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# Arab Gulf

C O U N T R Y

B U L L E T I N S

September 10 - 13



The Last Thing to Read this Week

*by*

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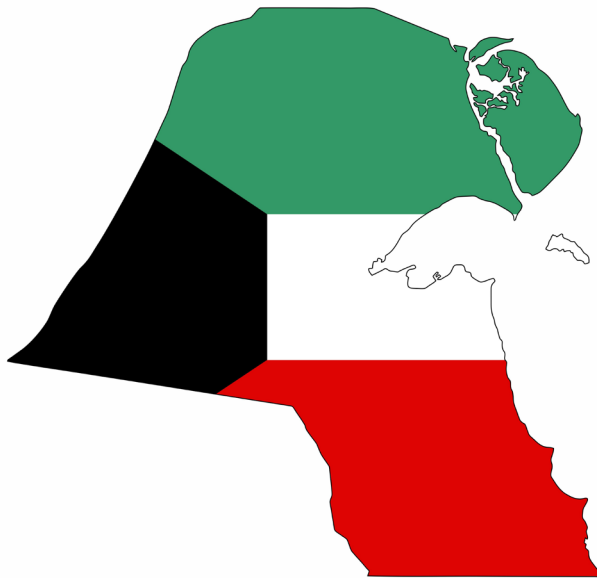
## Kingdom of Bahrain

Monday, 10 September— King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, by royal order set the date of elections to the 40-member Representative Council on 24 November 2018, and the 1st December in case of a run-off. Bahrain has been going through democratic process since it became constitutional monarchy in 2002. This will be the 5th legislative term since the first parliamentary elections in October 2002, when both men and women were granted right to vote as well as to be elected.





## State of Kuwait



Monday, 10 September—Kuwait hosted the 15th meeting of the Supreme Military Committee of Chiefs of Staff of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) nations, including Qatar, in a bid to enhance coordination among the GCC countries' armed forces and promote joint military action, particularly in light of the continuing Gulf Crisis. On Wednesday, the GCC Chiefs of Staff met also with representatives of the US Central Command as well as the armed forces of Egypt and Jordan. The meeting came a week after Kuwait's Emir met with US President in the White House, and as Kuwait's senior official implied earlier this year that it is considering the US proposal to create strategic regional military alliance to counter Iran's expansion.

Wednesday, 12 September—Two Kuwaiti candidates were appointed to senior positions during the 150th Session of the Council of Arab States in Cairo. Abdullah Sorour Al-Mutairi was appointed as Assistant Secretary-General of the League of Arab States for five years and Osama Al-Thuhaykh as Chairman of the Permanent Arab Committee for Human Rights for two years. The Council also hailed Kuwait's contributions to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) as the United States recently halted all funding to the UNRWA after 70 years.



## Sultanate of Oman

Wednesday, 12 September—Oman's Majlis Al-Shura, chaired by Khalid bin Hilal Al Ma'awali, held talks with the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), represented by its Vice Chairperson, Chen Xiaoguang, as part of Chinese parliamentary delegation's official three-day visit in Oman. They explored possibilities for enhancing their bilateral relations and deepening cooperation, notably in parliamentary and economic fields. Beijing has invested billions of dollars in the China-Oman Industrial Park in Duqm as part of China's Belt and Road Initiative.

Wednesday, 12 September—United Nations Special Envoy for Yemen, Martin Griffith, travelled to Muscat to meet with Oman's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Yousef bin Alawi bin Abdullah. Griffith then continued to Sana'a, Yemen, to meet Houthi leaders and to Saudi Arabia's Riyadh on talks with officials from the internationally recognised Government of Yemen. The series of visits comes as part of the UN envoy's efforts to bring the parties together and end the war in Yemen, after the representatives of the Houthi rebels did not attend the UN-led peace talks in Geneva on 6 September.





## State of Qatar

Monday, 10 September— Qatar Liquefied Gas Co (Qatargas) signed a deal with PetroChina Co Ltd to supply 3.4 million tons of liquified natural gas (LNG) per annum for 22 years. The LNG will be supplied from the Qatargas 2 (QG2) project, a joint venture of Qatar Petroleum, Exxon Mobil Corporation and Total SA, to various terminals across China. The agreement comes as China's LNG gas imports have surged in the past year due to its focus on cleaner energy sources and Beijing's search for alternatives to the US supplies amid the ongoing trade war with the United States.





## Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Tuesday, 11 September— Abdul Rahman Al-Sudais, President of the General Presidency for the Affairs of the Two Holy Mosques, appointed 41 women in leadership positions. Saudi Arabia strives to liberalise its strict religious rules and engage women more in the society. Earlier this year, senior cleric, Abdullah al-Mutlaq, called for women to be appointed as muftis to the Council of Senior Scholars, the Kingdom's highest religious body, to deal with women's issues. However, not all religious establishment is in favour of the reforms—ultraconservative clerics publicly opposing the changes have been silenced or jailed as Mohammed bin Salman strives to curb the influence of extremist religious figures.

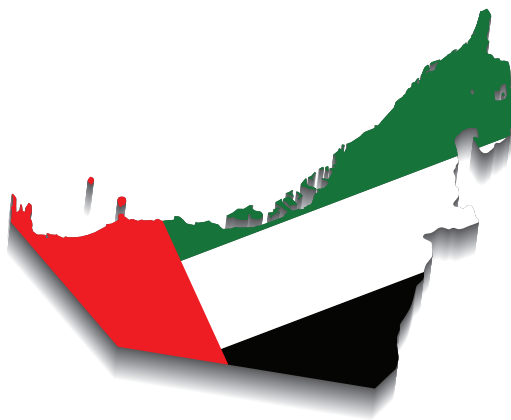
Thursday, 13 September—Spanish Foreign Minister, Josep Borrell, announced that Spain will deliver 400 laser-guided bombs to Saudi Arabia as agreed in the 2015 contract. The announcement overturns the Spanish government's last week decision halting the weapons delivery following the August coalition accidental bombing of a busy market place in Yemen. The laser-guided bombs are said to have less than a metre precision, which helps to avoid collateral damage. The turn came as cancellation of the deal might endanger €1.8 billion contract on five corvettes for Saudi Arabian Navy, signed in July with Spanish Navantia.





## United Arab Emirates

Monday, 10 September—Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Mohamed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, met Morocco's King, Mohammed VI, in Abu Dhabi. They discussed regional and international issues and prospects for promoting and strengthening their relations through developing cooperation in all fields, including politics, economy and development. Enhanced Morocco-UAE relations would be beneficial to the joint Arab action, promoted by the UAE, to confront threats to regional security and stability.



Tuesday, 11 September—The UAE will build the first centre in the region for professional training in the fight against drug use. The National Rehabilitation Centre Training Institute will establish centralised framework, as the region struggles to deal with the growing challenge of drug addiction and lacks certified experts in the field. The UAE has registered an upsurge in cases requiring treatment since it reduced punishments for drug users in 2016—sending the first-time offenders to rehabilitation centres instead of prisons.

Wednesday, 12 September—Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, received Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Office (UNCTO), Vladimir Ivanovich Voronkov. Voronkov hailed the UAE's efforts to combat extremism and terrorism as they discussed ways to enhance bilateral relations and support international counter-terrorist efforts. The UNCTO was established in June 2017 to review the UN capability to assist Members with implementing the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.



*The Arabian Gulf is rapidly becoming a geopolitical pivot. As a result, it is important to understand the internal and international dynamics unfolding in the region and the countries that compose it. We at EGIC are proud to present “The Last Thing to Read this Week” segment which contains a small, carefully selected, batch of the most important events unfolding in the countries of the Arab Gulf to help you map the region’s trends.*

