

Archived Content

Information identified as archived on the Web is for reference, research or record-keeping purposes. It has not been altered or updated after the date of archiving. Web pages that are archived on the Web are not subject to the Government of Canada Web Standards.

As per the [Communications Policy of the Government of Canada](#), you can request alternate formats on the "[Contact Us](#)" page.

Information archivée dans le Web

Information archivée dans le Web à des fins de consultation, de recherche ou de tenue de documents. Cette dernière n'a aucunement été modifiée ni mise à jour depuis sa date de mise en archive. Les pages archivées dans le Web ne sont pas assujetties aux normes qui s'appliquent aux sites Web du gouvernement du Canada.

Conformément à la [Politique de communication du gouvernement du Canada](#), vous pouvez demander de recevoir cette information dans tout autre format de rechange à la page « [Contactez-nous](#) ».

CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE - COLLÈGE DES FORCES CANADIENNES

NSSP 10/PESN 10

Confronting the Threat:

The Arabian Gulf States and their Strategic Options

By/par Col Khalfan Al Kaabi

This paper was written by a student attending the Canadian Forces College in fulfillment of one of the requirements of the Course of Studies. The paper is a scholastic document, and thus, contains facts and opinions which the author alone considered appropriate and correct for the subject. It does not necessarily reflect the policy or the opinion of any agency, including the Government of Canada, the Canadian Department of National Defense and the Government of the United Arab Emirates. This paper may not be released, quoted or copied except with the express permission of the Canadian Department of National Defence

ABSTRACT

The Gulf area represents one of the most important areas to the stability of the world because of its oil and gas reserves which account for 55% of the world's known reserves. Many potential threats confront the Arabian Gulf states. Several steps have been taken by the Arabian Gulf states to ensure their security, one of which was the establishment of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) following several crises in the region at the end of the 1970s. This paper examines how some regional powers represent potential threats to the GCC. By comparing the military capabilities of the GCC states with potential threat states, and by considering geography and other factors, the GCC seems unable to protect itself against these regional powers. This paper concludes that the GCC could enhance its own position as a regional power by taking steps to improve its relative power and security. Among its sources of strategic power one of the most important is their economy.

CONFRONTING THE THREAT:

THE ARABIAN GULF STATES AND THEIR STRATEGIC OPTIONS

The Gulf area represents one of the most important areas to the stability of the world because of its oil and gas reserves which account for 55% of the world's known reserves¹. Three wars have erupted in the Gulf region in the last two decades, wars that have shown the importance of the stability of the region. The first war between Iran and Iraq in the 1980s lasted eight years, threatening the sea lanes in the Gulf and increasing the price of oil. The second war involved the liberation of Kuwait after Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, and resulted in Operation Desert Storm in January and February 1991. This war demonstrated what will happen to the world economically if this area is threatened and the price of oil goes up. After the liberation of Kuwait many steps were taken to ensure the security of the Gulf. One of these steps established the Peninsula Shield, an organization that will be described later in this paper. ^[1] As well, Martin Indyk, a former US Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs, proposed a dual containment policy to contain Iraq and Iran as potential threats from the American perspective.

This paper will consider why the Gulf is important to the world, different facets of the threats to the Gulf states, and what strategic options are available to them. Along with discussion of some related issues it will answer this question: could the Gulf States defend themselves without depending on another country?

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GULF'S POSITION IN THE WORLD

¹ http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/Persian_Gulf/Background.html(this

^[1] The strategic balance in the Arabian Gulf in the ninety last century

The strategic position of the Gulf has been very important since long before the discovery of its oil. This importance was a result of its commercial trade between the east and the west, and of its position as part of the strategic Arabian Peninsula. Over the course of generations the importance of the Gulf has increased, culminating with the discovery of oil in the twentieth century. This made the Gulf of essential and vital importance to the world due to its possessing 55% of the world's oil reserves. We can summarize the unique importance of the Gulf region to the current multi-faceted world order in four points^[2]: its geopolitics, its strategic geographical position, its economic geography and its cultural geography.

In the field of geopolitics, it could be said that the outcome of the Arab – Israeli conflict could determine the fate of the geopolitics of the whole world. Moreover, the movement toward regional political groupings in the Middle East, with the Gulf as its central pole, is one of the most salient advantages for controlling the course of political globalization. The scope of regional political groupings in the mainly Arab Middle East and the Gulf is much larger than the potentially negative impact of the challenges posed by the designs of externally imposed regional groupings.

In relation to the strategic geography of the region, and with a close look at the world scale for weighing strategic and security importance, it could be said that whether in terms of proximity to the center of the globe, to its fringes, or both, that there is no spot in the world that holds such massive advantages as the Gulf region.

In the field of economic geography, the Gulf region is capable of providing a total of about two-thirds of the world's oil production. The Gulf region exports around 25% of the total

^[2] The Gulf challenges of the future by H.E. Mohammed Ali Abtahi

world's consumption of oil and the largest facilities for exporting natural gas are found in this region. Any change, whether it is a sudden or gradual decline, in the oil production networks in the Gulf can be dangerous for the world economy. Moreover, if we take into account the existing production facilities in their entirety from the north, south, east and west, and the transportation and navigation traffic in transit through the area, then we can say that the region serves the market of nearly seven hundred millions persons living in the neighboring regions of the Gulf.

In relation to cultural geography, the prevalence of a common religion and shared moral values that promote Islamic unity in this region can equally create unity of opinions and a common vision in the social, political, cultural and economic realms. It can also prepare the ground for achieving religious-cultural integration in this vital region. All of these elements constitute sources of strength for the area.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL

The Arabian Gulf states recognized the changes in the world security environment, especially when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979 in an effort to arrive at the warm waters of the Gulf. As well, the eclipse of the Shah's regime in Iran and the Islamic revolution led by AL KHOMEINI had occurred. This was accompanied by the announcement of AYATOLLAH AL KHOMEINI that he intended to export the revolution to the other side of the Gulf, the United State's announcement of its intention to create and exercise rapid reaction forces, and the war between Iraq and Iran which erupted in September 1980. As individual countries the Gulf States would not be able to defend themselves against any outside aggressions. Due to all of this and in order to ensure a mutual defense the

Arabian Gulf states came up with an initiative to^[3] establish the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in Abu Dhabi, the UAE capital, on 27 May 1981. The articles of the GCC not only consist of military cooperation, but also imply other types of cooperation like economic.

At its institution and by the establishment text the GCC only includes the UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, BAHRAIN, the KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA, the SULTANATE OF OMAN, and the states of QATAR, and KUWAIT. It is clear that the establishment of the GCC was intended to ensure the security of the member states, but not against any country in particular. However, by the time the GCC was established the war between Iraq and Iran was ongoing. It became clear that the GCC along with the West would support Iraq against the new regime of the Islamic republic of Iran during the eight years of war, due to the fact that they viewed Iran as a threat to Gulf security. When the war ended in 1988 it was clear that Iraq had won, and was left with one of the strongest armies in the region owning a huge arsenal of weapons.

It should be understood that although the GCC supported Iraq such support was in response to a specific and unique situation and by individual states, not as a common or general policy announcement in response to the situation. It does not appear to be an appropriate situation that the organization does not share a common policy. In any event, the GCC was established in clearly difficult and complicated circumstances, and it is perhaps because of these unusual circumstances that the GCC was not able to create a common policy in the war between Iran and Iraq. It is important to mention that except for Saudi Arabia all of the other five members of the GCC had received their independence recently, meaning that they did not have a long or extensive experience with foreign policy affairs.

THE CONCEPT OF GCC SECURITY

^[3] The theory of GCC security by Kamal Mohhamed Alastal

This paper will now consider what the concept of security means to the GCC from the author's perspective and based on the crises that have happened in the past. Security means the ability of the GCC to decide upon and manage their own situation based on their interests and values and without any interference by outside parties. As well, they must have the ability to defend themselves against any aggression by any regional powers, and finally must also be able to ensure that their oil production is exported to the world without any trouble or obstacles. As discussion it may be fairly normal for most countries in the world to have their decisions subjected to some form of outside influence or interference with maybe the exception of the United States. So it is not unusual for most countries in the world to consider other countries when making their decisions. But with respect to the vital issues they should not allow any outside countries to intervene.

An example of this is the invasion of Iraq and change of its regime in 2003. While it was to the benefit of the GCC that this should occur it is not clear that the GCC estimated the consequences of these events. It is true that the GCC could not prevent the United States from doing so, but at least the GCC could have sided with the countries that were against the war like France and Germany. But some will argue that the GCC needs the United States to ensure their own security as was illustrated by what happened when Iraq occupied Kuwait in 1990. At that time the United States was the first country that acted to support the security of the GCC against aggression. This leads us to the second point in the concept of Gulf security: do the Arabian Gulf states have the ability to defend themselves against any regional power? It is clear that the GCC developed their military capability after Operation Desert Storm and that they spent huge amounts of money to do so. They also established the Peninsula Shield which this paper will talk about later.

The third point is to ensure the export of oil from the Gulf to the world markets. This of course requires cooperation with other countries in the region like Iran because of its position to the north of the strategically important Straits of Hormuz. The importance of this issue became clear during the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s, when Iran attacked the Kuwaiti oil tankers passing through the Gulf. Of course actions like this not only affected the GCC, but the world as well because 25% of the world's oil production in the world was placed in danger. We can imagine the effect such events could have on the price of oil, and how much it would overshadow growth in the world's economy. This shows how much the security of the Gulf is important to the world.

THE THREAT TO THE ARABIAN GULF STATES

The threats confronting the GCC are different and unique, and we can see that they could materialize in one of several different shapes. The first threat is the security threats that are the most the dangerous threats to the Arabian Gulf States. From the author's point of view threats can be seen from many countries such as:

Iran. For reasons of geography Iran is very close to the GCC, and after their Islamic Revolution in 1979 the new regime declared its intention to export Islamic revolution throughout the world, starting with the Gulf. Because of geography Iran will remain the primary threat to the Arabian Gulf or at least to the transportation of oil in the Gulf. This is because it has the capability to threaten the sea lanes in the Gulf by controlling the Straits of Hormuz from the north side of the Strait. What leads to the conclusion that Iran is the primary threat to the Gulf is that it has not shown actions in any situations that would reassure and make the Arabian Gulf states feel good towards Iran. Iran is continuing to occupy the United Arab Emirates' three islands in the strategic Straits of Hormuz. As well, it

still claims Bahrain as being historically part of Iran, and in the 1980s during the pilgrim season Iran caused disruption and tried to assert its dominance in the region. Finally and most recently, Iran demonstrates a pattern of interfering in the internal affairs of Iraq by supporting one group against the others to ensure there is not any more growth in Iraqi (or other) power in the region. This is because it is known that Iran was defeated in the eight year war with Iraq, so it does not want any power close to its boundaries. But never the less and after all of that, the author feels that any security arrangements in the Gulf must include Iran because it is neighboring the Arabian Gulf states. However Iran should not intervene in the internal affairs of the GCC and it must arrive at an agreement on the United Arab Emirates call to refer the dispute over the three Gulf islands to the International Court.

Israel. There is no doubt that Israel is a threat to the Gulf because of many things like their geography. Basically it is not far from Saudi Arabia and is able to make use of the Red Sea. Also, it has treaties with other countries which might thr

But we should ask if the Arabian Gulf states could be easily threatened by any of those countries, whether the GCC has the ability to defend themselves against any such aggression, and what options GCC has to defend themselves. This will be discussed later in this paper.

A COMPARISON BETWEEN POTENTIAL THREAT COUNTRIES AND THE GCC

It is important to look at the defense balance between those threat countries (Iran, Israel and India) and the GCC. ^[4]

We should note that the comparison between the GCC and these three countries covers different variables, and that distance, common boundaries and relative air power are also very important factors that we should keep in mind. Of course Israel and India are members of the nuclear weapons club and Iran appears on its way to owning its own nuclear weapons. This is a capability which none of the Gulf States owns. It is believed that it would be impossible for any country to actually use such weapons in the region without seriously damaging its own interests.

From the comparison of air forces it can be estimated that the Gulf States have the ability to defend against and also attack those countries, especially Iran and Israel because of their close geographical proximity. India is also in the range of many of the aircraft. Without dwelling extensively on tactical issues, it is clear that if any country decides to invade another country it will start by using its air power.

In a comparison of the numbers of land forces the GCC is less numerous than Iran and India, but again the use of land forces will occur only after the success of the air power war. There are no common boundaries between these three countries and the GCC. Israel is about 80 kilometers from the GCC (Saudi Arabia), and Iran is not too far from the nearest

GCC land boundary (Kuwait). But it is not a common boundary in either case. In the case of India it is far away, there is no common boundary with the GCC, and the Gulf of Oman effectively separates India from the GCC. Once again the threat would not come from the land because of geography. The most realistic threat comes from missiles, and Iran seems to be the most serious potential threat to the GCC from this perspective. The other two countries, because of their geographic separation and a possible reluctance to use third party airspace, are seen as less of an immediate threat than Iran. Also, by occupying the three strategic islands^[5] Abu Musa, Lesser Tunb and Greater Tunb in the entrance to the Gulf, Iran possesses a forward base in the Gulf that is just 90 kilometers from the United Arab Emirates coast. But despite the more serious Iranian threat, both Israel and India have the capability to reach the GCC from their home lands.

There could be other threats from other countries but to a lesser degree. It should be mentioned that the GCC has an excellent relationship with the western countries and to what extent that tends to reduce the threat from regional powers is not very clear. But for sure without those relationships with the west there would be a one hundred and eighty degree change in the way both the GCC and the western countries approach security in the region.

What is important to the GCC is to be able to manage itself in a worse case scenario. By this it is meant that if the United States and the other western countries pull out from the region or elect not to act in a time of crisis, the GCC must be able to depend on itself in such a case. Indeed, the GCC has taken this into account, and later in this paper we will talk about what the GCC has done so far in this regard and what more they could do.

OTHER THREATS TO THE GULF STATES

^[4] the military balance 2008 by the international institute for strategic studies

^[5] Gulf news paper web site rsu@alkhaleej.ae

Economical threats to the Gulf States could also develop by the discovery of areas anywhere in the world where there is as much oil as in the Gulf region. It could be in the northern region which is shared by five countries: Canada, Denmark, the United States, Norway and Russia. But it is not clear what the future will be for that area, and if there is even the possibility to have the ability to benefit from such resources. Or the economical threat could come from somewhere in Africa or elsewhere in the world. Of course these do not represent direct security threats to the GCC, but they would cause the GCC to lose the advantage that it now has as the first and major supplier to the world's oil demands. However it seems unlikely that the price of oil will change if such things happen because the world is growing and the dependency on oil is increasing^[7].

Another economical threat to the GCC would be the discovery of an alternative to oil and a reduced worldwide reliance on oil as a source of energy. Of course that would mean that the price of oil would go down, affecting not only the GCC but also many other countries and the huge multi-national oil companies as well. In response to these economical threats to the GCC it should be said that the GCC has invested billions of dollar in the past and along with the huge^[8] oil companies will invest other billions of the dollars in the next few years doing the same research in alternatives to oil so that they won't lose their investments. In the meantime it appears unlikely that there will be any alternative energy sources other than oil, and that oil will continue to be used^[9]. As well, even if there are other inventions that provide an alternative to oil, it is likely that oil will still remain a vital resource used by a lot of countries.

^[7] OPEC long term strategy

^[8] Opec estimated investment in the next ten years

^[9] Opec long term strategy

The other two threats which might affect the GCC are the current ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The paper will now address each of these two countries separately.

Afghanistan. After 9/11 the United States along with other allies changed the Taliban regime because they supported and hosted al Qaeda. Since the end of 2001 the situation has not been stabilized. Not only has NATO not been able to stabilize and normalize the situation in Afghanistan, but meanwhile the production of opium has increased significantly and the year 2007 has seen the highest levels of production according to the United Nations^[10]. Most of that opium is going to Europe while the remainder goes to the GCC which is not far from Afghanistan. Of course how that will affect the GCC, which are known as conservative countries, represents the pressing and primary threat arising from the situation in Afghanistan. The second threat is what will happen if NATO is unable to control the broader situation in Afghanistan and they decide to leave Afghanistan. What would be the impact on the GCC and how would that threaten the GCC. From the author's point of view there would be a serious effect on the GCC, knowing that many Afghans work in the GCC and that many among them are sympathetic to the Taliban. But estimating the precise impact of that on the stability of the GCC would be difficult.

Iraq. Since the United States invaded Iraq in the year 2003 and changed the regime there, the country has suffered from a high level of violence. The Americans have been unable to stabilize the country so far and there is no significant light at the end of the tunnel with respect to stabilizing the country, only an ongoing discussion in the United States about whether to keep their forces in place or to leave Iraq. Next November a new administration will take over and they might change the strategy towards Iraq as the British have now somehow changed their strategy. Of course it is hoped that Iraq will be stabilized and remain

as one country with all the Iraqis enjoying equal rights, without any outside interference in their internal affairs. If such is the case it will be to the benefit of the GCC and will make for security and balance in the region, but if that does not happen the insurgent cause might spread to the entire region including the GCC. No one can estimate the impact of that, but Iraq shares a boundary with Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and nothing can prevent militias from crossing the boundary because it is thousands of kilometers long. It can be argued that the Saudi and the Kuwaiti army could secure the boundary, but it is uncertain at best given that the United States Army could not accomplish it. So if the boundary cannot be secured the potential scenario which no one likes could develop and this could pose a serious potential threat to the GCC.

In addition, Saudi Arabia will be forced to fortify and protect its borders with Iraq, as the future of Iraq remains unknown and the current puppet government is unlikely to lead Iraq to stability because of the discrimination which it practices internally. The other thing contributing to the unknowns are the excellent relationships Iraq's current government enjoys with Iran, while at the same time the United States maintains that the Iranians form part of their 'axis of evil'.

Environmental Threats. Among the major threats to the GCC are the environmental threats. Among these the most potentially dangerous results from the Iranian nuclear position, largely due to the location of Iranian reactors on their southern coast along the gulf shore. In addition to the threats this embodies it could be argued that the Iranian nuclear program in general represents the most potentially dangerous threat in this author's view. However, with respect to the associated environmental threats we will consider the environmental damage that could occur if an accident were to happen at the Iranian nuclear

^[10] Afghanistan opium survey 2007

facilities. But first it is important to remember what happened when the CHERNOBYL² accident occurred in 1986. That accident killed at least 30 plant workers, caused the hospitalization of hundreds of others, and exposed millions of people to ionizing radiation. This type of high-energy radiation can break apart molecules and atoms.

But 18 years after the disaster, the true health costs of Chernobyl's radiation bomb are still unknown. Up to 2,000 children later developed thyroid cancer as a result of radiation. While some experts believe the cancer rate has peaked, others warn that it could take decades for all cancers to be detected. Thousands of other fatal illnesses have also been blamed on the disaster. Less controversially, it is widely accepted that the accident has caused great economic and psychological hardship, especially among the hundred thousand people who had to be resettled.

"Eighteen years after the Chernobyl disaster, we are still unable to give an exhaustive picture of the consequences of this accident and its health implications," said Denise Adler, a radiation expert at the University of Geneva in Switzerland. "It can't be compared to any other environmental disaster."

Contaminated Rains. Chernobyl is located about 80 miles (130 kilometers) north of Kiev, the Ukrainian capital, and 7 miles (11 kilometers) south of the border with Belarus. At the time of the accident, Ukraine and Belarus were still part of the Soviet Union. Belarus was affected the most by the Chernobyl catastrophe. About 70 percent of all released radioactive substances from Chernobyl fell on its territory. Some places in western Europe and Turkey received contaminated rains, and insignificant amounts of radiation even reached the United States. In Switzerland, it is still forbidden to eat mushrooms in some mountainous parts.

² NATUNAL GEOGRAPHIC <http://news.nationalgeographic.com>

The secretive Soviet government at first downplayed the magnitude of the disaster. Few residents were told to evacuate the area, even though a large swath of territory soon became heavily contaminated by radionuclide's (atoms that emit ionizing radiation).

It is known that the Iranian nuclear facilities are located on their coast in the northwest area of the gulf. As a result of this position if there is ever any incident it will spread contamination throughout the entire gulf because the wind in the region typically blows from the northwest. Of course, the facilities are being built by the Russians so it is not possible that it is safe and fully protected against any potential incident. As well, if there are any conflicts between Iran and any other country the first target will be the Iranian facilities. Besides, the rotating inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency are not covering everything because Iran has not been honest and clear with the international community about the purpose of its program.

The Composition of the Populations. This is one of the important issues that the GCC must consider and find a solution to before it is too late. By this it is meant that the worker population represents a big percentage³ of the populations of GCC countries. In particular many come from India and Pakistan, and in some countries they represent almost half of the population. Of course, this is not a suitable situation for the GCC which all of the GCC members realize as a problem, and they are trying to solve the impact of having that big a number of foreign workers in the GCC. It is a threat that presents itself in different facets. The principle threat is to the ethics and happiness of the GCC that make the region into one family because of the integrity between GCC citizens. The second facet is that those workers behave different than the local GCC citizen behaves, in that most GCC citizens behave in accordance with the Islamic religion.

Economic Threat to GCC Currency. The final threat to be focused on is economical in nature and it is related to the connection between the GCC currency and the American dollar. The effect of this threat has become clear over the last two years as the US dollar began to weaken against other currencies like the Euro, the yen and other currencies.⁴ To elaborate the problem, all the GCC countries (except Kuwait) evaluate their currency against the US dollar. The dollar in the last two years began to lose some of its value in comparison with other currencies. The GCC is a major producer of oil in the world, and oil prices are established as the barrel price by dollar. The GCC has not benefited a lot because although oil prices have increased over one hundred dollars per barrel the link to the US dollar means the GCC has not seen full benefit from that price increase. On the other hand, with respect to other goods the GCC must import almost everything from China, Japan and the EU. Their currency has increased against the US dollar which is linked to the GCC currencies. This causes a lot of inflation and the price of every thing has increased by double. The other essential and related threat comes from the fact that the GCC is investing trillions of dollars in the United States so it is not as simple as disconnecting that link between the GCC currencies and the US dollar, or revaluating the actual price of the GCC currency against the dollar. As an example, the UAE dirham now equals 3.67 as a rate of exchange, while the actual exchange is 2.2 and the other GCC currencies have the same amount of exchange. So if the GCC countries reevaluated their currencies against the dollar a huge amount of their investment will be lost. The threat here is that the GCC might lose a big amount of their investment which has been established a long time ago.

Before answering the question of whether the Gulf states could defend themselves

³ <http://www.transcomm.ox.ac.uk/traces/page5.htm>

⁴ <http://www.rgemonitor.com/blog/setser/244562/>

without depending on another country, this paper will talk about the Peninsula Shield power that was founded in 1986⁵ and stationed in Saudi Arabia. It consists of about 20,000 troops, more than one third of them in Hafr Al-Batin in Saudi Arabia. It participated in the liberation of Kuwait in 1991 and also in the defense of Kuwait in 1994 and 2003. In the year 2006 the leaders of the GCC in their annual summit in Riyadh agreed with the Saudi King Abdullah's suggestions to further develop the Peninsula Shield power. The suggestions include that the troops will be deployed back to their countries and stationed there, and when the situation requires it they will be moved to where they are needed. The suggestions also include the establishment of a joint headquarter in Riyadh to command and control the forces and conduct a joint exercises at least twice a year. Mainly the suggestions dealt with somehow making the Peninsula Shield as similar as possible to the NATO structures. Many meetings have been held to process this new concept which is seen as a good step for the GCC to take in order to depend more on themselves with respect to defending the GCC.

Steps Required in Making the GCC More Self-reliant in Defending Itself. There are many steps that the GCC should take in order to be more capable of defending itself. These include things internal to the GCC and others that are related to other third party countries.

First of all, the GCC is not a country that can make its own weapons. They are dependent on exporting weapons from other countries and they are spending billions of dollars every year on defense expenditures. They also spend other billions of dollars on maintenance and spare parts. After a period of time those weapons expire and the GCC ends up buying other weapons from outside suppliers. Instead of this practice, the GCC could start their own manufacturing capacity. Some of the weapons they require could be manufactured

⁵ Defense news February 4, 2008

cooperation with some other countries. It is not being argued that they should make complex systems such as F15 or F16 aircraft, but rather some weapons could be made in the GCC and after several will develop the defense industrial capacity of the countries. The main issue here is to build up the manufacturing base. It would be easy to find employees from the GCC or from other countries, Turkey for example.

The second step is that the GCC must maintain an excellent relationship with the five permanent members of the Security Council, just as they have now, as well as the other major developed and developing countries in the world like Japan, India, Germany, Brazil, Canada and others.

Thirdly, building GCC relations with other regional organizations like the ASEAN, as the GCC and not as individual countries.

Fourthly, on the subject of the relationship with the neighboring countries the GCC must live with (we choose our friends but not our neighbors), it is essential to have an excellent relationship with them. As well, if there are any problems between any member of GCC and one of those neighboring countries, the GCC must speak and act with one voice (position).

Fifth, it is important to included Yemen in the security arrangements of the GCC (in **translation** time because of the different system there and the deferent in the training and equipments). This is because Yemen is in the Arab peninsula and has a huge population in comparison with most GCC members. As an example, Turkey is a member of NATO regardless of its language, religion and history, but it is not an EU member. Compared with Yemen the language, religion, and history are common with GCC states, so I think Yemen should be included in the security arrangements with the GCC.

Sixth, internal to the GCC the processes of cooperation need to be faster than now, especially with respect to the economy, and outside cooperation should all be done through the general secretary of the GCC not as individual countries.

Seventh, the GCC should use its economical collective strength to support their position on essential issues, and should not just be following another country's policies. They should look the benefits first and then decide on a policy based on their collective interests.

Eighth, the GCC should enhance the Peninsula Shield's power and increase the troop numbers to be not less than fifty thousand, and create them as rapid reaction forces ready to act when necessary for GCC security. They should also take speedy action to have a common currency as decided before by the year 2010.

Finally, the GCC has already started to implement some of these options, but doing all of these strategic options will make the GCC more capable and give it the ability to confront any regional threats while depending solely on themselves. It will also give the GCC a role in shaping some issues differently because of their capable economy and the influence that goes with it.

CONCLUSION

The GCC represents an essential area to the world, with more than 55% of the world's oil reserves found in the gulf. The GCC was established in 1981 between the six Arabian states in the gulf in response to many crises in the region since the end of the 1970s. The aim of the GCC is to have collective security and more cooperative in many different fields, keeping in mind that the six member of the GCC are similar in almost every thing. The GCC has many different potential threats, with the most dangerous threats to their security coming from other regional powers: Iran, Israel and India. As well, there are other

different threats like to the economy and the environment. The GCC has taken many different steps to ensure the security of its members and there are many steps it could still do in order to make the GCC better capable of defending itself against any regional power. This includes keeping excellent relationships with the major effective powers in the world, and by using their economical position to do so.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ¹ http://www.eia.doe.gov/cabs/Persian_Gulf/Background.html(this
- ^[1] **The strategic balance in the Arabian Gulf in the ninety last century**
- ¹ **The Gulf challenges of the future by H.E. Mohammed Ali Abtahi**
- ^[3] **The theory of GCC security by Kamal Mohhamed Alastal**
- ¹ **the military balance 2008 by the internatunal institute for strategic studies**
- ^[5] **Gulf news paper web site rsu@alkhaleej.ae**
- ^[7] **OPEC long term strategy**
- ^[8] **Opec estimated investment in the next ten years**
- ^[9] **Opec long term strategy**
- ^[10] **Afghanistan opium survey 2007**
- ¹ **NATUNAL GEOGRAPHIC <http://news.nationalgeographic.com>**
- ¹ **<http://www.transcomm.ox.ac.uk/traces/page5.htm>**
- ¹ **<http://www.rgemonitor.com/blog/setser/244562/>**
- ¹ **Defense news February 4, 2008**