منتدى الخليج الدولي
Gulf International Forum

GIF Newsletter

November 2018, Volume 5

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Upcoming Event - Save the Date!

Thursday, December 6th, 2018 from 12:30 p.m till 2:30 p.m.

It's a photograph that now lives in infamy, a grainy shot of a smiling King Abdul Aziz sitting in a high-backed leather chair next to US President Franklin Delano Roosevelt aboard the USS Quincy. Just a year prior to this meeting FDR famously declared, "the defense of Saudi Arabia is vital to the defense of the United States." And with that began a relationship that has always held defense at its center. Over the years the GCC nations have been purchasers of hundreds of billions of dollars in of Western weaponry, training and strategic assistance that has been used to the advantage of the Gulf states in conflicts as varied as the Liberation of Kuwait to the ongoing War in Yemen. To be sure, changing technologies and geopolitics have vastly altered the weapons and processes by which the region is secured, however even with these changes certain aspects of the region's security have remained constant. The Strait of Hormuz, the narrow passage by which nearly all oil exits the region, continues to be vital for American security interests, in addition to being a source of tension for the region's relationship to Iran. **Read More**

Location:
National Press Club
529 14th St NW, Washington, DC

Click here for directions.

More information to be announced!

ANALYSIS

Changing Context Provides Conditions for De-Escalation in Yemen

Opportunities for peace between Yemen's warring parties are higher than ever before. Recent events in Yemen and the greater Gulf region indicate a shift toward de-escalation in the war-torn country, which would alleviate the suffering of millions of Yemenis.

Although a long time coming, it would seem that increased media scrutiny has prompted the international community to realize the necessity of winding down a war that has done nothing but exacerbate a tragic humanitarian and economic situation in what was already the poorest country in the Arab world. **Read More**

The Jamal Khashoggi Affair Part 2: Congress Responding to President Trump

Even President Trump's own party found his statement confounding yesterday, in which he made a series of disputed claims regarding Saudi Arabia and the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. The statement begins with an explicit condemnation of Iran, followed by a disregard for CIA conclusions, and ends with a defense of Saudi Arabia's role in the global energy market. As a result, President Trump indicated that the Khashoggi case will not result in any significant changes to the USA-Saudi relationship. In response, a bipartisan group of Senators is invoking the Global Magnitsky Act, while newly empowered House Democrats signal they will use their committee chairmanships and votes to insert accountability into the US-Saudi relationship and hedge against the President's predilection for dollar-diplomacy. **Read More**

Evolution of U.S.-GCC Defense Cooperation

U.S. defense ties to the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates [UAE], Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman) are extensive and since their inception have evolved in many unintended ways not always...

attuned to U.S. interests. Prior to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990 U.S.-GCC cooperation was limited and informal, but became more sweeping and extensive in the aftermath of the early 1991 U.S.-led expulsion of Iraqi troops from its Gulf neighbor. During 1991-1994, the U.S signed successive formal defense contracts with Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, and the UAE, which reportedly provided for U.S. security advice, training, access to major Gulf defense facilities (such as Al Udeid air base in Qatar and Al Dhafra air base in the UAE), and the prepositioning of U.S. military equipment, including enough armor to outfit several U.S. brigades. **Read More**

Delaware-Gulftainer Agreement Represents Significant Change in Rhetoric Since DP World Controversy

In late September 2018, Delaware government authorities finalized a deal whereby Gulftainer, a global port operator based in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates (UAE), had been granted a lease to operate Delaware's Port of Wilmington for 50 years.

Gulftainer's selection comes with the expectation that the company will institute $584 million worth of upgrades to the port's existing infrastructure. After being announced in early April, the deal was approved by both chambers of the Delaware General Assembly and was signed into law by Governor John Carney this past September with resounding bipartisan support. Contrasting with the widespread benefits for Delaware are the concerns from workers, officials, and operators of the Port of Philadelphia, anxious that this latest move will sharply increase competition between the two ports. **Read More**

Iraq's New Government: Historic Opportunity for Reform in Iraq

The formation of Iraq's recent government has to a large extent shaped a new perspective on Iraq's national identity. The results of the election show that a major gap between Iraq's political-elite and the rest of the country's population exists. The former group is polarized across internal and external agendas largely influenced by the support received from either Tehran or Washington. The formation process and appointments made by the new government mirrored the elections' results; minimizing the power of religious political parties, while increasing the power of and trust in political outsiders and independent candidates. The coming-together of this new government also resonated with the message sent by voters, as nominating nonpartisan and technocrat figures to run Iraq's long list of policy-needs reflected the population's desire to see a decline in Tehran's and Washington's influence over Baghdad. **Read More**

November 2018 Panels

Congress & The Shaping of US Policy in the Gulf

Mere hours after American citizens journeyed to the ballot box to cast their votes in the first midterm elections of the Trump Presidency, Gulf International Forum's luncheon panel event "Congress & The Shaping of US Policy in the Gulf," brought in a panel of experts to discuss both the role of Gulf-related foreign policy issues in determining the election's outcome, as well as the impact the newly-elected congress will have on the United States' foreign policy in the region. GIF's very-own Strategic Advisor Ambassador Patrick Theros moderated the discussion between the Honorable Former Congressman James P. Moran, and Dr. A. Trevor Thrall, a professor at George Mason University and a Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute. **Read More**

On November 14th, 2018 Gulf International Forum (GIF) was honored to have gathered a diverse panel of experts at an event titled "Religious Pluralism in the Gulf." Such a topic is certainly timely in the United States, after a recent antisemitic mass shooting at a Pittsburgh synagogue forced Americans to grapple with how the project for peaceful religious coexistence remains unfinished. As a testament to the oft overlooked religious diversity that exists within the Gulf, (a region nominally understood as homogeneously Islamic) several Gulf states including Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Qatar each decried this recent instance of violence against America's Jewish community. That these nations would specifically speak out concerning violence against Jews is neither un-shocking nor random, as Jews have deep historical ties to the region. **Read more**

Internship Opportunities

Period: Spring 2019

Position Title: Unpaid Internship

Job Summary:

Gulf International Forum is offering a training opportunity for distinguished students and graduates. Internship programs are designed to help interns learn about the Gulf region through research/analysis and event planning. A cover letter is required stating why you would like to intern with us and what interests you in Middle East studies, particularly the Gulf region. Interested applicants, please send an updated resume and cover letter to info@gulfii.com

Two Internship Programs Available:
Please indicate which program you are applying to in your cover letter.

(1) Events and Social Media

The internship will provide a training opportunity to advance interns skills in pre-event preparations and post-event documentation. Specific training experiences may include, but are not limited to:

- Learn how to prepare all event-related tasks, which includes -but not limited to- printouts, venue logistics before and during the event day, taking photos and check-in participants.
- Learn how to promote GIF's events and activities.
- Assist in managing GIF social media accounts according to GIF standards for social media and information dissemination.
- Assist in editing for all events related materials.

Desired Skills:

- Undergraduate or recent graduate
- Strong analytical and critical thinking skills
- Strong communication and presentation skills
- Flexibility to work extra hours to fulfill event preparation requirements
- Ability to work well in teams
- Previous experience working on small or medium scale events preferred
- Strong negotiation skills
- Diligent, dependable and hard working
- Detail Oriented

(2) Research Assistant Intern

The internship will provide a training opportunity to advance interns research skills by providing assistance and support for the organization's research and publications initiatives. However, given this is a start-up organization, the training opportunity may vary as the organization further develops. Specific training experiences may include, but are not limited to:

- Learn how to monitor news trends on social media and promote organizations in social media.
- Home editing skills, developing, and producing print and electronic promotional/informational material for the institute, including, but not limited to the website, press releases, newsletters, reports and other publications.
- Learn how to plan and execute events.
- Learn in other areas of organization based on demand.

Desired Skills:

- Degree in liberal arts, public policy, political science, or related field.
- Interest in the Gulf and Middle East region required.
- Strong attention to detail.
- Strong research and analytical skills.
- Excellent written and communication skills
- Ability to proactively multitask and prioritize.

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