



CBN01 | 2019
02

EGIC
Euro-Gulf
Information
Centre

Arab Gulf

C O U N T R Y

B U L L E T I N S

10 - 15 February 2019



The Last Thing to Read this Week

by

NIKOLA ZUKALOVÁ



Kingdom of Bahrain

Tuesday, 12 February—Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa received the Director General of the Russian Federal Space Agency (Roscosmos), Dmitry Rogozin. During the meeting they discussed cooperation in peaceful space researches and the use of space activities for the development of Bahrain's economy.

Tuesday, 12 February—Commander of the US Central Command (USCENTCOM), General Joseph Votel, met with Bahrain's King Hamad in the presence of the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) Commander-in-Chief, Marshal Khalifa bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa, and other officials. They reviewed military and defence cooperation and coordination between Bahrain and the United States, hailing their level of development and strength.



Thursday, 14 February—The Kingdom of Bahrain celebrated the 18th anniversary of the National Action Charter (NAC), a document which turned the Kingdom into a constitutional monarchy, issued by King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa in reaction to the demands of the Bahraini people, who voted in favour of the change in a referendum by an overwhelming majority of over 98.4%. Since then the Kingdom held five rounds of Parliamentary elections, where representatives of various segments of Bahraini society, both men and women, competed and were

elected to the National Assembly.

Thursday, 14 February—Bahrain's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al-Khalifa, and his counterparts from over 60 countries, including all the Arabian Gulf countries and Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, attended the Ministerial to Promote a Future of Peace and Security in the Middle East, held jointly by the United States and Poland in Warsaw between 13-14 February, in the presence of the US Vice President, Mike Pence, and

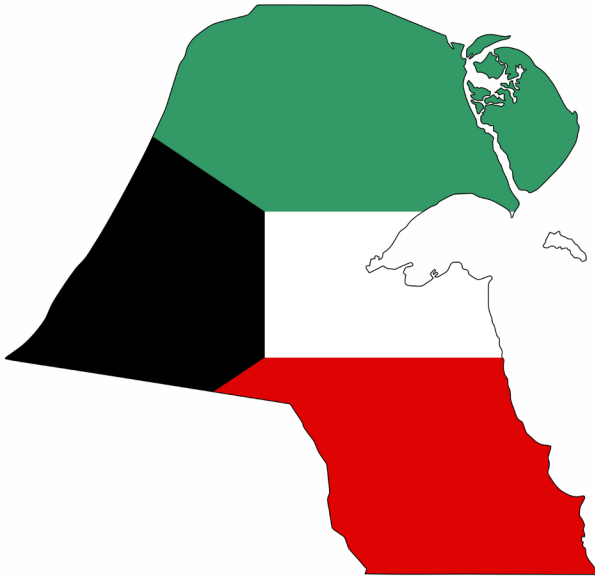


Poland's President, Andrzej Duda. As a result of the Summit several international working groups were established to tackle numerous issues: Counterterrorism and Illicit Finance; Missile Proliferation; Maritime and Aviation Security; Cybersecurity; Energy Security; Humanitarian Issues and Refugees and Wrongful Detainees and Human Rights.



State of Kuwait

Friday, 15 February—Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister, Khaled Al-Jarallah, reaffirmed Kuwait's opposition to ties' normalisation with Israel, following the Ministerial to Promote a Future of Peace and Security in the Middle East in Warsaw, Poland, which was attended by representatives of the Arabian Gulf countries, including Kuwait, and dozens of others, as well as Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. On the topic Mr Al-Jarallah noted that 'Kuwait will be the last country to normalise relations with Israel.'



Friday, 15 February—A delegation of Kuwaiti lawmakers met with their Italian counterparts and visited Italy's Senate and Chamber of Deputies during their visit to Rome. During the meeting in Senate, the President of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Vito Petrocelli, reiterated that both Senate and Parliament will do their best to pass the exemption for Kuwaitis to get the visa-free access to the Schengen Area, following the fulfilment of technical requirements by the Kuwaiti side. On the occasion, President of Italy's Senate, Maria Elisabetta Alberti Casellati, was invited to Kuwait to meet Speaker of the National Assembly, Marzouq Al-Ghanim.



Sultanate of Oman

Thursday, 14 February—Oman and the European Union held a consultative meeting at Oman's Foreign Ministry in Muscat, focusing on bolstering cooperation between the EU and Oman. The Meeting was co-chaired by Oman's Acting Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry for Diplomatic Affairs, Dr Mohammed bin Awadh al Hassan, and the Director and Deputy Managing Director for the Middle East and North Africa at European External Action Service, Colin Scicluna, and was attended by Michele Cervone D'Urso, the EU Ambassador to the GCC and its member states, among other officials.

Thursday, 14 February—Oman's Defence Minister, Sayyid Badr bin Saud bin Harib al Busaidi, discussed military cooperation and ways to enhance it with the Commander of the US Central Command (USCENTCOM), General Joseph Votel, who was visiting the Sultanate with his delegation.





State of Qatar

Monday, 11 February—The Secretary General of Qatar’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs met with Director and Deputy Managing Director for the Middle East and North Africa at the European External Action Service, Colin Scicluna, in the presence of Michele Cervone D’Uso, the EU Ambassador to the GCC and its member states, to discuss cooperation and common concern issues.

Monday, 11 February—The French Delegation, led by the Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs of the French Republic, Jean-Yves Le Drian, was received by the Qatari Emir, Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, in Doha. The same day, Foreign Ministers of Qatar and France signed a declaration of intent to establish strategic dialogue to boost bilateral cooperation in various fields, par-



ticularly security and defence, economy and culture. The strategic dialogue also promises to focus on reaching stability in Libya, Lebanon, Iraq, Syria and Palestine. On the occasion, Mr Le-Drian announced that France’s Prime Minister, Edouard Philippe, will participate in the Qatar National Museum’s opening ceremony on 28 March in Doha.

Thursday, 14 February—The Qatari Emir, Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, arrived in Munich, Germany for the 55th Munich Security Conference held be-

tween 15-17 February. Dozens of heads of states, ministers and military and security experts from around the world gathered to discuss the current and future security challenges, with focus on the EU’s self-assertion, transatlantic cooperation, great power competition and disarmament. The US Vice-President, Mike Pence, called there on the EU to withdraw from the Nuclear Deal with Iran. Among other notable participants were Germany’s Chancellor, Angela Merkel; Presidents of Afghanistan and Egypt; Foreign Ministers of Iraq, Iran,



Qatar, Russia, Pakistan; Defence Ministers of the UK, France, Canada, Turkey; and senior representatives of the EU, NATO, International Monetary Fund and World Bank.



Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Wednesday, 13 February—Prince Sultan bin Salman bin Abdulaziz met with Director General of the Russian Federal Space Agency (Roscosmos) State Corporation for Space Activities, Dmitry Rogozin, and decided to form a programme of cooperation between Saudi Arabia and Russia in the space field. Mr Rogozin also visited the UAE's Mohammed bin Rashid Space Center (MBRSC) in Dubai.

Wednesday, 13 February—The European Commission included Saudi Arabia on its list of high-risk countries for money laundering and terrorist financing. The list will now have to be approved by the European Parliament over the upcoming weeks. Saudi Arabia is a member of the Global Coalition Against Daesh and has adopted numerous measures to combat terrorism financing and money laundering in line with the Financial Action Task Force's Recommendations framework.

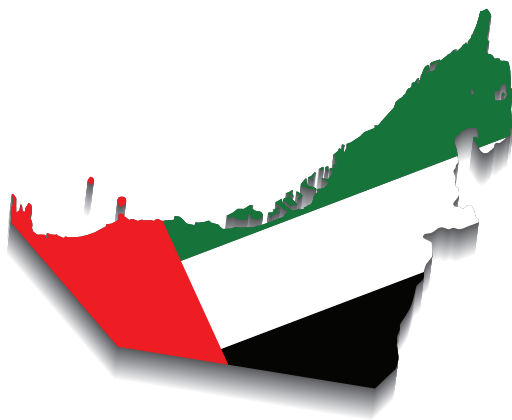
Thursday, 14 February—Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud received Oman's Interior Minister, Hamoud bin Faisal Al-Busaidi, with his delegation in the presence of Interior Minister, Abdulaziz bin Saud Al-Saud, State Minister, Dr Mu-saed Al-Aiban, and Foreign Minister, Ibrahim Al-Assaf. The Omani Interior Minister later met separately with his Saudi counterpart to review bilateral relations and security cooperation and discuss ways to boost their cooperation.





United Arab Emirates

Sunday, 10 February—The UAE hosted the World Government Summit between 10-12 February, where government officials, policy-makers and private sector leaders gathered to discuss the shaping of future governments around the world, focusing particularly on the use of innovation and technology for dealing with challenges to their populations. The list of participants included notably: Lebanese Prime Minister, Saad Hariri, Prime Minister of France, Edouard Philippe, Rwandan President, Paul Kagame, Secretary General of the OECD, Ángel Gurría, and many others. During the Summit, the UAE Economy Minister said that the United Kingdom approached the



UAE and other GCC countries to negotiate a possible free-trade agreement after Brexit, which was confirmed by the British State Secretary for International Trade, Liam Fox.

Sunday, 10 February—Pakistan's Prime Minister, Imran Khan, arrived in the UAE and met with Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, Mohammed bin Zayed, to discuss bilateral ties and cooperation and ways to strengthen them as well as a number of issues of common

concern.

Monday, 11 February—María Fernanda Espinosa, the President of the UN General Assembly, held talks with Mohamed bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, about ways to improve cooperation between the UAE and the United Nations, particularly in supporting peace and stability around the world.

Thursday, 14 February—Crown Prince of



Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, Mohamed bin Zayed, discussed the strengthening of relations between Italy and UAE and several regional and international issues of common concern with Italy's Prime Minister, Giuseppe Conte, in a telephone conversation.



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.

