



Gulf Studies Symposium

March 4-5, 2024

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY



منتدى الخليج
Gulf International Forum



The Center for Contemporary
Arab Studies

مركز الدراسات العربية المعاصرة

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
School of Foreign Service



Gulf Research Center
Knowledge for All

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Agenda

March 4, 2024

8:00 - 8:45

REGISTRATION OUTSIDE GASTON HALL

8:45 - 10:15

**OPENING CEREMONY AT GEORGETOWN
UNIVERSITY'S GASTON HALL**

8:45- 9:05

WELCOME REMARKS

Dr. Dania Thafer, *Executive Director and Senior Fellow
at Gulf International Forum*

Dean Joel Hellman, (video), *Dean of Georgetown University's
School of Foreign Service*

Dr. Ahmed Sager, *Vice President of the Gulf Research Center*

Dr. Fida Adely, (livestream), *Associate Professor and Director
of Center for Contemporary Arab Studies*

9:05 - 9:15

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Dr. Saud Bin Abdullah Al Attiyah, *Deputy Undersecretary for
Economic Affairs at Qatar's Ministry of Finance*

9:15 - 10:10

PANEL DISCUSSION

Dr. Dania Thafer, *Executive Director and Senior Fellow at
Gulf International Forum*

Dr. Ahmed Sager, *Vice President of the Gulf Research Center*

Dr. Michael Herb, *Professor of Political Science at Georgia
State University's Middle East Center*

Dr. Courtney Freer, *Senior Non-Resident Fellow at Gulf
International Forum and Visiting Professor at Emory
University College of Arts and Sciences*

Ambassador Patrick Theros (moderator), *Senior Fellow and
Strategic Advisor at Gulf International Forum, and Member of
the Advisory Board at Center for Contemporary Arab Studies*

10:10 - 10:15

GULF BOOK AWARD

Presenting the Gulf Book Award to the Recipient

Agenda

10:25 - 10:45

GROUP PHOTO

11:00 - 12:30

**WORKSHOP DIRECTORS OPENING WORKSHOPS
AND THREE PRESENTATIONS DISCUSSIONS**

12:40 - 1:45

LUNCH

2:00 - 3:30

THREE PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION

3:30 - 4:00

COFFEE BREAK

4:00 - 5:30

THREE PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION

5:30

END OF FIRST DAY PRESENTATIONS

March 5, 2024 Program

9:00 - 12:00

PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

12:00 PM

END OF WORKSHOPS

Visit www.gulfif.org to learn more about the symposium.

Times are approximate and subject to change depending on presentations and discussions.

The Gulf Studies Symposium GSS

The Gulf Studies Symposium (GSS)

The Gulf Studies Symposium (GSS) stands as an annual gathering of scholars committed to advancing the depth of knowledge about the Gulf region. Our overarching mission revolves around the promotion of in-depth learning and the facilitation of insightful analysis. We achieve this by orchestrating a series of workshops, with the ultimate aim of bringing forth publications that contribute to the academic discourse on the Gulf.

Our approach to achieving comprehensive discourse is characterized by a deliberate pursuit of diversity among our participants. We actively seek the engagement of a broad spectrum of experts, meticulously curating a blend of both emerging talents and established scholars. This intentional balance in our selection process ensures a rich and multifaceted exploration of the Gulf region, fostering a dynamic exchange of ideas and perspectives.

Gulf International Forum

Gulf International Forum is an independent Washington-based institute that aspires to enhance peace, progress, security, and stability in the Gulf and the greater Middle East region through the open proliferation of ideas.

Gulf International Forum strives to be the primary source of credible analysis on the region. Our mission revolves around enhancing understanding; engaging in free dialogue; and promoting independent thinking by building awareness and contributing to the accumulation of knowledge on the Gulf. The Forum focuses on political, economic, social, and security issues for the nine regional states: Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. Through various educational platforms that promote research, analysis, and dialogue, the Forum aspires to encourage objective intellectual debates that inform interested audiences.

The Gulf Studies Symposium GSS

Georgetown University's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies

Established in 1975, the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies (CCAS) is a research center in the School of Foreign Service offering courses, certificates, and degree programs in the language, history, culture, politics, and economics of the contemporary Arab world. CCAS is also a Department of Education-sponsored National Resource Center on the Middle East and North Africa.

Gulf Research Center

GRC was founded in July 2000 by Dr. Abdulaziz Sager, a Saudi businessman. Dr. Sager's vision was to fill an important void and to conduct scholarly, high-quality research on all aspects of the wider strategic Gulf region, including the GCC countries as well as Iran, Iraq and Yemen. GRC operates on an independent, non-profit basis.

Its belief is that everyone has the right to access knowledge, so it has made all its research available to the general public through publications, workshops, seminars, and conferences. As a non-profit organization, GRC injects all income back into new programs and activities.



Workshops

GEOPOLITICS

Intercultural Center 214

Nuclear Proliferation and Counter-Proliferation in the Gulf: Impacts on Domestic, Defense, and Security Policies

Directors: Dr. Banafsheh Keynoush and Alex Vatanka

This workshop focuses on the Gulf and Middle East's nuclear landscape, examining domestic and geopolitical impacts, particularly concerning Iran's nuclear aspirations. It discusses Gulf nuclear programs, regional and global security dynamics, the role of major powers, and strategies for nuclear deterrence and proliferation within a multipolar world context.

MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2024

8:45 – 10:15	OPENING CEREMONY		
10:25 - 10:45	GSS GROUP PHOTO		
10:45 – 11:00	Workshop directors' welcome remarks and setting rules of presentation and discussion		
TIME	PRESENTER	PAPER TITLE	DISCUSSANT
11:00 – 11:30	Dr. Javad Heiran Nia, <i>Director of Center for Scientific Research & Middle East Strategic Studies, Iran</i>	Obstacles and Prospects of Revitalizing Iran Nuclear Deal, Regional Security Implications	Dr. Robert Mason, <i>Non-Resident Fellow at Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington</i>
11:30 – 12:00	Dr. Nurşin Ateşoğlu Güney, <i>Professor at the National Intelligence University, Ankara</i> Dr. Vişne Korkmaz, <i>Professor at Nisantasi University, Istanbul</i>	Nuclear Deterrence and Iran's Nuclear Program	Dr. Rakshanda F. Fazli, <i>Professor at Aligarh Muslim University-AMU, India</i> Dr. Rashid Aziz Faridi, <i>Professor at Aligarh Muslim University-AMU, India</i>
12:00 – 12:30	Dr. Robert Mason, <i>Non-Resident Fellow at Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington</i>	Saudi Arabia's Civil Nuclear Program: Power, Non-Proliferation, and U.S. Mideast Policy	Dr. Javad Heiran Nia, <i>Director of Center for Scientific Research & Middle East Strategic Studies, Iran</i>
12:40 – 1:45	LUNCH		

Workshops

2:00 – 2:30	Dr. Ali Bakir, <i>Research Assistant Professor, Qatar University</i> Dr. Nayef Nahar Al-Shamari, <i>Associate Professor at Qatar University</i>	Preparing for the Future: A Strategic Foresight into the JCPOA and GCC's Strategic Behaviour	Ludovica Castelli, <i>Doctoral Researcher at University of Leicester</i>
2:30 – 3:00	Ludovica Castelli, <i>Doctoral Researcher at University of Leicester</i>	De-securitization by Silencing: Analyzing Gulf States' Diplomatic Discourses on Israel's Nuclear Status	Dr. Ali Bakir, <i>Research Assistant Professor, Qatar University</i>
3:00 – 3:30	Salma Al Wahaibi, <i>Independent Researcher</i>	Exploring the Viability of a Gulf Weapon of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Contemporary Middle	Nigel Li, MA Candidate, <i>Georgetown University School of Foreign Service</i>
3:30 – 3:55	COFFEE BREAK		
4:00 – 4:30	Nigel Li, MA Candidate, <i>Georgetown University School of Foreign Service</i>	Russia and the Gulf: Jack of All Trades, Master of None?	Salma Al Wahaibi, <i>Independent Researcher</i>
4:30 – 5:00	First day themes and papers discussion		
5:00	END OF FIRST DAY, WRAP UP AND COMMENTS		
TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2024			
9:00 – 9:30	Dr. Rakshanda F. Fazli, <i>Professor at Aligarh Muslim University-AMU, India</i> Dr. Rashid Aziz Faridi, <i>Professor at Aligarh Muslim University-AMU, India</i>	Geopolitical Implications of Iran's Nuclear Program for Gulf Security: Comparative Analysis of Gulf States' Perspectives	Dr. Nurşin Ateşoğlu Güney, <i>Professor at the National Intelligence University, Ankara</i> Dr. Vişne Korkmaz, <i>Professor at Nisantasi University, Istanbul</i>
9:30 – 11:00	END OF SECOND DAY, WRAP UP AND COMMENTS		
END OF WORKSHOP			

Workshops

U.S.-GULF POLICY

Boardroom Intercultural Center 141

U.S.-Gulf Relations in Transition and the Future of Policy Dynamics

Directors: Dr. Kristian Coates Ulrichsen and Dr. Jim Krane

This workshop examines the changing U.S.-Gulf relations over the last decade, focusing on the Gulf Cooperation Council states, and also considering Iran and Yemen's roles. It explores U.S. domestic political influences on foreign policy, individual Gulf states' engagement with the U.S., global power dynamics, and impacts of energy transitions on U.S. interests in the region.

MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2024

8:45 – 10:15	OPENING CEREMONY		
10:25 - 10:45	GSS GROUP PHOTO		
10:45 – 11:00	Workshop directors' welcome remarks and setting rules of presentation and discussion		
TIME	PRESENTER	PAPER TITLE	DISCUSSANT
11:00 – 11:30	Dr. Fadi Hilani, <i>Senior Academic and Research Fellow at the National Council on US-Arab relations</i>	Rethinking Strategies of Defense, Security and Economy in the U.S.-Arab Gulf Foreign Policy	Dr. Rui Li, <i>Chief Correspondent of Tehran News Bureau of Hong Kong PhoenixTV</i> Dr. Jianwei Han, <i>Middle East Institute of Shanghai International Studies University PHD in International Relations in Tehran University</i>
11:30 – 12:00	Dr. Anna Viden, <i>Research Associate at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs</i>	Investigating Value Dilemmas in U.S. Policy Towards Saudi Arabia	Oliver John, <i>President of Astrolabe Global Strategy</i>
12:00 – 12:30	Dr. Rui Li, <i>Chief Correspondent of Tehran News Bureau of Hong Kong Phoenix TV</i> Dr. Jianwei Han, <i>Middle East Institute of Shanghai International Studies University PHD in International Relations in Tehran University</i>	The Great Game between China and the United States: Restoration of Diplomatic Relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran	Dr. Tyler Parker, <i>Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Idaho</i>

Workshops

12:40 – 1:45	LUNCH		
2:00 – 2:30	Oliver John, <i>President of Astrolabe Global Strategy</i>	U.S. Focus on Transnational Challenges and the GCC Role	Dr. Fadi Hilani, <i>Senior Academic and Research Fellow at the National Council on US-Arab relations</i>
2:30 – 3:00	Dr. Tyler Parker, <i>Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Idaho</i>	Managing Multipolarity: How the Gulf States are Augmenting their American Alignments	Anna Viden, <i>Research Associate at the Swedish Institute of International Affairs</i>
3:00 PM – 3:30 PM ET	Anil Gupta, <i>Project Manager at CACI International</i>	Adapting American Foreign Policy in the Gulf	Dr. Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, <i>Workshop Director</i>
3:00 – 3:30	General discussion of workshop themes and paper topics		
3:30 – 3:55	COFFEE BREAK		
4:00 – 4:30	Next steps discussion		
5:00 – 5:25	END OF WORKSHOP, WRAP UP AND COMMENTS		

Workshops

DEFENSE AND SECURITY

Intercultural Center 203

Broadening Gulf Security: New Perspectives and Persistent Challenges

Directors: Dr. Gawdat Bahgat and Professor David Des Roches

This workshop explores the integration of holistic security concepts, including environmental, economic, and social dimensions, with traditional military and diplomatic security in the Gulf region. It aims to address the multifaceted security paradigm, considering the region's unique challenges, such as its security environment, ambitious local leadership, global interests, and the impact of rentier politics.

MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2024

8:45 – 10:15	OPENING CEREMONY		
10:25 - 10:45	GSS GROUP PHOTO		
10:30 – 10:45	Workshop directors' welcome remarks and setting rules of presentation and discussion		
TIME	PRESENTER	PAPER TITLE	DISCUSSANT
11:00 – 11:30	Dr. Saban Kardas, <i>Research Professor at Qatar University</i> Botan Buran, <i>Teaching Assistant at Georgia State University</i>	Revisiting the Saudi Reaction to the "Iranian threat": A Case of Overbalancing?	Dr. Heidi Lane, <i>Naval War College</i>
11:30 – 11:12	Syeda Nada Qadri, <i>Research Scholar at Aligarh Muslim University</i>	Interconnected Threats: Analyzing the Nexus of Water Security, Food Security and Climate Change in Iraq and Syria	Dr. Javad Heiran Nia, <i>Director of the Persian Gulf Studies Group at the Center for Scientific Research and Middle East Strategic Studies in Iran</i> Dr. Habibi Doroh Hessam, <i>Lecturer and Researcher, at Vienna University of Applied Sciences, FH Campus</i>
12:00 – 12:30	Dr. Zia Ul Haque Shamsi, <i>Assistant Professor at National Defense University, Islamabad</i>	The Hybrid War on Qatar	Jia Liu, <i>H.H. Sheikh Nasser al-Mohammad al-Sabah, Doctoral Fellow at Durham University</i> Dr. Jianwei Han, <i>Associate professor of Middle East Studies Institute at Shanghai International Studies University</i>

Workshops

12:40 – 1:45	LUNCH		
2:00 – 2:30	Dr. Juha Pekka Makela, <i>LtCol (G.S.) Dr. Mil.Sci. Chief of Division/ FDRA</i>	Countering Hybrid Threats in the Gulf	Dr. Zia Ul Haque Shamsi, <i>Assistant Professor at National Defense University, Islamabad</i>
2:30 – 3:00	Jia Liu, <i>H.H. Sheikh Nasser al-Mohammad al-Sabah, Doctoral Fellow at Durham University</i> Dr. Jianwei Han, <i>Associate professor of Middle East Studies Institute at Shanghai International Studies University</i>	China and Iran-Saudi Normalization: Deconstructing the Notion of “Responsible Chinese Power”	Syeda Nada Qadri, <i>Research Scholar at Aligarh Muslim University</i>
3:00 – 3:30	Dr. Javad Heiran Nia, <i>Director of the Persian Gulf Studies Group at the Center for Scientific Research and Middle East Strategic Studies in Iran</i> Dr. Habibi Doroh Hessam, <i>Lecturer and Researcher, at Vienna University of Applied Sciences, FH Campus</i>	Iran’s Reaction to the Israeli-Gulf Security Order	Dr. Saban Kardas, <i>Research Professor at Qatar University</i> Botan Buran, <i>Teaching Assistant at Georgia State University</i>
3:30 – 3:55	COFFEE BREAK		
4:00 – 5:00	END OF FIRST DAY, WRAP UP AND COMMENTS		

TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2024

9:00 – 9:30	Dr. Amr al Azm, <i>Professor of Middle East History and Anthropology, Qatar University and Shawnee State University</i>	The Role of Cultural Heritage in Promoting Human Security in the Gulf Region	Dr. Juha Pekka Makela, <i>LtCol (G.S.) Dr. Mil.Sci. Chief of Division/ FDRA</i>
9:30 – 10:00	Dr. Heidi Lane, <i>Professor of Strategy and Policy, US Naval War College</i>	Mission Command in the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy	Dr. Amr al Azm, <i>Professor of Middle East History and Anthropology, Qatar University and Shawnee State University</i>
10:00 – 11:00	End of second day, wrap up and comments		
END OF WORKSHOP			

Workshops

FOREIGN POLICIES OF GULF STATES

McGhee Library - Deans Office Suite Intercultural Center

The Quest for Strategic Autonomy in the Gulf: Policies and Capabilities

Directors: Dr. Jonathan Fulton and Dr. Jean-Loup Samaan

This workshop examines the evolving foreign and regional policies of Gulf states, focusing on their potential pivot from the U.S. towards China or Russia, and their quest for strategic autonomy amid great power competition. It invites discussion on how Gulf states navigate changing global dynamics through internal defense, diplomacy, energy, and tech advancements, aiming to redefine their role and strategic preferences in the international order.

MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2024

8:45 – 10:15	OPENING CEREMONY		
10:25 – 10:45	GSS GROUP PHOTO		
10:45 – 11:00	Workshop directors' welcome remarks and setting rules of presentation and discussion		
TIME	PRESENTER	PAPER TITLE	DISCUSSANT
11:00 – 11:30	Dr. Jean-Loup Samaan, <i>Senior Research Fellow at the Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore</i>	Small State Strategies: UAE & Singapore	Albert Vidal, <i>Research Analyst at IISS</i>
11:30 – 12:00	Dr. Mate Szalai, <i>Marie Skłodowska-Curie Cofund Fellow, Ca' Foscari University</i>	Between a Rock and a Hard Place – The Small Gulf States and the Israel-Hamas War	Dr. Gedaliah Afterman, <i>Head of Asia Policy Program at Abba Eban Institute for Diplomacy and Foreign Relations</i>
12:00 – 12:30	Dr. Altea Perioli, <i>Visiting Research Fellow at Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies</i> Dr. Federico Donelli, <i>Assistant Professor at the Department of Political and Social Sciences, University of Trieste, Trieste, Italy</i>	Regional Competition and Foreign Aid Strategies: Qatar and the UAE in Somalia	Dr. Yossi Mann, <i>Head of the Israel and the Arab Gulf Program, Abba Eban Institute for International Diplomacy</i>
12:40 – 1:45	LUNCH		
2:00 – 2:30	Albert Vidal, <i>Research Analyst at IISS</i>	In Pursuit of Strategic Autonomy: Assessing Emirati, Saudi, and Qatari Efforts in The Defense Industrial Domain	Dr. Jean-Loup Samaan, <i>Senior Research Fellow at the Middle East Institute, National University of Singapore</i>
2:30 – 3:00	Dr. James Worrall, <i>Associate Professor in International Relations & Middle East Studies at University of Leeds</i>	Economic Hedging in Oman: Between China and India	Leonardo Jacopo Maria Mazzucco, <i>Blue Book Trainee MENA.1 Division at the European External Action Service</i>

Workshops

3:00 – 3:30	Fatiha Dazi-Héni, <i>Senior Researcher on Gulf and Middle East Issues at IRSEM</i>	The regional dilemma of the Saudi and Emirati competitive search of autonomy	Dr. Mate Szalai, <i>Marie Skłodowska-Curie Cofund Fellow, Ca' Foscari University</i>
3:30 – 3:55	COFFEE BREAK		
4:00 – 4:30	First day themes and papers discussion		
4:30	END OF FIRST DAY, WRAP UP AND COMMENTS		
TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2024			
9:00 – 9:30	Dr. Yossi Mann, <i>Head of the Israel and the Arab Gulf Program, Abba Eban Institute for International Diplomacy</i> Dr. Gedaliah Afterman, <i>Head of Asia Policy Program at Abba Eban Institute for Diplomacy and Foreign Relations</i>	Cutting Through the Hype: An Analysis of the Economic Potential of Israel- Saudi Arabia Relations	Fatiha Dezi- Héni, <i>Senior Researcher on Gulf and Middle East Issues at IRSEM</i>
9:30 – 10:00	Dr. Sterling Jensen, <i>Associate Professor, Mohamed Bin Zayed University for Humanities</i>	Arab Gulf States use religious diplomacy to build strategic autonomy, based on domestic factors and foreign policy interests	James Worrall, <i>Associate Professor in International Relations & Middle East Studies at University of Leeds</i>
10:00 – 10:30	Dr. Rachid Chaker, <i>Assistant Professor in International Relations at École navale</i>	Arab Gulf States' Naval Ambitions: A Comprehensive Procurement Strategy	Dr. Kristian Patrick Alexander, <i>Senior Fellow and Director of the International Security & Terrorism Program at Trends Research & Advisory in Dubai</i>
10:30 – 11:00	Leonardo Jacopo Maria Mazzucco, <i>Blue Book Trainee MENA.1 Division at the European External Action Service</i> Dr. Kristian Patrick Alexander, <i>Senior Fellow and Director of the International Security & Terrorism Program at Trends Research & Advisory in Dubai</i>	Maximizing Strategic Autonomy in a Multi-Polar World: The UAE's Omni-Enmeshment Strategy	Dr. Sterling Jensen, <i>Associate Professor, Mohamed Bin Zayed University for Humanities</i>
11:00 – 11:30	END OF SECOND DAY, WRAP UP AND COMMENTS		
END OF WORKSHOP			

Workshops

ENERGY POLICY

Intercultural Center 212

Navigating the Energy Crossroads: The Gulf's Evolving Energy Landscape

Director Dr. Naji Abi-Aad and Co-Director Dr. Sara Vakhshouri

This workshop will examine the latest advancements in the Gulf's energy sector, focusing on both hydrocarbons and renewables. It addresses the region's critical role in global energy supply, especially post-Ukrainian crisis, and its efforts to meet increasing domestic and international demand. The workshop aims to explore the Gulf's expanding role in natural gas markets, its ambitions in renewable energy to align with global environmental standards, and the challenges of balancing domestic consumption with export capabilities.

MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2024

8:45 – 10:15	OPENING CEREMONY		
10:25 – 10:45	GSS GROUP PHOTO		
10:45 – 11:00	Workshop directors' welcome remarks and setting rules of presentation and discussion		
TIME	PRESENTER	PAPER TITLE	DISCUSSANT
11:00 – 11:30	Dr. Umud Shokri, <i>Senior Visiting Fellow at George Mason University</i>	Challenges and Opportunities in the Renewable Energy Transition: A Comparative Exploration of Saudi Arabia and the UAE	Professor Vicky KeukPanossian, <i>Visiting Professor at UCLA</i>
11:30 – 12:00	Eugene Chausovsky, <i>Senior Director at the New Lines Institute</i> Dr. Chaouki Ghenai, <i>Associate Professor at the Sustainable and Renewable Energy Engineering (SREE) Department at the University of Sharjah (UoS)</i>	The Russia-Ukraine War and Qatar's Emerging Energy Role in Europe	Dr. Naji Abi-Aad, <i>Workshop Director</i>

Workshops

12:00 – 12:30	Dr. Serhat Cubukcuoglu, <i>Senior Fellow at TRENDS Research's Strategic Studies Department</i> Gina Bou Serhal, <i>Researcher at TRENDS Research's Strategic Studies Department</i> Sultan Alrubaei, <i>Deputy Head of Research and Advisory Sector at TRENDS Research</i>	The Gulf's Evolving Energy Landscape Saudi Arabia's Energy Policy: A Transition to the Post-Oil Era	Dr. Umud Shokri, <i>Senior Visiting Fellow at George Mason University</i>
12:40 – 1:45	LUNCH		
2:00 – 2:30	Dr. Nikolay Kozhanov, <i>Research Associate Professor at Qatar University</i>	Russia's War in Ukraine and the Interests of GCC Hydrocarbon Producers in the New Realities of the 4th Energy Transition	Eugene Chausovsky, <i>Senior Director at the New Lines Institute</i>
2:30 – 3:00	Professor Vicky Keuk Panossian, <i>Visiting Professor at UCLA</i>	Factors that Enable or Hinder the Transition of Some GCC Countries to Green Economies	Dr. Serhat Cubukcuoglu, <i>Senior Fellow at TRENDS Research's Strategic Studies Department</i>
3:00 – 3:30	Dr. Ahmed Badran, <i>Department Head and Associate Professor of Public Policy in the Department of International Affairs at Qatar University</i>	Energy Transition in the GCC Countries: Investigating the Challenges and Opportunities of Green Hydrogen	Dr. Nikolay Kozhanov, <i>Research Associate Professor at Qatar University</i>
3:30 – 3:55	COFFEE BREAK		
4:00 – 4:30	END OF FIRST DAY, WRAP UP AND COMMENTS		
4:30	END OF WORKSHOP		

Workshops

ECONOMY, GOVERNANCE AND REFORM

Boardroom Intercultural Center 270

Reimagining the Gulf:

Economics, Politics, and Reform in Gulf Arab Nations

Directors: Dr. Abdulla Baabood, Ozgur Pala

This workshop focuses on the Gulf's economic diversification away from hydrocarbons towards sectors like finance, tourism, logistics, and technology. It examines the evolving social contract, governance dynamics, economic disparities, and the development of a knowledge-based economy. The workshop will explore the implications of these shifts for societal stability, national identity, political participation, and the role of youth and women in fostering innovation and entrepreneurship within the Gulf states and their impact on regional and global scales.

MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2024

8:45 – 10:15	OPENING CEREMONY		
10:25 – 10:45	GSS GROUP PHOTO		
10:45 – 11:15	Workshop directors' welcome remarks and setting rules of presentation and discussion		
TIME	PRESENTER	PAPER TITLE	DISCUSSANT
11:15 – 11:45	Dr. Michael Herb, <i>Professor at Georgia State University</i>	Spend or Hoard? Explaining the Emergence of the Welfare State in Kuwait	Sinem Cengiz, <i>Researcher at Qatar University's Gulf Studies Center</i>
11:45 – 12:15	Sinem Cengiz, <i>Researcher at Qatar University's Gulf Studies Center</i> Dr. Nikolay Kozhanov, <i>Research Associate Professor at Qatar University's Gulf Studies Center</i>	Implications of Change and Continuity in GCC Leaderships on State-Business Elite Relations: Experiences of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait	Dr. Michael Herb, <i>Professor at Georgia State University</i>
12:40 – 1:45	LUNCH		
2:00 – 2:30	Dr. Saranjam Baig, <i>Assistant Professor at Sultan Qaboos University</i> Tahiya Al-Daghaishi, <i>Researcher at Sultan Qaboos University</i>	Economic Boycotts as an Instrument of Political Pressure: A Case Study of the BDS Movement	Dr. Ahmed Badran, <i>Department Head and Associate Professor of Public Policy in the Department of International Affairs at Qatar University</i>
2:30 – 3:00	Dr. Ahmed Badran, <i>Department Head and Associate Professor of Public Policy in the Department of International Affairs at Qatar University</i>	State-Led Entrepreneurship Strategies and Economic Development in the GCC Region: the Case of Qatar	Dr. Saranjam Baig, <i>Assistant Professor at Sultan Qaboos University</i> Tahiya Al-Daghaishi, <i>Researcher at Sultan Qaboos University</i>

Workshops

3:00 – 3:30	Dr. Kassim Alsraiha, <i>Post-Doctoral Fellow and Lecturer at Cambridge University</i>	Reimagining the Citizenship in the Gulf: The Thinking of Contemporary Reformist Intellectuals	Dr. Shareefa Fadhel, <i>Research Culture Strategy Project Manager at University of Leeds</i>
3:30 – 3:55	COFFEE BREAK		
4:00 – 4:30	Dr. Shareefa Fadhel, <i>Research Culture Strategy Project Manager at University of Leeds</i>	The Gulf in Transition: Women, and Youth in a Shifting Economic Landscape	Dr. Kassim Alsraiha, <i>Post-Doctoral Fellow and Lecturer at Cambridge University</i>
4:30 – 5:00	Dr. Haila Al-Mekaimi, <i>Professor of Political Science at Kuwait University</i>	Investigation of the Role of State-led Economic Development Strategies: A Look at the GCC Sustainable Development Plans	Dr. Yasmina Abouzzohour, <i>Fellow and Lecturer at Princeton University</i>
5:00 - 5:30	FIRST DAY WRAP UP AND THEMES DISCUSSION		
TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2024			
9:00 – 9:30	Dr. Yasmina Abouzzohour, <i>Fellow and Lecturer at Princeton University</i>	Taxation Reform and State-Society Relations in Rentier States: Evidence from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Monarchies	Dr. Haila Al-Mekaimi, <i>Professor of Political Science at Kuwait University</i>
9:30 – 10:00	Dr. Gail J. Buttorff, Associate Director, <i>Center for Public Policy, Instructional Assistant Professor, Hobby School of Public Affairs</i> Dr. Bozena C. Welborne, <i>Associate Professor at Smith College</i> Nawra Al Lawati, <i>Sultan Qaboos University</i>	The Evolving Social Contract in the GCC: The Future is Gendered?	Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed, <i>Guest Faculty at Aligarh Muslim University</i>
10:00 – 10:30	Dr. Imtiaz Ahmed, <i>Guest Faculty at Aligarh Muslim University</i>	Charting a Path to Sustainable Peace in Post-Conflict Yemen	Dr. Gail J. Buttorff, Associate Director, <i>Center for Public Policy, Instructional Assistant Professor, Hobby School of Public Affairs</i> Dr. Bozena C. Welborne, <i>Associate Professor at Smith College</i> Nawra Al Lawati, <i>Sultan Qaboos University</i>
10:30 - 11:00	WORKSHOP WRAP-UP		
END OF WORKSHOP			

Workshops

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

Intercultural Center 202

The Art of Diplomacy: Cultural Diplomacy of Gulf States

Directors: Dr. Hind Al Ansari and Abdelrahman Kamel

This workshop delves into cultural diplomacy in the Gulf, examining how cultural engagements and exchanges are used to build international alliances and enhance soft power. It explores the strategic use of culture through sports, art, heritage, and cultural centers, highlighting the role of cultural institutions in fostering cross-cultural dialogue and cooperation. The workshop aims to understand cultural diplomacy's evolving landscape in the Gulf, focusing on the unique contributions of Gulf states to global peace and stability through cultural outreach.

MONDAY, MARCH 4, 2024			
8:45 – 10:15	OPENING CEREMONY		
10:25 – 10:45	GSS GROUP PHOTO		
10:45 – 11:00	Workshop directors' welcome remarks and setting rules of presentation and discussion		
TIME	PARTICIPANT	PAPER TITLE	DISCUSSANT
11:00 AM – 11:30 AM ET	Marwa J Ghumrawi, <i>Project Manager at Arab America Foundation; Operations and Communications Manager at the Washington center for Yemeni studies</i>	Harmony Across Borders: Collaborative Diplomacy, Inclusion, and Accessibility in Gulf State Cultural Initiatives	Tamara Al-Juburi, <i>Gulf Program Manager at the Institute for Human Rights and Business</i>
11:30 – 12:00	Tamara Al-Juburi, <i>Gulf Program Manager at the Institute for Human Rights and Business</i>	Art Diplomacy in Saudi Arabia: How increased regional and global collaboration in the art industry can foster understanding across publics	Marwa J Ghumrawi, <i>Project Manager at Arab America Foundation; Operations and Communications Manager at the Washington center for Yemeni studies</i>
11:30 – 12:00	Peer Review Discussion		Dr. Khalid Al-Jaber, <i>Workshop Director</i>
12:40 – 1:45	LUNCH		
2:00 – 2:30	Dr. Natalie Koch, <i>Professor Dept. of Geography, Maxwell School, Syracuse University</i>	From desert cultures to desert diplomacy: Cultural diplomacy at Qatar's 2023 Horticultural Expo	Matthew Asada, <i>Visiting Senior Fellow at University of Southern California</i>

Workshops

2:30 – 3:00	Matthew Asada, <i>Visiting Senior Fellow at University of Southern California</i>	An inter-event comparison of two historic global mega events: FIFA 2022 and Expo 2020	Dr. Natalie Koch, <i>Professor Dept. of Geography, Maxwell School, Syracuse University</i>
3:00 – 3:30	Peer Review Discussion		Abdelrahman Kamel, <i>Workshop Director</i>
3:30 – 3:55	COFFEE BREAK		
4:00 – 4:30	Jalal Naser, <i>IVLP Alumni/ Board Member and Founder of Bahrain IVLP Alumni Association</i>	Nation branding and cultural promotion: How Gulf states promote their cultural heritage	Dr. Khalid Al-Jaber, <i>Workshop Director</i>
4:30- 5:00	Wrap up of the first day and discussion of paper themes		
5:00	END OF FIRST DAY, WRAP UP AND COMMENTS		
TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2024			
9:00 – 9:30	Dr. Chiara Pellegrino, <i>Researcher at the Oasis International Foundation</i>	A Perspective on Saudi Cultural Diplomacy and its Nation Branding	Abdelrahman Kamel, <i>Workshop Director</i>
9:30 – 10:00	Peer Review Discussion		Dr. Khalid Al-Jaber, <i>Workshop Director</i>
10:00 – 11:00	Round Table Discussion on Cultural Diplomacy in Gulf		All Workshop participants
11:00 – 11:30	END OF SECOND DAY, WRAP UP AND COMMENTS		
END OF WORKSHOP			

Gulf Book Award

GULF BOOK AWARD

The Gulf Book Award is an accolade that celebrates excellence and innovation in literature about the Gulf region, recognizing authors and scholars who have made contributions to the knowledge production about the Gulf. The award is granted to works that delved into the study of the region, and aims to promote literary talent and fostering a rich literary community across the Gulf.

Selection Committee

Dr. Dania Thafer, *Senior Fellow and Executive Director at Gulf International Forum*

Dr. Yagoub Alkandari, *Advisory Board Member at Gulf International Forum and Director of Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Center in Kuwait University*

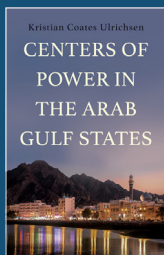
Dr. Courtney Freer, *Senior Non-Resident Fellow at Gulf International Forum and Provost's Postdoctoral Fellow at Emory University*

Dr. Khalid Al-Jaber, *Director of MENA Center*

Dr. Gawdat Bahgat, *Senior Non-Resident Fellow at Gulf International Forum and Professor at the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies at the National Defense University*

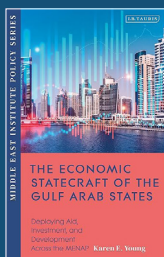
Gulf Book Award Winners

**WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE RECIPIENTS
OF THE 2024 GULF BOOK AWARD.**



Dr. Kristian Coates Ulrichsen's "Centers of Power in the Arab Gulf States," published by Oxford University Press, is this year's awardee in the Political Studies category. His book offers an in-depth analysis of the evolving power dynamics within the Gulf states, complementing his

extensive publication record on Gulf politics, security, and international relations. Dr. Ulrichsen's previous works, including "The Gulf States in International Political Economy" and "Qatar and the Gulf Crisis," have significantly contributed to our understanding of Gulf states in the global context.



Dr. Karen E. Young has been awarded in the Economic Studies category for her enlightening work "The Economic Statecraft of the Gulf Arab States: Deploying Aid, Investment and Development Across the MENAP," published by IB Tauris/Bloomsbury. This book builds on her extensive research and publications on the

political economy of energy, finance, and security in the Gulf and broader MENA region. Dr. Young's previous book, "The Political Economy of Energy, Finance and Security in the United Arab Emirates," and her numerous articles in prestigious outlets, have established her as a leading voice in her field.

These awards recognize their outstanding contributions to the scholarly examination of the Gulf region, highlighting the significant impact of their work on our understanding of economic and political developments in the Gulf.

Biographies



Dr. Dania Thafer

Executive Director and Senior Fellow at Gulf International Forum

Dr. Dania Thafer is the Executive Director of Gulf International Forum. She is also a Professorial Lecturer at the School of Foreign Service's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies at Georgetown University. Her expertise is on the Gulf region's security, U.S.-Gulf relations, and the political economy of the GCC states.

Dr. Thafer has been widely published and consults regularly on matters concerning the GCC and the Middle East. Dr. Thafer has a new book titled "Creative Insecurity: Institutional Inertia and Youth Potential in the GCC" published by Hurst Co. and Oxford University Press (2023). Additionally, she has co-authored two edited books: *"The Arms Trade, Military Services and the Security Market in the Gulf States: Trends and Implications"* and *"The Dilemma of Security and Defense in the Gulf Region."* Her commentary has appeared in international media outlets, including: *The New York Times*, *Financial Times*, *BBC World*, *The Washington Post*, *Forbes*, *Al Jazeera* and others. Additionally, she is regularly consulted by governmental, non-governmental, corporations and research institutions globally.

Previously, she was responsible for building relationships with foreign dignitaries from the Middle East at the National Defense University's Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies in Washington, DC. Dr. Thafer has a master's degree in Political Science from New York University, and a PhD in Political Science, specialized in the Political Economy and International Relations from American University in Washington, DC.



Dr. Fida Adely

Associate Professor and Director of Center for Contemporary Arab Studies

Fida Adely is an Associate Professor at the Center for Contemporary Arab Studies in the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and the Clovis and Hala Salaam Maksoud Chair in Arab Studies. She is also currently serving as the Academic Director for the Arab

Studies program at Georgetown. Dr. Adely is an anthropologist and her research interests include education, labor, development, and gender in the Arab world. Her primary research site has been Jordan, although she teaches and writes about the Arab world more broadly.

Dr. Adely received her PhD in 2007 at Teachers College (Columbia University) in Comparative Education and Anthropology. She was previously a lecturer at

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Columbia University's School for International and Public Affairs, as well as a visiting professor in the Department of International and Transcultural Studies at Teachers College/Columbia University.



Dr. Ahmed Sager
Vice President of the Gulf Research Center

Dr. Ahmed Sager is the Vice President of the Gulf Research Center. He is a PhD holder in Higher Education Management from the University of Sussex in 2016. Dr. Sager has been the CEO of Knowledge Corporation, the sister company of the Gulf Research Center, and since 2021 has been appointed Vice President of the Gulf Research Center. With his experience and interest in business and education management disciplines and politics, Dr. Sager has been involved in various local and international conferences. In addition, Dr. Sager has experience in operation and project management on international affairs in the non profit, governmental, and political arenas.



Dean Joel Hellman
**Dean of Georgetown University's
School of Foreign Service**

Dean Joel Hellman brings to Georgetown a unique and valuable perspective from his work on issues of governance, conflict and the political economy of development around the world. He joins the School of Foreign Service following 15 years of service at the World Bank, where he most recently served as Chief Institutional Economist and previously led its engagement with fragile and conflict-affected states as Director of the Center on Conflict, Security and Development in Nairobi, Kenya.



Dr. Saud bin Abdullah Al Attiyah
**Deputy Undersecretary for Economic Affairs at
Qatar's Ministry of Finance**

Dr. Saud Bin Abdullah Al Attiyah is the Deputy Undersecretary for Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Finance. He previously held the position of Director of Economic Policies and Research Department at the Ministry of Finance and was also in charge of managing the Public and Private Partnership Department from 2014. Dr. Al Attiyah is a Board Member of Qatar Postal Services Company (Q-Post), Chairman of the Economic Diversification and Private Sector Development Strategy within the National Development Strategy 2018 – 2022, Vice Chairman of the Executive Technical Committee for improving the business environment

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at H.E. the Prime Minister's office, Vice Chairman of Aspire Sport Accelerator, and has served as Chairman of Lusail Circuit Sports Club since 2015.

Previously, Dr. Al Attiyah served as Director of Legacy Department at the Supreme Committee for Legacy & Delivery from 2011 to 2014, and also as a member of various advisory and executive committees at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Aspire Zone, the Ministry of Public Health, and the Ministry of Education.

Dr. Al Attiyah holds an Executive Master of Business Administration from HEC Paris (Winner of best Capstone project) and a Bachelor of Business Administration from Qatar University. Dr. Al Attiyah holds a Doctorate of Business Administration from the Swiss Business School in Zurich, Switzerland, an Executive Master of Business Administration from HEC Paris (Winner of best Capstone project) and a Bachelor of Business Administration from Qatar University.



Dr. Michael Herb
Professor of Political Science at Georgia State University's Middle East Center

Michael Herb is a Professor of the Political Science Department. Dr. Herb's research interests focus on issues related to the Arab monarchies of the Gulf. He has written on the political consequences of oil wealth, on the relationship between taxation and democracy, and on how monarchism

shapes the process of democratization. He maintains the Kuwait Politics Database, the most comprehensive and authoritative source of information on Kuwaiti elections. He is the author of *The Wages of Oil: Parliaments and Economic Development in Kuwait and the UAE* (Cornell University Press, 2014) and *All in the Family: Absolutism, Revolution, and Democracy in the Middle Eastern Monarchies* (State University of New York Press, 1999).



Dr. Courtney Freer
Senior Non-Resident Fellow at Gulf International Forum and Visiting Professor at Emory College of Arts and Sciences

Dr. Courtney Freer is a Provost's Postdoctoral Fellow at Emory University and a Senior Non-Resident Fellow at Gulf International Forum. Previously, Dr. Freer was Assistant Professorial Research Fellow at the LSE Middle

East Centre. From 2015-2020, Courtney was a Research Officer for the Kuwait Programme at the LSE Middle East Centre. Her work focuses on the domestic

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politics of the Gulf states, particularly the roles played by Islamism and tribalism. Her book *Rentier Islamism: The Influence of the Muslim Brotherhood in Gulf Monarchies*, based on her DPhil thesis at the University of Oxford and published by Oxford University Press in 2018, examines the socio-political role played by the Muslim Brotherhood groups in Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates. She previously worked at the Brookings Doha Center and the US–Saudi Arabian Business Council. Courtney holds a BA from Princeton University in Near Eastern Studies and an MA in Middle Eastern Studies from the George Washington University.



Alex Vatanka

Director of the Iran Program at the Middle East Institute

Alex Vatanka is the founding Director of the Iran Program at the Middle East Institute. He specializes in Middle Eastern regional security affairs with a particular focus on Iran. He was formerly a Senior Analyst at Jane's Information Group in London. Alex is also a Senior Fellow in Middle East Studies at the US Air Force Special Operations School (USAFSOS) at Hurlburt Field and teaches as an Adjunct Professor at DISAS at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. He has testified before the US Congress and lectured widely for both governmental and commercial audiences, including the US Departments of State and Defense, US intelligence agencies, and a list of international corporations. Born in Tehran, he holds a BA in Political Science (Sheffield University, UK), and an MA in International Relations (Essex University, UK), and is fluent in Farsi and Danish. He is the author of two books: *The Battle of the Ayatollahs in Iran: The United States, Foreign Policy and Political Rivalry Since 1979* (2021) and *Iran and Pakistan: Security, Diplomacy, and American Influence* (2015). He has also written chapters for a number of books, including *Authoritarianism Goes Global* (2016); *Handbook on Contemporary Pakistan* (2017); *Russia in the Middle East* (2018), *Winning the Battle, Losing the War: Addressing the Drivers Fueling Armed Non-state Actors and Extremist Groups* (2020); *Global, Regional and Local Dynamics in the Yemen Crisis* (2020); *Routledge Handbook of Counterterrorism and Irregular Warfare Operations* (2021); and *Understanding New Proxy Wars* (2022). He is presently working on his third book, *Iran's Arab Strategy: Defending the Homeland or Exporting Khomeinism?*

Biographies



Dr. Banafsheh Keynoush **Foreign Affairs Scholar**

Dr. Banafsheh Keynoush is a foreign affairs scholar and a fellow at the International Institute for Iranian Studies. She conducted fieldwork in the Middle East for two decades, was recently a visiting scholar at Princeton University, and a visiting fellow at the King Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies. Dr. Keynoush is the author of *Saudi Arabia and Iran: Friends or Foes?* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, also available in Arabic and Persian), and the editor and an author of *Iran's Interregional Dynamics in the Near East* (Peter Lang, 2021). She is a team member of the Carnegie-funded Sectarianism, Proxies and De-sectarianisation Project, the President of Mideast Analysts, and she has advised and worked with the United Nations, the World Bank, the Asia Foundation, Chevron Corporation, CNN International, and European policy centers. She is also an accredited interpreter at the European Commission, was a chief interpreter for Nobel Laureate Shirin Ebadi from 2003 to 2010, and an interpreter in a number of dual-track international peace talks.



Dr. Kristian Coates **Fellow for the Middle East, the Baker Institute; Senior Non-Resident Fellow, Gulf International Forum**

Kristian Coates Ulrichsen, Ph.D., is a fellow for the Middle East at the Baker Institute. He is also a Senior Non-Resident Fellow at Gulf International Forum. His research examines the changing position of Persian Gulf states in the global order, as well as the emergence of longer-term, nonmilitary challenges to regional security. Previously, he worked as senior Gulf analyst at the Gulf Center for Strategic Studies and as co-director of the Kuwait Program on Development, Governance and Globalization in the Gulf States at the London School of Economics. Dr. Coates Ulrichsen has published extensively on the Gulf. His books include: *"The Gulf States in International Political Economy"* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), *"The United Arab Emirates: Power, Politics, and Policymaking"* (Routledge, 2016), and *"Qatar and the Gulf Crisis"* (Oxford University Press, 2020). Coates Ulrichsen's articles have appeared in numerous academic journals, including *Global Policy* and the *Journal of Arabian Studies*, and he consults regularly on Gulf issues for government and private sector agencies around the world. He holds a doctorate in history from the University of Cambridge.

Biographies



Dr. Jim Krane

Wallace S. Wilson Fellow for Energy Studies and co-director of the Middle East Energy Roundtable (MEER) initiative at Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy

Jim Krane, Ph.D., is the Wallace S. Wilson Fellow for Energy Studies at Rice University's Baker Institute for Public Policy in Houston. He specializes in energy geopolitics, with a focus on oil-exporting countries and the challenges they face from energy subsidies, internal demand and climate change. He teaches classes on energy policy and geopolitics at Rice University. Krane's scholarly articles have been published in *Nature Energy*, *Energy Policy*, *Energy Journal*, *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, *MRS Energy and Sustainability*, the *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* and the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* as well as numerous edited volumes. He is the author of two books. His acclaimed 2009 volume *"City of Gold: Dubai and the Dream of Capitalism"* is widely recognized as the seminal work on the iconoclastic city-state, while his award-winning 2019 book, *"Energy Kingdoms: Oil and Political Survival in the Persian Gulf,"* is the definitive study of energy demand in the Gulf region. Krane spent nearly 20 years as a journalist, six of them in the Middle East. He was a longtime correspondent for the Associated Press based in Dubai, Baghdad and New York, and has written for myriad other publications including the *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times* and the *Economist Intelligence Unit*. He is the winner of several journalism awards including the 2003 AP Managing Editors Deadline Reporting Award, received for his coverage of Saddam Hussein's capture in Iraq. Krane received his PhD from the University of Cambridge, master's from Columbia University and bachelor's from City College of New York.



Dr. Gawdat Bahgat

Professor of National Security Affairs, National Defense University's Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Study; Senior Non-Resident Fellow, Gulf International Forum

Dr. Gawdat Bahgat is a Professor of National Security Affairs at the National Defense University's Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Study. He is an Egyptian-born specialist in Middle Eastern policy, particularly Egypt, Iran, and the Gulf region. His areas of expertise include energy security, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, counterterrorism, the Arab-Israeli conflict, North Africa, and American foreign policy in the Middle East. Bahgat's career blends scholarship with national security practice. Before joining NESA in December 2009, he taught at different universities. Bahgat published ten books including

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Alternative Energy in the Middle East (2013), *Energy Security* (2011), *International Political Economy* (2010), *Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East* (2007), *Israel and the Persian Gulf* (2006), and *American Oil Diplomacy* (2003). Bahgat's articles have appeared in *International Affairs*, *Middle East Journal*, *Middle East Policy*, *Oil and Gas Journal*, and *OPEC Review*, among others. His work has been translated to several foreign languages. Bahgat served as an advisor to several governments and oil companies. He has more than 25 years of academic, policy and government experience working on Middle Eastern issues. Bahgat has contributed to CNN, BBC, Washington Post and Al-Jazeera. He has spoken at Tufts University, Columbia University, London School of Economics, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich, Swiss Foreign Ministry, Yildiz Technical University in Istanbul, Qatar University, Kuwait University, Oman Diplomatic Institute, Griffith University (Australia), and India School of Business.



Professor David Des Roches
Associate Professor, the Near East South Asia
Center for Security Studies; Senior Non-Resident
Fellow, Gulf International Forum

Professor David Des Roches is an Associate Professor at the Near East South Asia Center for Security Studies and Senior Non-Resident Fellow at Gulf International Forum. Prior to this, he was the director responsible for defense policy concerning Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Prior to this assignment, he has served in the Office of the Secretary of Defense as the DoD Liaison to the Department of Homeland Security, as the senior country director for Pakistan, as the NATO operations director, and as the deputy director for peacekeeping. His first job in government was as a special assistant for strategy and later as the international law enforcement analyst in the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. A British Marshall Scholar, he has also attended the Federal Executive Institute, the German Staff College's Higher Officer Seminar, the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare School and the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. An Airborne Ranger in the Army Reserve, he was awarded the Bronze Star for service in Afghanistan. He has commanded conventional and special operations parachute units and has served on the U.S. Special Operations Command staff as well as on the Joint Staff.

Biographies



Dr. Jean-Loup Samaan

Senior Research Fellow, the Middle East Institute of the National University of Singapore; Senior Research Fellow, The Middle East Institute

Jean-Loup Samaan is a senior research fellow at the Middle East Institute of the National University of Singapore, as well as a nonresident senior fellow at the Atlantic Council's Scowcroft Middle East Security Initiative. He is also an associate research fellow with the French Institute of International Relations. His research covers Middle Eastern security affairs, in particular the reforms of Gulf armed forces, Israel's evolving military strategy, and the evolution of non-state warfare in the region.

Prior to that, Samaan was a policy analyst at the Directorate for Strategic Affairs of the French Ministry of Defense (2008-2011), research advisor at the NATO Defense College (2011-2016), and associate professor in strategic studies detached by the US Near East South Asia Center to the UAE National Defense College (2016-2021).

His most recent book, *New Military Strategies in the Gulf*, was published by I.B. Tauris in August, 2023 and looks at the evolving defense policies of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates. Dr. Samaan has authored five other books and several articles and monographs for various international academic and policy journals such as *Survival*, *Orbis*, *Comparative Strategy*, *Parameters*, the *Middle East Journal*, and *The International Spectator*.

He regularly gives lectures to civilian and military audiences in various countries and has been providing expertise to governments, international organizations as well as private companies.

Dr. Samaan is a former student of Arabic at the French Institute of Oriental Languages and the French Institute for the Near East in Beirut, Lebanon. He graduated from the Institute for Political Studies in Grenoble, and he holds a PhD in political science (2009) from the University of Paris 1, Panthéon-Sorbonne as well as an accreditation to supervise research (2017) from the doctoral school of Sciences Po, Paris.



Dr. Jonathan Fulton

Associate Professor of Political Science in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Zayed University; Nonresident Senior Fellow, the Atlantic Council

Dr. Jonathan Fulton is an associate professor of Political Science in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Zayed University, in Abu Dhabi, UAE, and a nonresident

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senior fellow at the Atlantic Council. His research focuses on China - Middle East relations, international relations of the Gulf, Chinese foreign policy, and Asia – Middle East relations. He has written widely for both academic and popular publications. His books include China's Relations with the Gulf Monarchies, External Power and the Gulf Monarchies, Regions in the Belt and Road Initiative, the Routledge Handbook of China-Middle East Relations, and Asian Perceptions of Gulf Security.



Dr. Naji Abi-Aad
COO of Petroleb

Dr. Naji Abi-Aad was appointed COO of Petroleb, an oil company based in Beirut and active in petroleum exploration offshore in the East Mediterranean, in September 2012. In addition, he manages the newly-established Institute for Energy Economics at the American University of Beirut (AUB). Prior to his move to Lebanon, Dr Abi-Aad served for one year as Senior Advisor to the CEO of Qatar Petroleum International (QPI), after spending six years as Research Advisor for Qatar Petroleum and its Board of Directors, and as Media and Research Strategist in the Office of HE Qatar's Deputy Premier, Minister of Energy & Industry. Between 1999 and 2005, Dr Abi-Aad was managing director of Econergy, a Beirut-based research center which carried out studies on the economic and energy developments in the East Mediterranean and the Gulf. He was also engaged between 1988 and 2003 as Senior Advisor for the Middle East within the French-based Observatoire Méditerranéen de l'Energie (OME). Dr Abi-Aad studied at the American University of Beirut before being awarded a PhD degree in Energy Economics from Grenoble University in France. During his 30 years of experience, he has been involved in extensive consultations, conferences and research studies, particularly on oil and gas in the Middle East. He has authored over 80 reports and studies on Middle East energy issues as well as a book on the security of petroleum supply from the region.



Dr. Sara Vakhshouri
Adjunct Professor of Energy Security and Director of the Center for Energy Security and Diplomacy, The International Institute of World Politics; Founder and President, SVB Energy International

Dr. Sara Vakhshouri is an energy strategist and humanitarian visionary with two decades of experience of working in the energy industry. She has extensive experience in energy strategy, energy security and geopolitical risk and global energy market studies. She has advised numerous countries on their energy roadmap strategy and consulted public and private entities, and international

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organizations like IMF, World Bank. She is also Professor of Energy Security at the Institute of World Politics. Dr. Vakhshouri has advised various governments, energy companies, investment banks, financial institutions, law firms and international corporations on energy security strategies and energy transition, energy markets, trading and the geopolitics of energy, and investment patterns.



Dr. Abdullah Baabood

Chair of the State of Qatar for Islamic Area Studies and a visiting professor at the Faculty of International Research and Education, Waseda University, Tokyo-Japan

Dr. Abdullah Baabood is an academic from Oman who currently holds the Chair of the State of Qatar for Islamic Area Studies and a visiting professor at the Faculty of International Research and Education, Waseda University, Tokyo-Japan. Abdullah taught at different universities and institutions in Europe and the Gulf, and was a visiting professor at the Middle Institute, National University of Singapore and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Hamad Bin Khalifa University, Qatar. He has previously held the positions of the Director of the Gulf Studies Center at Qatar University and the Director of the Gulf Research Center at the University of Cambridge, UK. Abdullah's teaching and research interest focuses on international relations, international political economy, especially on globalization and regionalism. His area focus is on the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) economic, social and political development and their external relations. He has published widely and is frequently invited to speak at international conferences and seminars as well as media programs.



Özgür Pala

PhD Researcher, Qatar University

Özgür Pala is an ABD PhD candidate specializing in Gulf Studies at Qatar University. Previously, Özgür taught at the University of Oregon, Eugene and Qatar University, Doha and currently he is teaching at Koc University, Istanbul. His research interests encompass state identity, state-society relations, political and economic reform, and nation-building in Gulf Arab countries, alongside a focus on the security, defense, and foreign policy of Turkey and the Gulf. As a polyglot, Özgür has a deep affinity for languages, sociolinguistics, and etymology studies. His recent contributions to international relations literature have been published in esteemed journals such as the Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies and the International Spectator, in addition to work with think-tanks like Gulf State Analytics. Notably, Özgür co-authored a book titled *Turkish-Qatari Relations: From Past to Present in a Turbulent Geopolitical Landscape*.

Biographies



Dr. Hind Al Ansari

Non-Resident Fellow, Gulf International Forum

Dr. Hind Al Ansari is a Non-Resident Fellow at Gulf International Forum. She is a development and global education researcher based in Washington and recently completed a one-year fellowship at the Wilson Center. Dr. Al-Ansari has published multiple articles and has been recognized for her work as a recipient of the Middle

East Policy Council 40 Under 40 Award. She holds a PhD in Education from Cambridge University and a Master in Middle Eastern Studies from Harvard.



Abdelrahman Kamel

Cultural Diplomacy Specialist

Abdelrahman Kamel is a cultural diplomacy specialist with a notable track record of fostering partnerships within the arts, culture, and museum sectors. He currently channels his expertise at the Qatar America Institute for Culture where he contributes to bridging the cultures of Qatar, the United States, and the larger Arab and Islamic world.

On the academic front, Abdelrahman embarked on his scholarly journey at Georgetown Qatar's Culture and Politics program. This was succeeded by specialized studies in Museum and Gallery Practice at the University College London in Qatar as well as a master's in Art History from the University of Toronto. In addition to his role at QAIC, Abdelrahman is currently immersed in his doctoral studies in cultural diplomacy at Queen's University. His professional journey has seen him take on multiple roles, encompassing positions as a teaching, research, curatorial as well as executive assistant. These roles span prestigious institutions, such as Northwestern's Media Majlis, the Royal Ontario Museum, the North American Cultural Diplomacy Initiative, and the Canadian committee of the International Council of Museums. Possessing a rich blend of academic knowledge and professional experience, Abdelrahman's passion is geared towards advocating integration, embracing multiculturalism, and navigating postcolonial narratives within the Middle Eastern cultural milieu. His commitment to advancing the narrative of art and culture in the region is evident through his research and continuous efforts.

