



**Gulf Research Center**  
Knowledge for All



# The EU and the GCC in Global Governance: Limitations and Future Potential



# The EU and the GCC in Global Governance: Limitations and Future Potential

Joachim Koops, Jamal Shahin, Chloe Smythe,  
Giulia Tercovich and Ziggy Vandebriel

## 1. Global Governance and EU-GCC Relations: Conceptual Divergences, Policy-oriented Implications

### 1.1 EU-GCC Convergences and Divergences in Global Governance

The European Union (EU) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have been interacting on a number of aspects of global governance for many years. Despite significant differences in size, structure, and political views on various topics, both organizations have managed to establish a level playing field wherein a tentative convergence of attitudes towards global governance has been possible.<sup>1</sup> Until recently, this has predominantly been in the field of economic cooperation. The focus on economics has led some to view this cooperation as falling short of perhaps overambitious expectations in political issues, while others view the cooperation as fitting with the EU's external relations and political incentives.<sup>2</sup> While this paper focuses on the opportunities for cooperation in global governance, it is crucial to note that within the EU and the GCC, multiple layers of governance are taking place, and the scope for engagement is heavily dependent upon the impulse provided by the

1. Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, "Rebalancing Global Governance: Gulf States' Perspectives on the Governance of Globalisation," *Global Policy* 2, no.1 (January 2011).
2. Valentina Kostadinova, "What is the Status of the EU-GCC Relationship?" *GRC Gulf Papers*, Gulf Research Center, 2013.

member states of both institutions. While the GCC and EU are formed of countries which share many political, legal, cultural and social similarities, both organizations are nevertheless characterized by unitary or homogenous 'actorness.' National politics and priorities of member states matter in both organizations, which in turn affects the potential and limitations of EU-GCC cooperation in global governance.

### *1.1.1 EU-GCC Convergence in the Economic Sector*

The common ground between the EU and the GCC is mostly limited to the economic aspects of global governance including economic and capital aspects, global financial governance, and establishing global networks of multinational companies. This very specific focus is not surprising, given that the Gulf countries account for about half of global fossil fuel reserves and roughly 15 percent of natural gas reserves.<sup>3</sup> Bearing in mind the importance of natural resources and the tendency for conflicts to arise over limited resources, it is evident that economic ties between both organizations are prioritized over other issues of global governance. Pragmatic interactions based upon mutual needs, however, are useful for maintaining and building trust, cooperation, and a space for future interactions.

Current activities focus on economic exchange, and the development of an EU-GCC Free Trade Agreement (FTA) has been a driving goal of interactions since the first agreements were signed between the two parties. As a complete and comprehensive policy goal, the FTA remains to be finalized. It is essential for the EU to target the well-developed GCC market, which is relatively open to international trade. The greater integration of capital markets, the improvement of stock trading, and the opening of Gulf stock markets to European investors are essential for the flow of capital in both regions.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, there is growing support for the use of Euro as a reserve in the region, as a trade and investment currency, which will foster growth and market efficiency and offer more stability. Finally, co-operation in banking regulation, particularly with respect to rating systems, is important for both organizations to preserve economic stability and safeguard the flow of capital.<sup>5</sup>

In economic policies, the EU and GCC do share similar goals with respect to global governance of trade and finance. Both entities are engaged in trying to influence financial global governance entities such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB). For the GCC, it is important to diversify their economies in order to reduce their dependency on the hydrocarbon sector and enhance employment

3. Working Group for European Strategy towards the Gulf, "The EU and the GCC – A New Partnership," Bertelsmann Foundation, Vol. 2, no. 7 (2002).

4. Ibid., 18.

5. Ibid., 18.

opportunities for their citizens.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, the GCC states are all in possession of substantial sovereign wealth, which gives a fairly good degree of global reach when it comes to the global financial architecture. Following the economic downturn in the West, it is in the interest of the GCC countries and the EU to help reshape the financial world, particularly the institutions which govern the current frameworks. As Saudi Arabia is one of the best performing G-20 countries, it is increasingly important for the country and its region that it gains increased voting powers within the IMF framework together with other developing countries (such as Brazil, China, and Russia), at the expense of developed countries.<sup>7</sup> The significance of the GCC economies became painfully evident when the UK sought Gulf support during the 2008 credit crunch, and the US asked the region for support in their bailout of the automotive industry.<sup>8</sup> Both the EU and GCC are keen to cooperate in the reshaping and rebuilding of the global financial governance structures, focusing on comprehensive governance frameworks that reflect the changes in the international economic system.

Lastly, the EU and GCC are both aware of the importance of continuously building on global networks of multinational companies. The importance of such networks can of course be related to the movement of capital, yet it is not limited to this. Despite their substantial economic growth and economic diversification, the GCC countries continue to import a large amount of commodities such as pharmaceuticals (90% imported), indicating the necessity to acquire knowhow and production capacities from abroad to sustain the needs of the region.<sup>9</sup> In addition to satisfying the demands of the region, these global networks contribute to employment in both the EU and GCC countries, leading to additional flow of capital and further growth.

### ***1.1.2 EU-GCC Divergences in Political Areas***

As outlined previously, EU-GCC relations are focused on a wide range of economic and financial aspects of global governance; at the same time, there are still a number of areas in which the two organizations have diverging interests based on differing domestic perceptions of these issues. Ranging from views on the role of civil society in political activity to the international actorness of the organizations, the EU and GCC have a number of differences which they need to address in order to understand each other better and build sustainable frameworks for interaction.

---

6. Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, "Repositioning Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council States in the Changing Global Order," *Journal of Arabian Studies* 1(2011).

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Kostadinova, "What is the Status of the EU-GCC Relationship?"

In light of the Arab Spring events, the GCC states have begun a gradual process of incremental reforms in their political institutions. The object of these countries is to allow political debate and contestation to occur in a managed manner.<sup>10</sup> This is of course welcomed by the EU, yet when it comes to values such as human rights, media freedom, access to information, transparency and accountability, both organizations diverge dramatically in their approach and objectives, leading to deadlock.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, the role of civil society groups and NGOs in the GCC remains limited.

The GCC states share a severe level of skepticism towards the normative, political and cultural dimensions of global governance, and reference is often made to historical legacies of neo-colonial Western dominance.<sup>12</sup> Yet, all six GCC states do remain actively involved in practical measures relating to global governance, mostly by creating coalitions with other emerging economies that share an interest in reshaping frameworks of global engagement.

In recent years, Saudi Arabia has led the GCC states in the rebalancing of the global order by creating coalitions with other emerging markets on the one hand and positioning itself through economic ties with the West on the other hand. The GCC, just like the EU, does not limit itself to financial and trade issues at the international level, but rather is involved in energy governance and climate change politics, putting its stamp on international institutions and their politics.

The EU has always advocated a global governance vision of a promotion of global public goods and a rule-based order based on 'effective multilateralism' with the UN at its core. For the GCC, strong global governance cooperation projects in trade, energy, sustainable development, financial governance, rule of law and security are of key importance. Thus, while both organizations and their core member states differ in their emphasis and prioritization of aspects of global cooperation fields, the potential exists to forge common approaches in global problem-solving beyond the limited area of trade and finance.

## 1.2 Main Actors in EU-GCC Cooperation

Who are the key actors in EU-GCC cooperation on global governance issues and what channels do they use? Essentially, in traditional studies of International Relations, state actors have dominated our understanding of the world. Transformations in world politics have enlarged our set of actors to include others that focus on

10. Ulrichsen, "Repositioning Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council States in the Changing Global Order."

11. Kostadinova, "What is the Status of the EU-GCC Relationship?"

12. Ulrichsen, "Repositioning Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council States in the Changing Global Order."

transnational channels in regional integration as well as international activities. Even a cursory analysis of the EU-GCC relationship reveals a multitude of actors engaged in interactions between the regions. Diplomatic relations are in place, and trading partners and parliamentarians regularly engage in dialogue. Civil society groups are also starting to engage, notably on issues of human rights.

A wealth of interaction takes place at the operational level. An examination of these more functional, less ‘high politics’ channels in an analysis of EU-GCC relations shows a picture of highly evolved cooperation between the two regions.

### ***1.2.1 Development of Diplomatic Relations between the EU and the GCC***

The opportunities for interaction between the EU and the GCC have multiplied enormously over the years, as different actors have emerged through internal transformations in both regions. The high-level political interaction that has developed shows the importance that both regions place on cooperation. High-level interactions between states have also increased simultaneously with a marked increase in non-state actor interactions. These have been facilitated by a growing number of transnational frameworks within the EU.

It is clear that within the broad context of EU-GCC relations, there are several EU and GCC member states that have privileged communications: we term these the ‘core state relations.’ These are due to historical reasons (e.g., the British role as colonial power), trade relations, and seemingly the most dominant concern at the moment: security.

### ***1.2.2 Multilateral Diplomacy***

The GCC has observer status at the UN General Assembly, and although it does not have the same level of status or activity as the European Union in the UN system, it is represented alongside its member states. Multilateral diplomacy, in the sense of GCC representation in the world’s multilateral institutions, owes to collective action taken by the individual GCC member states, rather than any conscious effort by the GCC to gather recognition on the global stage as an individual actor.

### ***1.2.3 Political and Policy-Operational Level Interactions: beyond ‘Diplomacy’***

At the diplomatic level, there are interactions of political and policy-operational nature. Within the EU context, GCC and EU representatives meet regularly to discuss the status of the Cooperation Agreement signed in 1988, through the aegis of both the Joint Council and the Joint Cooperation Committee. As a result of the Joint Action Programme, established in 2010 and currently in renegotiation, cooperation

between the regions has developed in line with the 1988 Cooperation Agreement. This interaction has taken place along two major lines beyond ‘diplomatic’ activity: i) epistemic connections and ii) economic and trade relations.

### **Toward Epistemic Communities**

The 2010-2013 EU-GCC Joint Action Programme outlines areas of work in which the European Union and the GCC plan to work together. There are exchanges in 14 different sectors ranging from economics to research. The experiences and knowledge sharing activities obviously broaden out the possibilities and opportunities for engagement across multiple actor types. Through EU-supported projects such as INCODEV, a strong emphasis is put on the sharing of knowledge and resources in the fields of technical and technological development, to the mutual benefit of both parties.

### **Economic and Trade Relations**

The economic importance of the GCC countries will not diminish in the foreseeable future. In economic terms, the GCC region is predicted to continually grow for at least the next seven years, when, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit, around 25 percent of the world’s oil supplies will come from the region. Saudi Arabia’s membership of the G20 also provides the largest GCC country with a seat at the table of the international economic powers of the world. On a more concrete level, there is a working partnership between the EUROCHAMBRES and the FGCCC, which was initiated through financial support from the European Commission. This body attempts to raise awareness of business practices in both regions. The EU-GCC Forum is, as many of the practices established around EU-GCC cooperation, designed to work towards, or in anticipation of, the proposed FTA.

#### ***1.2.4 Inter-parliamentary Connections***

Arab and European parliamentarians have been exchanging opinions and experiences even prior to the creation of the GCC. In 1979, with the first popular European Parliament elections taking place, a “Delegation for Relations with the Arab Peninsula” was established to maintain relations with the GCC countries, the GCC itself, and Yemen. The Delegation secretariat is managed out of the European Parliament’s offices and focuses on two specific tasks:

- monitoring the progress towards an EU-GCC bilateral free trade area
- examining and monitoring the democratization process in the region



Members of the Delegation come from the ranks of MEPs in the European Parliament.

### Civil Society Connections

One of the increasingly important sets of relations between EU and GCC countries are the links between civil society organizations. As part of the conditionality requirements of the EU's push towards more formalized relations with the GCC, issues of democracy and human rights recur frequently at the fore of political discussions. European Parliament delegations visiting the region are increasingly pushing for further engagement with such groups, particularly in light of the recent popular uprisings in Arab countries. As one of the tasks of the EP's Delegation for Relations with the Arab Peninsula, monitoring human rights and the development of democratization in the region has become a central issue.

Within the complex set of relations tying the EU and GCC together, there is a clear and notable growth of operational actors and channels through which closer cooperation can emerge. Necessity and opportunity have helped forge the desire for greater cooperation.

## 2. EU-GCC Approaches in Selected Fields of Global Governance

### 2.1 EU-GCC Cooperation: The Development Dimension and Economic Governance

#### *2.1.1 EU-GCC and Global Governance: The Development Dimension*

The GCC has been credited with being on track with meeting each of the eight UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Over the course of several decades, the region has been witnessing the rapid growth of numerous metropolises, which have transformed the countries from developing, desert lands to major world cities.

These successes have not only been attributed to the individual governments in the region for their strategic foresight and their execution of relevant policies, but to the collective cooperation that exists between the GCC states. The realization of the necessity of looking beyond its reliance on hydrocarbon reservoirs and specifically developing areas such as renewable energy and high-end tourism is propelling the region towards success in the decades to come. As mentioned in other papers in this

working paper series, there are key issues that need to be addressed in terms of societal development in the GCC countries.

The GCC's determination to meet the MDGs manifests itself particularly in the drive of the individual states to increase the employability potential of their citizens through national employment programs. The ultimate goal of such initiatives is to simultaneously reduce the over-dependence on foreign labor while boosting citizen employability and subsequently increasing prosperity and living conditions for GCC citizens. In regard to the third MDG, which is concerned with promoting gender equality and empowerment of women, GCC states have witnessed considerable improvements. For instance, there have been legislative reforms of previously discriminatory laws against women as well as the implementation of new laws to promote the protection of women and facilitate their participation in public life.<sup>13</sup> However, despite representing a better education talent pool than men, the academic contribution of women has yet to be successfully transposed into greater economic and political participation, and their presence in both the labor force and political circles requires improvement.<sup>14</sup>

In terms of development aid and its role as an international donor, the GCC has granted financial assistance to countries like Morocco or Egypt in the wake of the Arab Spring events. This was against the backdrop of the financial crisis in Europe, which meant that European countries could not provide as much support as desired. Due to this latter issue, the GCC has started to increase its foreign aid to countries in the Gulf's sphere of influence. Such investments are of course politically motivated, and one thus needs to look at the consequences of this increase – i.e., the increasing alignment of third countries with the policies of the GCC – as opposed to the EU's. The development effect of this financial aid can still be improved as it is unclear as to whether the aid increased crucial shortcomings for the citizens of these third countries, yet as the GCC is new to this sort of aid programs it is left to be seen how they will further develop this.

13. United Nations Development Program, "Millennium Development Goals: Overview, 2012," <http://www.undp.org/content/rbas/en/home/mdgoverview/overview/mdg3/>.

14. Abdulrahman M. Abouammoh, "The Role of Education: Trends of Reforms and EU-GCC Understanding," presentation made at the workshop entitled: "The EU and the GCC: Challenges and Prospects under the Swedish Presidency of the EU," held in Lund, Sweden from June 8-9, 2009, <http://faculty.ksu.edu.sa/abouammoh/Reports%20and%20papers%20in%20HE/E%20%20The%20Role%20of%20Education%20%20Trends%20of%20Reforms%20and%20EU-GCC%20Understanding.pdf> (p.15); Al Masah Capital Limited, "GCC Women: Challenging the Status Quo" (Dubai, UAE: 2012), [http://almasahcapital.com/uploads/report/report\\_19.pdf](http://almasahcapital.com/uploads/report/report_19.pdf); Nadine Sika, "The Millennium Development Goals: Prospects for Gender Equality in the Arab World," *Journal of International Women's Studies* 12.3 (2013): 27-42, <http://vc.bridgew.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1111&context=jiws>.

Advancing EU-GCC interactions, particularly in the field of education and research innovation, is crucial in achieving the MDG's, more so as education enables numerous positive spillover effects into different aspects of society. Thus, strengthened EU-GCC relations through higher degree programs will not only facilitate the advancement of MDG 3, but enable the GCC states to learn from the experiences and weaknesses of the EU which currently serves as the economic and monetary integration model for the Gulf.<sup>15</sup>

### ***2.1.2 EU-GCC and Global Governance: The Economic Dimension***

As outlined before, the strongest developed field of mutual interest for EU-GCC relations is trade and finance. This is very evident in the negotiations for an FTA between both organizations.<sup>16</sup> Suspended since 2008, the desire to reinstate negotiations indicates the importance of the region for the EU.

This high level of importance and strongly developed interest in trade and finance can of course be related to the hydrocarbon resources in the Gulf. However, trade ties are not limited to hydrocarbon resources as the import of automobiles or pharmaceutical products, for example, from the EU form a big portion of the GCC's imports. In addition, exchange programs such as Erasmus Mundus have been established between a number of EU and GCC universities, highlighting the interchange of human capital and knowledge between both regions.<sup>17</sup>

Saudi Arabia's new seats in the G20 and the IMF board have not passed without notice. After playing a major role in stabilizing the oil markets in late 2008, the country received a lot of international praise. While holding these positions, Saudi Arabia used the opportunity to call for changes to the international financial architecture, which is something that most developing countries within the G20 have been asking for.<sup>18</sup> For Saudi Arabia and its counterparts such as Brazil, India, and China, the crisis has been an excellent opportunity to call for more voting power within the IMF framework since the established powers within the organization such as the US and the UK, had been calling upon the GCC countries for extra financial contributions to the

15. Rodney Wilson, "Human Resources and Education in the GCC: Prospects for European Cooperation" in *EU-GCC Cooperation in the Field of Education*, G. Luciani et al., (European University Institute, Florence, 2002); Cono Giardullo, "The Gulf Cooperation Council as a New Regional Power: Time for the EU to Propose a Strategic Partnership," College of Europe & the United Nations University: 2012.

16. Giardullo, "The Gulf Cooperation Council as a New Regional Power," Bruges Regional Integration & Global Governance Papers, no. 3. 2012.

17. Ibid.

18. Ulrichsen, "Repositioning Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council States in the Changing Global Order."

system. The GCC countries cleverly traded money for power and managed to form a coalition with other developing countries to counter-balance what they perceived as post-colonial dominance. As a result of Saudi Arabia's efforts in the G20 and IMF, the balance in these organizations is now shifting towards a more representative model of the multi-polar world of today. These efforts have indicated the willingness and ability of the GCC countries to forge a consensual view and vision on how to reform and stabilize the global economic governance architecture with respect for the existing structure yet creative enough to shift the balance.

By joining the World Trade Organization (WTO), the GCC countries have committed themselves to reducing existing tariffs and restrictions on imports to foster economic growth in the region. Within this organization, the GCC countries along with other developing countries are also trying to modify reigning paradigms coming from the developed world. Using the economic crisis and its impact on the developing world as an example of how an organization such as the WTO has been abused by the western countries, the GCC is attempting not only for change within the organization but also to push the Doha Round forward.

## 2.2 Rule of Law Initiatives and Lessons for EU-GCC Cooperation on Rule of Law Projects: the Qatari Case Study

The global rule of law and strengthening of legal approaches to global problems is at the heart of global governance. All GCC countries have established national strategies and programs focused on economic development and diversification but they are also concerned with improving development in other spheres of activity including education and employment. Qatar, Bahrain and Abu Dhabi (UAE) have established "2030 Visions" which set broad-based, ambitious goals for development by the year 2030. The Qatar National Vision 2030 also includes a focus on civic and legal development including an increasing emphasis on the rule of law.

Indeed, despite considerable challenges and rule of law problems (such as the current problems surrounding labor rights), in recent years a modest sign of advancement in the field of the rule of law can be discerned. The establishment of institutions, although still in their infancy, in Qatar can form the basis for an EU-GCC dialogue on the rule of law in fields such as anti-corruption and human rights.

In December 2012, an 'Anti-Corruption and Rule of Law Center' was set up with support from the UN Development Program. While the creation of such a center was also motivated by commercial interests (to show the combatting of corruption to build investor confidence), it can also be seen as an important step toward building rule of law

dialogues. Furthermore, the creation of a “UN Center for Human Rights” by the UN Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights can be seen as another important small step toward a potential rule of law dialogue. These instances of institution-building, albeit modest in scale, bear potential for expanded EU-GCC cooperation in this field.

Qatar has also fostered international dialogue and exchange on the rule of law through the creation of the Qatar Law Forum. The Forum began as a three-day conference held in 2009, and again in 2012, on the subject of global commitment to the rule of law together with allied issues of international legal and economic significance. Sponsored by the Qatari government, the Qatar Law Forum gathers legal leaders from 60 countries spanning the developed and developing worlds. The second Qatar Law Forum featured a special emphasis on the Arab Spring, with the Qatari context providing a relevant regional backdrop for these discussions.

The Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Center (QICDRC) has expanded its original vision by developing itself into a global center for quality dispute resolution. Headed by the former President of the Supreme Court of England and Wales, and filled with international and national judges, the QICDRC is a multi-door center combining court, arbitration and mediation services. Investment by Qatar in its legal architecture has resulted in the QICDRC being selected as a forum of choice by an increasing number of international companies. The Court’s pioneering development of a construction case dispute resolution model in advance of the 2022 World Cup and its strenuous efforts in developing professional legal and judicial education can also be seen as further examples of its growing importance.

As outlined previously, Qatar has formed international partnerships with governmental and institutional partners on the subject of legal development and the rule of law. It has signed memoranda of understanding with other countries (including France and Egypt) on the subject of judicial education, reflecting not only the diversity of Qatar’s legal tradition but its open attitude towards dialogue and exchange with a range of international partners. The American Bar Association Rule of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI) has also worked with Qatari institutions in the development of public education regarding the rule of law through an interactive website; the production of citizenship materials for school pupils; input into the curriculum of the College of Law at Qatar University (currently the country’s only law school); and involvement in the delivery of professional legal education.

While the GCC is formed of countries which share many political, legal, cultural and social similarities, the GCC and its constituent members are far from homogenous in character. They are also at different stages of development vis-à-vis the rule of law. EU cooperation with the GCC needs to take account of this. It must also consider the

motivations and incentives for growing rule of law projects in individual Gulf States, and engage the concerns, needs, and desires of different national interests and players in order to encourage their sustainability. Whether it be, for example, developing rule of law projects as a question of national and international leadership or positing them within the aegis of economic strength and diversification, we suggest that the EU takes a thoroughly informed approach towards rule of law engagement with the GCC.

Although the EU has long established formal cooperation with the GCC, practical engagement by European countries in rule of law projects in the Gulf is very much in its infancy. By way of contrast, other international organizations such as the American Bar Association's ABA ROLI have a well-established presence in the Gulf and have made some notable achievements. As outlined earlier, the EU should consider the current picture of rule of law projects in individual Gulf countries in its dialogue with the GCC. In so doing, the EU could enter into a triangular partnership (in cooperation with the UN) and draw on lessons that may be learnt from other international actors and their experiences in the promotion of a rule of law dialogue; the synergies of potential rule of law projects with those that already exist; and partnerships that may be formed to facilitate the delivery of future projects.

Finally, a true global dialogue on human rights could also be advanced by forging an EU-OIC Dialogue on the "Cairo Declaration," which is currently in a process of revision by an independent expert committee. Taking advantage of these developments could provide a favorable basis for advancing a critical and constructive dialogue on the global rule of law.

## 2.3 The Political Dimension: EU-GCC Cooperation in the Middle East Peace Process

Many global powers are involved in the Middle East Peace Process (MEPP), which has been an issue of focus for commentators and policymakers in the region. In recent years, the GCC, as a stable multilateral organization, has played a key role as an intermediary between the Palestinian Authority and other groups, and – notably – the US in trying to come to some sort of negotiated solution. The EU has had a key role in this process and has given specific support to both the political and practical aspects of MEPP.

### 2.3.1 Direct Support from the EU and GCC to the Palestinians

The Gulf countries as independent entities, and the GCC as a whole, have supported the Palestinian people both politically and financially over the years. Support for



the rights of Palestinians and all Arabs states engaged in wars with Israel has been high-level and predominantly of a political level. Since its inception, the GCC has proclaimed its support for the Palestinian people. The organization has been used as a vehicle for pursuing a peaceful solution to the conflict, with initiatives emerging from Saudi Arabia in both 1981 and 2002. In 2002, the 'Arab Peace Initiative' was launched wherein Arab states promised normalization of bilateral relations with Israel in exchange for agreement with the 1967 borders of the two-state solution proposed by the international community. Specific GCC countries, such as Qatar and Saudi Arabia, have played the roles of supplementary intermediators and so-called 'brokers' between the EU and the US and the Palestinians in furthering these negotiations. Recently, the Qatari government played a leading role in building up regional support for the beleaguered Gaza Strip, inviting Hamas to represent the Palestinian contingent at a regional conference after the Israel-Gaza conflict of 2008-2009.

Similarly, the EU has been a strong supporter of the Palestinian Authority. It has been supporting the Palestinian people since 1971, when the EEC provided financial assistance to the UN's Relief and Works Agency, which provides support for Palestinian refugees in the region.<sup>19</sup> Subsequently, the EU has emerged as one of the biggest – if not the biggest – financial supporter of the Palestinian people.

Politically, the EU has been a long-time contributor to discussions on the Arab-Israeli conflict and has sought to contribute toward international solutions to the problem. During the 1970s, European Political Cooperation – a loose framework of EEC Foreign Ministers – launched several communiqués and démarches seeking to clarify their perspectives on the most problematic issues underlying the conflict.<sup>20</sup> This was strengthened in later years with strong French support for building up international consensus on proposed solutions, and through the appointment of a permanent observer to follow the MEPP in 1996,<sup>21</sup> and subsequently the transformation of this post into that of Special Representative of the EU to the MEPP, which was – until recently – an office supported by the member states of the EU; this function of EUSR has now been fully integrated into the EEAS structure.

For the purpose of this paper, we set aside the direct and individual roles that the EU and the GCC have played in the Palestinian issue and only look at their

19. European Commission, "European Neighbourhood Policy. Country Report Palestine Authority of the West Bank and Gaza Strip," Commission Staff Working Paper, Brussels: European Commission, 2004.

20. F. d'Alançon, "The EC Looks to a New Middle East," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 23, no. 2 (1994): 41–51.

21. P.M. de la Gorce, "Europe and the Arab-Israel Conflict: A Survey," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 26(3) (1997): 5–16.

engagement in international/global structures for finding solutions to the crisis that has defined the region for more than half a century. In the following section, the key fora that attempt to contribute towards the development of peace, security and stability in the region are described, with a specific discussion on how the GCC and the EU work together. At the end of this section, an outline concerning the potential for, and suggestions for, improvement of collaborative efforts is given.

### ***2.3.2 Coordination of Support? EU-GCC Cooperation Agreement and the Middle East Peace Process***

Combined, the EU and the GCC comprise the world's largest supporters of the Palestinian Authority. However, the support emerging from the two has often varied. In the recent past, the GCC countries have been willing to support Hamas in the Gaza Strip, while the EU has been more supportive of the Fatah element of the Palestinian political spectrum. Therefore, questions of legitimacy and representation become stumbling blocks to achieving jointly-decreed statements on support for the principles enshrined in international agreements on the MEPP. These declarations are reiterated at the regular Ministerial and Council Meetings that take place between the EU and the GCC, which are published as joint communiqués. At the Ministerial level, it appears that much of the discussion relates to the EU's role in the UN-supported Quartet mission to stabilize the region and to bring a mutually-acceptable solution to the conflict that is focused on internationally agreed conditions (1967 borders, etc.). Much is made by both the EU and the GCC of the mutual high-level support for these political ambitions that have been reiterated since the Madrid Conference in 1991.

These moments of vocal mutual support have emerged frequently over the years, but when we turn to practice, a slightly different story emerges. For example, witness the divergence in views over which Palestinian group should be supported. Other issues that may need to be fleshed out in more detail to ascertain congruence of opinion when it comes to operationalization of the fundamental principle concern the various 'red lines' that have been marked as non-negotiable by various parties in the conflict (notably the Israelis and the Palestinians, but also the US government). These include the Right of Return and the establishment of the capital of the State of Palestine in East Jerusalem.

### ***2.3.3 United Nations***

The continued efforts of the United Nations to bring about a lasting peace settlement to the Israel-Palestine question have been a dominant factor of international politics since the 1948 recognition of the State of Israel by the UN General Assembly. Part



of the leadership in the quest for a peaceful settlement has been provided by the famous Madrid Quartet, established in 2002 and currently represented by the former British Prime Minister Tony Blair. The United Nations financially supports the Special Envoy's role. The Quartet is composed of representatives from the UN, US, EU and Russia. However, the Quartet is seen by many observers – and particularly those in the Palestinian camp – as being “useless, useless, useless.”<sup>22</sup> However, other commentators have expressed a sentiment that the EU, in the shape of the newly formed European External Action Service, has started to work towards ‘unsticking’ the stalled Quartet process.<sup>23</sup> This relates to the ambitions of the EU to emerge as a “player and not a payer,” in the words of the EU's High Representative Catherine Ashton.

#### ***2.3.4 Regional Solutions***

The GCC has played a key role in the Middle East Peace Process in a regional context. The so-called Arab Spring produced a wave of protests against incumbent powers in the region. The GCC countries have not been immune to these protests, and their response has been on many levels. First of all, the support for internal stability has been reinforced (see the security section of this paper). Secondly, and most importantly for the EU, the GCC has shifted attention towards its role as an international actor, especially in its region. For example, it recently proposed the enlargement of the GCC to include countries such as Morocco and Jordan.

As a regional power, the potential for increased partnership between the EU and the GCC in this area remains vast and promising. If the GCC extends its borders to the River Jordan, then the geopolitical situation surrounding the Israel-Palestine conflict will doubtless change as the Gulf States emerge as ‘neighbors’ of Israel.

#### ***2.3.5 Arab League and the Organization of Islamic Conference***

The GCC countries have used their roles within other multilateral institutions to develop broad agreements with a large number of likeminded states, in order to help advance their political and strategic weight in the international community vis-à-vis the MEPP. The GCC has played the role of intermediary with the Arab League and Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), and worked towards developing common approaches and platforms from which Arab countries can voice their opinions.

---

22. “‘Useless, Useless, Useless’: The Verdict on Tony Blair’s Job,” *The Independent*, December 16, 2012. Available at: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/middle-east/useless-useless-useless-the-palestinian-verdict-on-tony-blairs-job-8421163.html>.

23. Steven Blockmans, *The European External Action Service One Year on: First Signs of Strengths and Weaknesses* (The Hague: Centre for the Law of EU External Relations, 2012).

### *2.3.6 Prospects for Collaborative Efforts*

Prior to the Arab Spring, the general consensus was that the EU's role in the MEPP was most effective at the micro-level: in dealing with projects and providing practical support to the Palestinians. Political action from the EU side had been stymied by the unwillingness of all EU member states to develop detailed common proposals that were agreeable to the major actors in the region and beyond.

As the effects of the Arab Spring fuel a resurgence in the international actorness of the GCC and its member countries, a more dynamic relationship between the GCC and the EU may emerge. Clearly with the GCC countries' relationship with the rest of the Arab and Muslim worlds appearing to grow in these times of turbulence, there is a scope for the GCC to embellish its role as preferred broker in relations between the 'West' and the 'Middle East.' Any peace agreement in Palestine would be a moment in history that could redefine the relationship between the Arab and Western worlds; hence, there is a lot of political weight placed on any party who can help make such a possibility come to fruition.

## **2.4 The Security Dimension: Libya, Syria, UN Peacekeeping**

In the last two years, milestones have been reached in the cooperation between the GCC and the UN peacekeeping organization. Increasingly, the GCC countries, in particular Qatar, are tackling global security issues of common interest by taking on the roles of mediators, peace-builders, and peacekeepers. This indicates that the GCC is still concerned with regional security issues, which, of course, is one of the reasons why the organization was set up. Throughout the long history of the Israel-Palestine conflict, Saudi Arabia has projected its clear opinion, yet the country always preferred to use diplomatic tools and mediation efforts in order to maintain stability. To this day, Saudi Arabia and other GCC states have tried to maintain or contribute to stability in the region, even within the GCC itself (cf. the protests in Bahrain).

Stability is key for the GCC states because of the price vulnerability of the hydrocarbon resources. Hence, it should not have come as a surprise that Qatar and the UAE contributed to NATO's 'Unified Protector' mission in Libya 2011, where Qatar supported the air strikes conducted to impose a no-fly zone. In the aftermath of the mission, both Qatar and the UAE have continued to take on the responsibilities of peacekeeping. Qatar contributed to the rehabilitation and rebuilding efforts in Libya by supporting police training efforts while the UAE offered assistance in naval border security. For Qatar, this mission was not their first effort in peacekeeping as the country had made a limited contribution to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon between 2007 and 2008.

In addition, the GCC has contributed to the joint Arab League and UN Observer Mission in Syria to ensure compliance with the agreements reached under the Arab League's peace plan. Although the commitment of the GCC countries towards global security is not new, the Syria crisis has put the Gulf region on the map as a serious player in this field. While the EU is currently debating a return to UN peacekeeping after NATO's ISAF mission in Afghanistan ends in 2014, the GCC's increasing efforts in this field might open new perspectives. Of course, at this stage it is still rather unclear whether the GCC is aiming to contribute to security issues outside its sphere of influence, or whether the EU will actually return to UN peacekeeping. Nevertheless, these developments indicate that it may be worth opening up the dialogue on an EU-GCC contribution to UN peacekeeping.

## 2.5 Potential Cooperation in Risk Analysis and Crisis Response

The level of cooperation between the EU and the other regional organizations like ASEAN, Arab League, and the African Union in responding to man-made and natural disasters and the possibility of developing a common information flow system is increasing.

In terms of global governance, the regional momentum is constantly extending into new and diverse domains; what is emerging is a de facto division of labor where regional actors take on increasingly important roles.<sup>24</sup>

Regions can be seen as a forum for building trust that is not possible on a global scale. For these reasons, they can often be more effective in establishing common policies.<sup>25</sup> Besides areas such as migration or climate change, disaster response seems to be an area in which regional mechanisms may not only be able to respond more quickly than international ones, but their intervention may also be politically more acceptable, as evidenced by the key role played by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in responding to Cyclone Nargis in 2008.

Some regional organizations have developed innovative and effective forms of regional collaboration that could serve as models for other regions. These are apparent in the way in which transborder crises have been dealt with in recent years. Disasters and crisis of all types, like hurricanes, earthquakes, and conflict equally affect all regions across national boundaries. The European Union, that has also faced both

24. Louise Fawcett, "Exploring Regional Domains: A Comparative History of Regionalism," *International Affairs* 80 no. 3, (2004): 431.

25. Katherine Haver and Conor Foley, "International and Regional Initiatives," Background paper prepared for the International Dialogue on Strengthening Partnership in Disaster Response, October 2011, [www.ifrc.org/ PageFiles/93533/Background%20paper%202.pdf](http://www.ifrc.org/PageFiles/93533/Background%20paper%202.pdf).

natural and man-made crises, has in recent years invested heavily in the build-up of a comprehensive response system. Most international crises today are complex and multidimensional, meaning that several actors come into play when a crisis occurs. Coherence and coordination of the EU's external action in the field of crisis response and management is the aim of the European External Action Service's Crisis Response and Operational Coordination Department, created by HR/VP Ashton at the end of 2010 as one of the key foreign policy innovations of the Lisbon Treaty. In this department, different instruments are already in place and others are under revision: the EU Crisis Platform, as an EU internal instrument of coordination; the EU Situation Room, a 24/7 situational awareness capability; and the EU Emergency and Crisis Coordination Arrangements (CCA), which provides a platform for exchanging information and supporting the political coordination and action during a complex crisis.

### *2.5.1 EU and Regional Organizations Dialogue in Risk Analysis and Crisis Response*

To ensure effective horizontal coordination among different regional organizations, the European Union is now implementing several projects with other regional organizations.<sup>26</sup> The EU has started investing in cooperation projects with the African Union (AU), the League of Arab States (LAS), and the ASEAN.

The AU Situation Room<sup>27</sup> was launched in 2009 and is situated within the Peace and Security Directorate's Conflict Management Division in Addis Ababa.<sup>28</sup> It was established in collaboration with the European Joint Research Centre (JRC), which supported the development of a Continental Early Warning System (CEWS).<sup>29</sup> The AU Situation Room is operated by 13 officials who take care of monitoring and produce analysis on a 24/7 basis.

The new Situation Room for the League of Arab States (LAS)<sup>30</sup> in Cairo was inaugurated in November 2012. It is co-financed to the tune of 1.9 million Euro by the

26. "EU Builds Situation Room for Arab League in Cairo," Andrew Rettman, EU Observer, June 26, 2012, <http://euobserver.com/foreign/116757>. See more on this discussion: <http://regionswatch.blogspot.be/2011/07/if-ever-there-was-temptation-by-afro.html>, [http://eeas.europa.eu/crisis-response/where-we-work/asean/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/crisis-response/where-we-work/asean/index_en.htm).

27. Official website, <http://www.peaceau.org/en/situationroom>.

28. P.B. Stares and M. Zanko, "Partners in Preventive Action: the United States and International Institutions," Council on Foreign Relations, Council Special Report No.62, September 2011.

29. The African Union and the Joint Research Centre (JRC), available at [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/downloads/jrc\\_leaflet\\_african\\_union\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/downloads/jrc_leaflet_african_union_en.pdf)

30. EU Press Release, High Representative Catherine Ashton inaugurates EU-funded Crisis Room at League of Arab States, Cairo November 13, 2012, available at [http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/133466.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/foraff/133466.pdf) (December 14, 2013).

EU with the Instrument for Stability (IfS) budget. The 200 Arab officials, who will run the operation, were trained and received know-how directly from the EU Situation Room officials. The objective is to reinforce the capacity of Arab League to gather and analyze information on critical issues such as elections in Egypt and the developments in Syria.

ASEAN and the EU-ASEAN Plan of Action 2013-2017 advocates the importance of increasing cooperation in crisis response. Southeast Asia is located in one of the most disaster-prone regions of the world: since the early days of ASEAN's establishment, the member states have initiated discussions on cooperation in disaster management. A Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM) was established in 2003. On July 26, 2005 the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN member states signed the Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) with the aim to provide effective mechanisms to achieve a reduction of disaster impact and to jointly respond to disaster emergencies through concerted national efforts and intensified regional and international cooperation. On November 17, 2011, in the framework of the AADMER agreement, the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) was created.

Under the EU-ASEAN Dialogue Instrument (READI), the AHA Centre<sup>31</sup> has been implemented and, since then various monitoring and evaluation workshops have been conducted in cooperation with the EU.<sup>32</sup>

These examples of regional interaction show that there is increasing collaboration between states to deal with the transnational impact of disaster and crisis, be it man-made or originating from natural causes.

### ***2.5.2 Strong Potential for EU-GCC Cooperation: Setting up a Situation Room/Information Sharing***

Following the examples of other regional organizations, the GCC could also start a process of integration and cooperation with other external actors (i.e., regional and international organizations), as well as with its own member states. The creation of a GCC Situation Room seems an objective that would be achievable in the medium term and in line with the GCC objectives,<sup>33</sup> in terms of (1) coordination, integration and inter-connection between GCC member states in all fields in order to achieve unity among them and (2) deepening and strengthening relations, links, and areas of

31. <http://www.ahacentre.org>.

32. "Overview of ASEAN-EU Dialogue Relations," available at <http://www.asean.org/news/item/overview-of-asean-eu-dialogue-relations>.

33. The Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, Article 4, available at <http://www.gcc-sg.org/eng/indexfc7a.html?action=Sec-Show&ID=1>.

cooperation already prevalent between their peoples across various sectors. There are different steps that need to be taken. It is a question of creating mutual trust, building and agreeing on a common discourse, and investing joint resources. The process of building trust should be developed in two directions: The ‘internal’ trust between the GCC and its member states, and the ‘external’ trust between the GCC and other regional or international organizations. Among the various mechanisms that could support trust building, the exchange of experts in emergency response and information sharing is absolutely the first step.

Information sharing can only start when trust is in place. However, trust and institutional developments often go hand in hand, and the creation of a common GCC Situation Room that could be located in the GCC Secretariat in Riyadh would play a key role in that dual process. Information sharing is key and should not only be seen as a mere technical issue. Cooperation on intelligence-related issues is not completely new to the GCC. In May 2004, GCC members signed an intelligence-sharing pact.<sup>34</sup> The aim of the agreement was to ‘counter terrorism’ and it shows that the Gulf States want to proceed in this field; the agreement lays the ground for subsequent activity. So far, the accord, however, gives the impression that it is more ‘style than substance.’<sup>35</sup> The resistance in sharing intelligence information encountered by GCC states is the same as that faced by the EU member states. Therefore, as in the EU, the solution could be to divert the focus to a less politically-sensitive subject, such as the sharing of open source or publicly available information on responses to disaster or humanitarian aid.

The discussion around the creation of a Global Network of Crisis Rooms<sup>36</sup> is ongoing, and the GCC states should not miss the opportunity to be a potential participant in this area. The European Union should look at the Gulf as a potential long-term partner in this project. Yet, it also needs to be ensured that the situation room or shared intelligence activities are not misused for activities against domestic opposition movements. Ensuring this balance and providing safeguards will also remain a core challenge in the years ahead in the context of EU-GCC cooperation and capacity-building.

34. BBC News, “Profile: Gulf Co-operation Council,” available at [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle\\_east/country\\_profiles/4155001.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/country_profiles/4155001.stm).

35. UK Parliament, House of Commons: Foreign Affairs Committee “Foreign Policy Aspects of the War Against Terrorism: Fourth Report of Session 2005-06; Report, Together with Formal Minutes, Oral and Written Evidence.”

36. C. Ashton, “Towards a Global Network of Crisis Rooms,” speech at the High-level Conference on Managing Complex International Crises, available at [http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2013/131205\\_04\\_en.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2013/131205_04_en.pdf).



## Conclusion

## GULF PAPER

It is clear from the previously-mentioned examples from different political, economic, legal and security fields that there are wide-ranging and far-reaching opportunities for enhanced cooperation on issues of global importance between the EU and the GCC. Economically speaking, the potential for enhanced cooperation is significant and has often been identified as the most important aspect of inter-regional cooperation in global governance. However, the political, legal and security dimensions have so far been largely unexplored but, as we argued earlier, hold clear promise. Yet, the experiences shared in the political field by the GCC and the EU appear to show, as highlighted in the case study on the Middle East Peace Process, that concrete action and high-level political statements need to be aligned more closely with each other. Interactions in the development of legal frameworks to support the development of the rule of law also appear to be evolving with tentative initiatives and institution-building that could provide further potential for EU-GCC cooperation.

International discourse on the global governance of these highly intertwined policy fields is increasingly converging, and the space between the EU and the GCC appears to be narrowing as the scope and mandate of these regional actors continues to grow. Besides, new actors are emerging and playing a greater role in developing spaces for engagement: this might be referred to as ‘new diplomacy’, but has a rich history in ‘cultural’ and ‘public’ diplomacies.

In summary, the existing relations between the EU and the GCC operate on pragmatic rather than principled lines. The joint cooperation activities reveal that the EU-GCC relationship is flourishing, but in specific sectors rather than on global lines. This paper seeks to show a sample of these different areas, looking at a range of different global governance challenges and examining how the EU and the GCC can interact in these areas. The variety of actors engaged in these interactions has also been mentioned and this reveals a broad range of loose interconnections that can be further – and perhaps more structurally – supported with greater efforts towards public diplomacy such as the project supporting this paper.

The multi-faceted relationship between the European countries and those in the GCC, and the wealth of potential for a deeper regional engagement between individuals, political institutions, and non-state organizations can only help contribute to greater understanding between the European and Arab worlds. Seeking a deeper and wider engagement may be seen as one of the most pressing objectives in our time.

This paper suggests that the engagement of different types of actors in diplomatic relations will support and enhance the development of cooperation between the EU

and the GCC in areas of global importance. Structural support for the increase in the number of these different actors (such as students, academics, and other civil society actors) would be one of the first steps to strengthening the engagement between the two regions.



## About the Authors

## GULF PAPER

**Joachim A. Koops** is Director of the Global Governance Institute and Professor of Political Science/Head of Department of International Affairs at Vesalius College, Free University of Brussels (VUB). He is also a Research Professor at the VUB's Institute for European Studies, focusing on the EU's role in Global Security Governance as well as inter-organizational approaches to peacekeeping and crisis management. In addition, he is the Academic Director of the European Peace & Security Studies (EPSS) Programme and the Executive Course in Global Risk Analysis and Crisis Management. Recent and forthcoming publications include the "Oxford Handbook of UN Peacekeeping Operations," Oxford University Press (co-edited with T. Tardy, N. MacQueen and P.D. Williams), "The EU as a Diplomatic Actor," Palgrave (co-edited with G. Macaj), "Operationalising the Responsibility to Protect," Palgrave (co-edited with D. Fiott), and "The Palgrave Handbook of Inter-organizational Relations in World Politics" (co-edited with R. Biermann). Joachim has served as Lessons Learned Advisor to the Standby High Readiness Brigade for UN Operations (SHIRBRIG), Advisor to the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, New York, and as a Member of the European Commission's Ethics Review Committee.

**Jamal Shahin** is a Postdoctoral Researcher with Ph.D.-supervision rights in the "Governance and Politics of the Internet in Europe" programme at the IES. He is also an Assistant Professor in European Studies at the University of Amsterdam. His research and teaching interests are focused on two strands: the EU as an international actor, particularly with respect to other international institutions; and Information Society policies and the development of public administration and institutional reform in the EU. Both strands focus on issues of new European governance and focus on the role of ICT therein. Recently, his research has focused on the new governance debate in the EU, comparisons of eGovernment developments in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the EU, and the performance of the EU in international institutions. Consultancy projects that he has managed or been involved in have concerned, inter alia, EU public diplomacy, EU-funded research work in the areas of research policy, eGovernment, and eDemocracy policies at EU and national levels. He has experience of working outside Europe, including in Asia and the Middle East. In 2010, Jamal's undergraduate course at the University of Amsterdam, "The Contemporary EU," was nominated for the Faculty of Humanities' annual teaching prize.

**Chloë Smythe** is a Senior Analyst in the Global Justice Section of the Global Governance Institute (GGI). She has over ten years of experience in legal research, policy and management. Before pursuing a career in legal practice, she was Deputy Chief Executive of the Civil Justice Council, England's leading civil justice think tank and watchdog. In this role, she was active in leading projects relating to legal education and dispute resolution. In addition to her work in legal practice, Chloë is also a consultant to the Qatar International Court and Dispute Resolution Centre. She was one of three students in her year to be selected by the University of Leicester to convert from LL.B Law to LL.B International Law and to spend a third year of study at the National University of Singapore. She was Called to the Bar as a Queen Mother scholar, and later graduated from the LL.M program at the University of Toronto as a Commonwealth scholar. She also holds a Certificate in Persian (Distinction).

**Giulia Tercovich** is office coordinator and a Senior Analyst in the Peace and Security Section of the Global Governance Institute. She is also a Research Fellow in European Peace & Security Studies (EPSS) at Vesalius College and Associate Researcher at the Institute for European Studies (IES) of the Free University of Brussels (VUB). Giulia focuses on the role of the European Union in crisis response and as a global security actor. Areas of expertise include EU Crisis Response and Civil Protection, EU Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management, CFSP/CSDP, European External Action Service (EEAS), Comprehensive Approach as well as Innovative Teaching Methods. Giulia has worked for the EEAS in the Crisis Response and Operational Coordination Department and for the Italian Permanent Representation to the EU, assisting the delegate to the Committee for Civilian Aspects of Crisis Management (CivCom). She is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in the GEM Multilateralism and Global Governance Ph.D. school at the ULB/University of Warwick.

**Ziggy Vandebriel** is an analyst at the Global Governance Institute (GGI) within the Environment & Sustainable Development as well as the Peace and Security sections and currently enrolled as a Ph.D. student, focusing his research on the relation between transparency, national security and deliberative democracy as well as the position of whistleblowers. He holds a B.A. in International Affairs from Vesalius College, Free University of Brussels (VUB) with a special focus on European Peace and Security Studies (in cooperation with the Belgian Royal Military School) and an M.A. in Environmental Law and Sustainable Development from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. In conjunction with his work at the GGI, Ziggy is an assistant for a member of the Belgian Federal Parliament, working in the commissions on Defense, Environment and Privacy.



**Gulf Research Center**  
Knowledge for All

---

[www.grc.net](http://www.grc.net)