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B U L L E T I N S

15 - 18 October



The Last Thing to Read this Week

by

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Kingdom of Bahrain

Monday, 15 October—Bahrain and China signed an Agreement on Mutual Visa Exemption for holders of diplomatic and special passports, which will allow them to stay 90 days in the country from the day of entry. This will be effective from 25 October 2018.

Monday, 15 October—Bahrain's High Criminal Court sentenced seven terrorists over the Buri oil pipeline blast on 10 November 2017. Six of the attackers were stripped of their nationality, five were sentenced to life in prison, one was handed 10 years and one 5 years behind bars. They were convicted of establishing and joining a terrorist group, handling and detonating explosives for terrorist purposes, receiving financing and training in the use of weapons from terrorist groups.

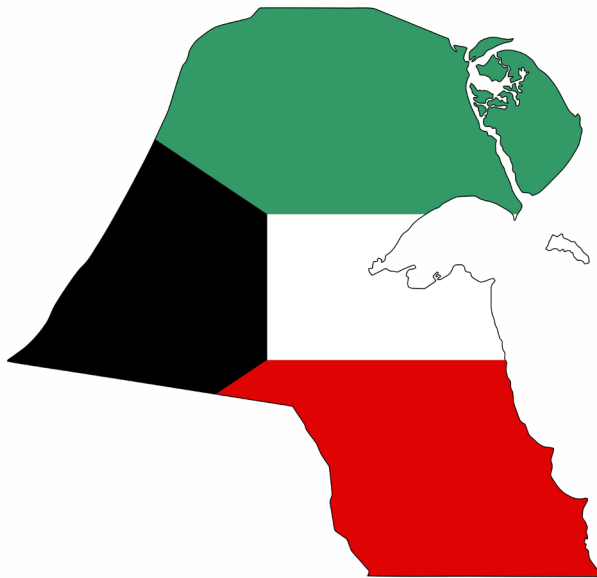
Wednesday, 17 October—Between 17-20 October, Bahrain hosts the 21st Meeting of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), a global fund created to support developing countries in responding to climate change. The event was inaugurated by Bahrain's Oil Minister, Mohammed bin Khalifa Al-Khalifa.





State of Kuwait

Tuesday, 16 October—Zain Kuwait, the leading digital service provider in the country, signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Samsung and Al-Babtain Turnkey Solutions to transform Kuwait's Internet of Things (IoT) initiatives to accelerate the country's digital transformation, facilitating development of smart education, smart security, smart health and smart mobility solutions, in line with Kuwait National Development Plan.



Wednesday, 17 October—Kuwait hosted the 20th Meeting of the Customs Union of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), attended by Customs Authorities of all GCC states. During the two-day event the attendees discussed reviewing the implementation of the unified customs system of the GCC countries, including direct and automated transfer of custom fees.



Sultanate of Oman

Wednesday, 17 October—Oman's Foreign Minister, Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah, received Hussein Jabri Ansari, Iran's Foreign Minister's Special Assistant for Political Affairs, and his delegation. During the meeting they discussed bilateral cooperation as well as regional and international issues of common interest. The same day, Oman's FM received Alexander Lavrentyev, the Russian President's Special Envoy for Syria and his delegation of senior officials, to discuss Russian-Omani relations and the latest regional developments, particularly in Syria.

Wednesday, 17 October—Sultan Qaboos issued five Royal Decrees: one amending the Competition and Monopoly Prevention Law; one amending provisions of the Public Authority for Investment Promotion and Export Development, and one appointing its new chairman, Yahya bin Said Al-Jabri; one appointing Salim bin Nasser Al-Ismaili as advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and one establishing the Oman Commercial Arbitration Centre.





State of Qatar

Tuesday, 16 October—Qatar Petroleum for Sale of Petroleum Products Company Ltd. (QPSPP) signed a Sale and Purchase Agreement with Oriental Energy (Singapore), a subsidiary of China's largest LPG player Oriental Energy, to directly supply China with 600,000 metric tonnes of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) per annum over five years from January 2019.

Wednesday, 17 October—Qatar's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs, Khalid bin Mohamed Al-Attiyah, met with Italy's Defence Minister, Elisabetta Trenta, in Rome where they discussed Qatar-Italy relations. After the meeting, Brigadier General Mashout Faisal Al-Hajri, head of NH90 Helicopter project, and Brigadier General Pasquale Montegiglio, Director of the Third Department of Industrial Policy and International Relations, signed an Agreement on Operational Training and the establishment of the national squadron of the NH90 helicopter in Italy.





Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Monday, 15 October—Riyadh hosted the International Conference on Commercial Arbitration, and, on the sidelines of the event, the Saudi Centre for Commercial Arbitration (SCAA), inked strategic partnership with the American Arbitration Association (AAA) to train the SCAA's staff, among others. The SCCA is currently negotiating with the Ministry of Justice about taking over some commercial mediation cases from commercial courts.

Monday, 15 October—The 7th AGFUND Development Forum, held under the auspices of Prince Talal bin Abdul Aziz, President of the Riyadh-based Arab Gulf Programme for Development (AGFUND), started in Geneva. The AGFUND aims to facilitate access to basic and fundamental goods to those in need, partnering with the United Nations and various local and regional development organisations.

Tuesday, 16 October—The US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, arrived in Riyadh, where he met briefly with King Salman bin Abdulaziz before heading to a meeting with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Among other issues, Pompeo and the Crown Prince discussed the case of missing Saudi journalist, Jamal Khashoggi. The circumstances around Khashoggi's disappearance remains disputed, and mysterious. The investigation is ongoing.

Tuesday, 16 October—The Muslim World League and the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, Italy — the world's second-largest and most important museum after the Louvre, Paris — signed a Cooperation Agreement to implement various educational and cultural initiatives to promote intercultural dialogue.



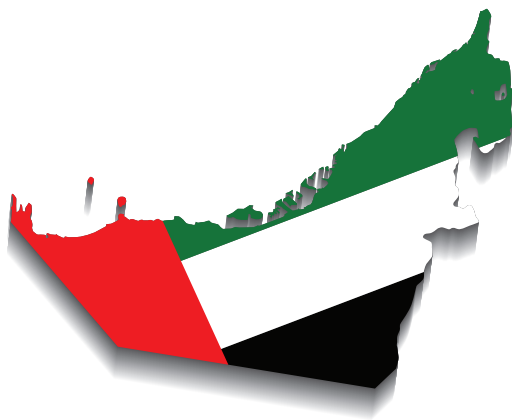


Thursday, 18 October—Saudi Aramco signed a Memorandum of Understanding with China's Eastern Zhejiang province to invest in a new refinery and co-operate in crude oil supply, storage and trading as Zhejiang Petrochemical is building a refinery, able of producing 400,000 barrels of crude oil a day, and associated facilities. Saudi Aramco expects to supply 170,00 barrels a day to the new refinery.



United Arab Emirates

Sunday, 14 October—Between 14-18 October, the Dubai World Trade Centre hosted the 38th Gulf Information Technology Exhibition (GITEX Technology Week 2018), a Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region's tech show featuring the biggest global companies, organisations, and entities from the IT and telecommunications sector, introducing innovations such as flying cars or robot pharmacists among an assortment of others. Dubai also hosted GITEX Future Stars, the fastest growing event for start-ups in the MENA region.



Tuesday, 16 October—The UAE and Romania reviewed bilateral relations and affirmed their mutual interest for enhancing cooperation in various fields, including agriculture and food, high-tech, energy, as the Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, met with Romania's Prime Minister, Viorica Dancila, in Dubai.

Wednesday 17 October—On the sidelines of the GITEX Technology Week 2018, the Dubai Internet City (DIC) and the Russian Export Centre signed a Memorandum of Understanding to launch in Dubai the first one of four planned Russian Centres for Digital Innovations and Information and Communication Technologies outside Russia.

Wednesday, 17 October—The UAE was this year's partner country of the 2nd Italian-Arab Business Forum held in Rome, Italy. The event focused on topics such as innovation, digital transformation, logistics, infrastructure, food and agribusiness to support cooperation between countries for achieving development and economic growth. The Forum was also attended by UAE's Minister



of Economy, Sultan bin Saeed Al-Mansouri, and other senior political and business figures from the participating countries.



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.

