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# Arab Gulf

C O U N T R Y  
B U L L E T I N S  
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The Last Thing to Read this Week

*by*

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## Kingdom of Bahrain

Sunday, 17 March—Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa, accompanied by several senior officials and businesspersons, travelled to Turkmenistan, where he met with the country's President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov. They focused on the opportunities for advancing bilateral cooperation, particularly in trade, investments and energy sector. On the occasion, the Turkmen-Bahraini Business Forum was organised in Ashgabat. The visit culminated in the signing of several Memoranda of Understanding, notably between both countries' Chambers of Commerce and Industry, and between the 'Turkmengas' and the 'Turkmenchemistry' State Concerns and the Gulf Petrochemical Industries Company (GPIC), the only petrochemical producing company with headquarters in Bahrain.



Monday, 18 March—Bahrain hosted the 21st Middle East Oil & Gas Show and Conference (MEOS 2019), co-organised by the Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE), the Arabian Exhibition Management Company and the National Oil & Gas Authority (NOGA), under the auspices of Bahrain's Prime Minister, Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa. The three-day event is one of the largest in the Middle East. Senior officials from various national and international oil companies and thousands of professionals and experts, attended the event to build business part-

nerships and share expertise. Around 200 oil companies from all over the world, including Brazil, Canada, China, Denmark, Kuwait, Russia, Turkey, the United States, participated in the exhibition.

Thursday, 21 March—Italy's Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Guglielmo Picchi, visited Bahrain to open the Italian Design Day, an exposition of iconic Italian brands. During his stay, Mr Picchi met also Bahrain's Crown Prince and First Deputy Prime Minister, Salman bin

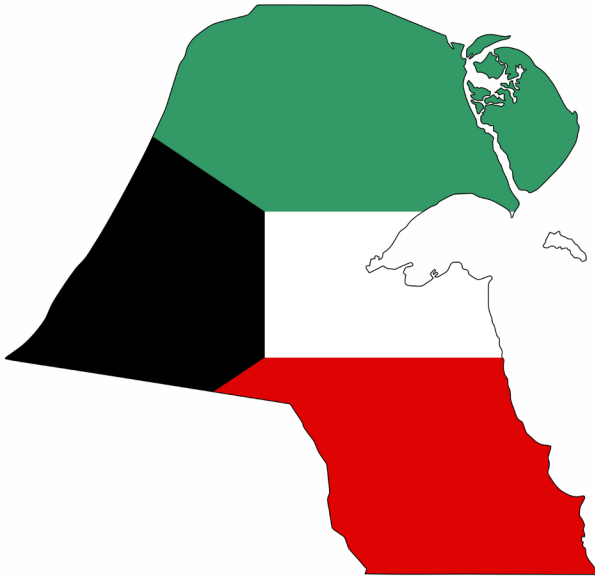


Hamad Al-Khalifa, and Foreign Minister, Khalid bin Ahmed bin Mohammed Al-Khalifa, to discuss the strengthening of bilateral cooperation in various fields, particularly in trade, and the upcoming opening of Bahrain's embassy in Rome.



## State of Kuwait

Wednesday, 20 March—The 3rd EU-GCC Business Forum was hosted by the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Kuwait City. The event offered an opportunity for experts, businesspersons and politicians to discover the opportunities for future trade and investments partnerships between the European Union (EU) and the Gulf Cooperation Council's (GCC). During the Forum, the GCC Secretary General, Abdullatif Al-Zayani, expressed the Gulf countries' interest in boosting trade with the EU and finalising the free trade agreement negotiations between the two economic blocs, which were launched in 1990.



Wednesday, 20 March—The United States' State Secretary, Mike Pompeo, travelled to Kuwait for the 3rd Strategic Dialogue between the US and Kuwait, which was rescheduled from January, as part of his regional tour to Israel and Lebanon. During the Dialogue both sides focused on the strengthening of bilateral cooperation, notably in cyber-security, countering terrorism and narcotics, trade, healthcare, education and customs. Mr Pompeo also met several senior Kuwaiti officials, including the Emir Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah to talk about the situation in Syria and Yemen as well as the Middle East Strategic Alliance (MESA), Middle East Peace Process and the Gulf Crisis.

Friday, 22 March—Austria's Chancellor, Sebastian Kurz, will travel to Kuwait and the UAE for an official visit during the following week. In Kuwait, Mr Kurz will discuss economic cooperation with the country's government officials, focusing particularly on infrastructure, energy and healthcare.



## Sultanate of Oman

Sunday, 17 March—The Egypt's Foreign Minister, Sameh Shoukri, and his accompanying delegation arrived in Oman for a two-day official visit, which included the co-chairing of the Omani-Egyptian Joint Committee and meetings with several senior government officials, including the Sultanate's Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs, Yousef bin Alawi bin Abdullah.

Wednesday, 20 March—Foreign Ministry Secretary General, Sayiid Badr bin Hamad Al-Busaidi, received his Italian counterpart, Elisabetta Belloni, to discuss the boosting of economic cooperation along with cultural and knowledge exchange between the two friendly countries.





## State of Qatar

Sunday, 17 March—Qatar received the first of 24 Boeing AH-64E Apache Guardian helicopters - the most advanced version of attack helicopter in the world. The ceremony, held on 14 March at the Boeing Plant in Mesa, Arizona, was attended by Qatar's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs, Khalid bin Mohamed Al-Attiyah. All AH-64Es are expected to be delivered to Qatar by mid-2020.



Thursday, 21 March—Qatar and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Office held the 1st Strategic Dialogue to address the scourge of terrorism at the UN headquarters in New York. The meeting was co-chaired by the Chair of the National Counter Terrorism Committee, Major General Abdulaziz Abdullah Al-Ansari, and Under-Secretary-General of the UN Counter-Terrorism Office, Vladimir Voronkov. The event was attended by several officials and experts from both sides. The next meeting is expected to be held on the sidelines of the Doha Forum 2019, organised in Qatar at the end of this year.

Friday, 22 March—Qatar's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Sultan bin Saad Al-Muraikhi, met with the President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, on the sidelines of the Emergency Meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation's Executive Committee in Istanbul.



## Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Tuesday, 19 March—Saudi Arabia launched four mega projects in Riyadh, aiming to create new facilities which would improve the citizens' lives and transform the capital into an attractive destination in line with the Vision 2030. The \$23 billion projects include the world's largest city park (13.4 km<sup>2</sup>), the King Salman Park, a large greens-planting project, Green Riyadh, which will significantly expand the urban green spaces, a health and wellness project, the Sports Boulevard, and the world's largest government investment program in public art, the Riyadh Art. The projects will also contribute to environmental sustainability and Kingdom's economy by creating tens of thousands of new jobs.



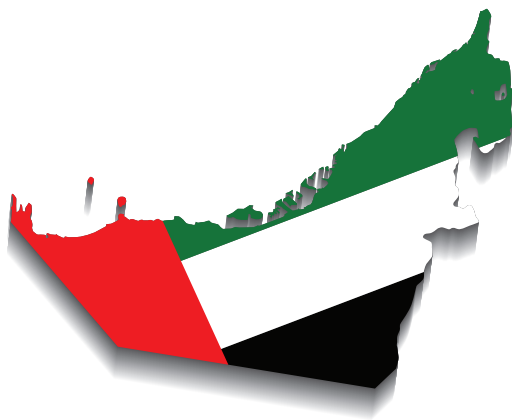
Tuesday, 19 March—The Deputy National Security Advisor of the United Kingdom, Christian Turner, visited Saudi Arabia and met with the Kingdom's Foreign Minister, Ibrahim Al-Assaf, and with the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Adel Al-Jubeir. During the meetings, they discussed bilateral coordination within the partnership framework between both countries and recent regional and international developments.

Friday, 22 March—The Council of Saudi Chambers hosted a Saudi-Bulgarian Business Forum in Riyadh, which focused on boosting bilateral trade and exploring investment opportunities, particularly in tourism, healthcare, IT and renewable energy. The Forum was attended by Bulgaria's Economy Minister, Emil Karanikolov, and Vice-Chairman of the Council of Saudi Chambers, Munir bin Saad, and several businesspersons from both countries.



## United Arab Emirates

Sunday, 17 March—Mohamed bin Zayed, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, and Afghanistan's President, Ashraf Ghani, along with several officials from both countries, met to discuss bilateral ties, ways to advance cooperation, particularly in trade, investments and development, as well as counter-terrorism and extremism. Both leaders witnessed the signing of several Memoranda of Understanding between the two countries, notably on cooperation in energy, agriculture, mining, education, sports and culture.



Monday, 18 March—The Assistant Minister for Human Rights and International Law at the UAE's Foreign Ministry, Ahmed Abdul Rahman Al-Jarman, and Italy's Ambassador to the UAE, Liborio Stellino, discussed bilateral cooperation and exchanged the ratification instruments on agreements, signed between Italy and the UAE on judicial cooperation, extradition and mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, which will become effective on 17 April 2019.

Thursday, 21 March—The Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, Mo-

hamed bin Zayed, received China's National Defence Minister, General Wei Fenghe, along with several Chinese military officials, in the presence of the UAE's Minister of State for Defence Affairs, Mohammed bin Ahmed Al-Bowardi. They focused on ways to enhance military and defence cooperation between the UAE and China.

Thursday, 21 March—The Chief of Staff of the UAE Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Hamad Mohammed Thani Al-Rumaithi, participated in the Meeting of the Chiefs of Staff of the six Gulf Cooperation Council Countries, Egypt and



Jordan and the Commander of the US Central Command (CENTCOM), General Joseph Votel, held in Tampa, Florida, the United States. The Meeting focused on issues concerning regional security and stability and efforts to combat terrorism and extremism.



*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.*

