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# Arab Gulf

C O U N T R Y

B U L L E T I N S

28 October - 02 November



The Last Thing to Read this Week

*by*

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## Kingdom of Bahrain



Sunday, 28 October—Bahrain hosted the 2018 IISS Manama Dialogue on regional security. The event, hailed as a success, was attended by senior government figures from the US the EU the Middle East and beyond. The speakers, among others, included: US Defense Secretary, James Mattis, King Abdullah II of Jordan, Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister, Adel Al-Jubeir, Germany's Minister of Defence, Ursula von der Leyen, Italy's Minister of Defence, Elisabetta Trenta, and Japan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Taro Kono.

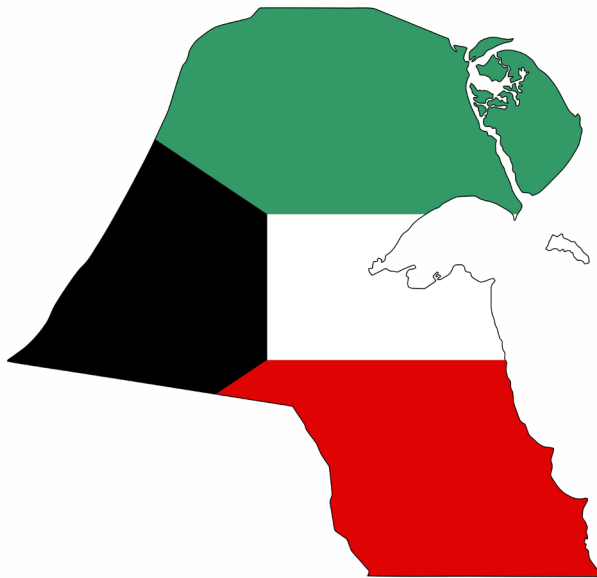
Sunday, 28 October—Bahrain's Foreign Minister, Khalid bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa, has said that he expects a planned security alliance, titled the Middle East Security Alliance (MESA), including Egypt, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the UAE and open to other Arab countries, to be formed next year. The purpose of this alliance is to deter Iran's expansionism in the region. Bahrain's Foreign Minister added that the country will host the upcoming security summit in which the alliance will be activated.

Wednesday, 31 October—Bahrain's Government unveiled a report showing that Bahrain's non-oil GDP expanded by 2.8%, this year, driven by the construction (up 6.7%) and manufacturing sectors (up 4.5%). Bahrain is on its way to carry out a comprehensive diversification programme.



## State of Kuwait

Monday, 29 October—Kuwait Airways announced the opening of a new air route to Milan Malpensa Airport in Italy. The Kuwaiti carrier is planning future expansions in the EU market.



Thursday, 1 November—Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah, and India's Foreign Minister, Sushma Swaraj, signed a memorandum of understanding on domestic workers, and an agreement for visa exemption for holders of diplomatic, special and official passports. Both Ministers expressed interest in developing the India-Kuwait relations further.



## Sultanate of Oman

Sunday, 28 October—Oman's Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs, Yusuf bin Alawi, represented the Sultanate at the 2018 IISS Manama Dialogue on regional security. In his speech, he reiterated Oman's effort to mediate solutions to regional crises including with regard to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Thursday, 1 November—Oman's Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al-Said, received, in Muscat, Israel's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. Netanyahu's visit was the first by an Israeli prime minister to the Gulf in over two decades. Oman could potentially become a new mediator in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The leader of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, visited Oman the week before Netanyahu's visit.





## State of Qatar

Tuesday, 30 October—Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Bin Al Thani, issued a law enabling foreigners to own property in areas designated by Qatar's cabinet in order to stimulate the struggling internal propriety market. In addition to opening up the property market, Qatar has allowed for 100% foreign ownership of companies, relaxed entry visa requirements and introduced permanent residency for expatriates.

Wednesday, 31 October—Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Bin Al Thani, met Italy's Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister, Matteo Salvini, in Doha. The meeting focused on Italy-Qatar cooperation on the Libya dossier and on the decision, by Doha's Sovereign Wealth Fund, to make Italy its number 1 investment destination in the EU—in the near future.





## Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Wednesday, 31 October—Saudi Arabia's Finance Minister, Mohammed Al-Jadaan, announced a 60% reduction in Saudi Arabia's budget deficit over the past nine months. This was rendered possible by a 48% growth in the government's non-oil revenues.

Thursday, 1 November—Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, met in Riyadh with a delegation of American evangelical Christian leaders. The meeting focused on the importance of joint efforts to promote religious coexistence, tolerance and combating extremism and terrorism. The Crown Prince is currently leading Saudi Arabia's domestic efforts against extremist religious preaching.

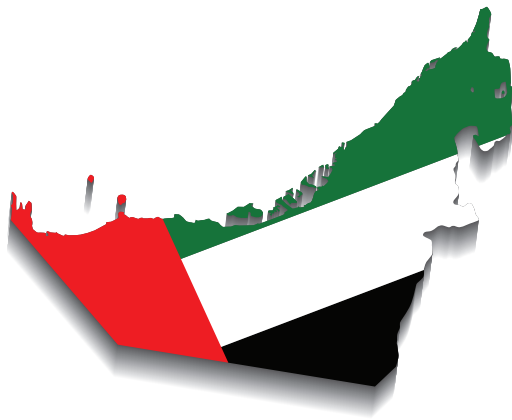
Friday, 2 November—The official spokesman of the Arab Coalition to Restore Legitimacy in Yemen, Colonel Turki Al-Malki, announced that Saudi Arabia's Air Force carried out a number of military operations targeting the Al-Dulaimi base in Sanaa, which was being used by Yemen's Houthi rebels to launch drone and ballistic missile attacks. Missile attacks by the Iran-backed rebels have constantly targeted Saudi Arabia's civilians since 2015.





## United Arab Emirates

Monday, 29 October—The UAE launched a new satellite, denominated KhalifaSat, from the Tanegashima Space Centre in Japan. The satellite, the first one to be built entirely in the UAE by an Emirati team, aims to assist with a range of tasks including aiding relief efforts after natural disasters. The satellite will spend five years in a Low Earth Orbit where it will capture and deliver high-resolution images of the Earth to the ground station at the Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) in Dubai.





*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.*

