Affairs and the American University of Beirut in Doha, Qatar.



February 6, 2023

Dr. Zaid Al-Fadhil, Director of the Cultural & Media Program, met with Dr. Mai Walid Salameh, a faculty member at the College of Information and Communication at King Abdulaziz University in the GRC’s office in Jeddah.



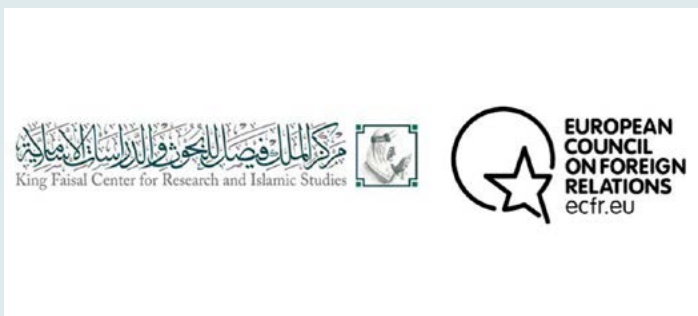
February 5, 2023

Dr. Mohamed Abdelraouf, Director of the Environmental Sustainability Program, facilitated a meeting between UN Major Groups, and Mrs. Gudi Alkemade (the Netherlands) Chair of the OEWG on chemicals, waste and preventing pollution on the sidelines of OWEG on chemicals, waste, and pollution.



February 2, 2023

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC and member of the Board of Trustees of the University of Business and Technology, participated in the seventh meeting of the Board of Trustees, which was held at the UBT in Jeddah.



February 1, 2023

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, participated in the closed panel discussion on the Saudi-European partnership in the fields of energy and regional security. The meeting was organized by the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies, in partnership with the European Council for Foreign Relations in Riyadh.



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

Recent Media Participations



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, participated in Al-Arabiya news channel in an episode that focused on Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister's visit to Ukraine. Watch the full interview [here](#).



Dr. Saleh Al-Khathlan, GRC's Senior Advisor, participated on Alekhbariya TV and discussed the strategic importance of Crimea Island to Russia.



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, participated in an interview published in 'The Seventh Day' newspaper and discussed the importance of the historic visit of King Abdulaziz to Egypt that established comprehensive partnerships between Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Access the interview [here](#).



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, participated in an interview for 'The Independent Arabia' in a report entitled 'Iraq steps up the ladder of its Arab Comeback.' Access the report [here](#).



Dr. Zaid Al-Fadhil, Director of the Cultural & Media Program, participated in a podcast 'Youm Badaina' on Panorama FM which focused on the symbolism of Saudi's Founding Day and its impact on the historical landscape of the region. Access the podcast [here](#).



Dr. Saleh Al-Khathlan, GRC's Senior Advisor, participated in an interview with Al-Arabiya and discussed the importance of U.S.-Saudi relations.



Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, Chairman of the GRC, participated in the 'Here is Riyadh' news program, in an episode titled 'Gulf-American Dialogue, Washington is Recalculating.' Click [here](#) to watch the full interview.



Dr. Zaid Al-Fadhil, Director of the Cultural & Media Program, participated in an interview with Jeddah Radio and talked about the importance of history and the convention of expressing cultural diversity. Click [here](#) to watch the full interview.



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