



DIGEST

THE GULF CO-OPERATION COUNCIL



**PREPARED BY THE
DOCUMENTATION DEPARTMENT
KUWAIT NEWS AGENCY (KUNA)**

**NINTH EDITION
MAY 1981
SECOND EDITION**

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“IN THE NAME OF ALLAH, THE MOST MERCIFUL, MOST COMPASSIONATE”

THE AIM, STRUGGLE AND PROGRESS OF GULF UNITY

On February 5, 1981, a new forum for unity emerged on the Arab scene in the shape of the Gulf Co-operation Council, the establishment of which was announced by the foreign ministers of six Gulf states as being, “in recognition of the special relations, common characteristics and similar institutions that link these states, and due to the importance of establishing strong coordination and integration in all spheres including various economic and social fields.”

Just as the Arab Nation is called upon to unify its countries against the challenges it faces and build a united Arab society based on national goals and humanitarian principles, so are the countries of the Arabian Gulf, which constitute the eastern wing of the nation, called upon to participate in the realisation of greater unity by laying the foundations for Gulf unity.

Whatever is said about the Gulf Co-operation Council's achievements or inevitable shortcomings, it nevertheless remains a significant step that places the region on a new and long awaited course which will surely achieve the aspirations cherished by every Arab for both the Gulf and the Arab World as a whole.

The time has come for the people of the Arabian Gulf to refute the myth of a security vacuum that allegedly exists in the region. Gulf security is the responsibility of its people who are eager to keep their region away from the international power struggle. This claim is only a cover for the implementation of hostile schemes at the cost of the

Arabs in the Gulf and ultimately the entire Arab Nation.

The unity trend which embraces millions of Arabs holding a common faith in their nation's mission, places on the shoulders of every Arab a responsibility to defend his nation with the weapon of unity. This precludes playing along with one or other of the international camps, all of which covet our land whatever their slogans and guise.

Now that the Gulf States are free to determine their own life and future, their meeting in a unified entity like the Gulf Co-operation Council moulds them into a force capable of facing the challenges of the world without having recourse to any sort of involvement in the power struggle, be it in the form of granting military bases or joining alliances. Any association with these powers diminishes the Gulf's independence by opening doors to infiltration and creating an atmosphere of turmoil both in its waters and on its soil.

We hope that the Gulf Co-operation Council will be the first step towards maintaining the Arab character and independence of its states as well as promoting the prosperity of all Arabs in every part of their great nation.

We felt obliged to help highlight the great event of the Council's birth by preparing a digest on Gulf Unity and the tremendous progress that has been made towards its realisation. It therefore gives me great pleasure to present to the reader this booklet which has been prepared by the Documentation Department of Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) as a source of reference on the Gulf Co-operation Council and its six member states. We ask God Almighty to guide us to success and prosperity for the sake of the Nation and its causes.

**Barges H. Al-Barges
Chairman and Director-General
Kuwait News Agency (KUNA)**

**March 2, 1981. A.D.
Rabi Al-Thani 25, 1401. A.H.**

ARAB GULF STATES' CO-OPERATION CHARTER

On February 4, 1981, (Rabi Al-Awwal 29, 1401 A.H.) the foreign ministers of six Arab Gulf states met in Riyadh to draw up an organisational structure for the consolidation and development of co-operation and co-ordination between them. The ministers represented each of the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Kuwait.

As a result of consultations held between these foreign ministers, which had been preceded by discussions on numerous occasions, the full text of the Gulf Co-operation Council's Charter was released as follows:

“In recognition of the special ties which bind each of the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait to one another, arising from their common ideology and heritage and the similarity between their social, political and demographic structures, and out of a desire to promote their people's prosperity, growth and stability through closer co-operation, the foreign ministers of these states met in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on February 4, 1981, corresponding to Rabi Al-Awwal 29, 1401 A.H.

“The talks at this meeting were aimed at drawing up a practical framework for the consolidation and development of co-operation between the states concerned. As a result it was decided to establish a co-operation council between these Arab Gulf states which would have a general secretariat and hold regular meetings both on the summit and foreign minister level in order to achieve the goals of the states and their peoples in all fields.

“This step conforms with the national aims of the Arab Nation as expressed in the charter of the Arab League, which encourages regional co-operation as a means of strengthening the Nation. In this way the formation of the Gulf Co-operation Council can be seen as confirming the support of these states for the Arab League, its charter and objectives, and for Arab and Islamic causes as a whole.”

The foreign ministers decided to hold a further meeting in Muscat on March 8, 1981, to be preceded by two experts meetings on February 24 and March 4, 1981, in Riyadh and Muscat respectively, to draw up an integrated structure for the establishment of the Gulf Co-operation Council of Arab States.

On the same day the text outlining the Co-operation Council's structure was released by the foreign ministers as follows :

“In recognition of the special ties, common characteristics and similar institutions linking each of the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait, and due to the importance of establishing close co-operation in all fields, particularly economic and social, the aforementioned states see a need for the establishment of an organisation aimed at strengthening the ties and co-operation between its members in all spheres. This organisation, to be known as the Gulf Co-operation Council, shall have its headquarters in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. It shall be a means of achieving a greater degree of coordination and integration in all fields and of forging closer relations between its members. To this end it will form corresponding organisations in the fields of economics and finance, education and culture, social affairs and health, communications, information media, nationality and passports, travel and transportation, commerce, customs and the movement of goods, and finally in legal and legislative affairs.”

The Co-operation Council's Organisational Structure

The Co-operation Council shall be composed of:

- a) the Supreme Council comprising the Conciliation Commission
- b) the Ministerial Council.
- c) the General Secretariat.

The Supreme Council - The Conciliation Commission - The Min-

Ministerial Council - The Secretary General - The Assistant Secretaries - The Departments.

The Supreme Council :

- 1) Shall be composed of the Heads of State.
- 2) Shall have a presidency which rotates in alphabetical order.
- 3) Shall hold two ordinary sessions every year with the possibility of holding extraordinary sessions as necessary.
- 4) Every member shall have the right to call a ministerial meeting so long as the call is seconded by at least one other member.

The Supreme Council's Jurisdiction :

The Supreme Council shall determine the Co-operation Council's higher policies and the basic lines along which it operates. It shall discuss the recommendations, rules and regulations submitted by the Ministerial Council and General Secretariat for approval. In addition, it shall appoint the Conciliation Commission.

The Conciliation Commission :

Annexed to the Supreme Council, this commission shall be responsible for resolving existing or potential disputes among member states and for interpreting the Co-operation Council's basic regulations.

The Ministerial Council :

- 1) Shall be composed of the foreign ministers or their representatives.

- 2) Shall draw up the organisational structure of the General Secretariat.
- 3) Shall prepare for the meetings of the Supreme Council, a function that includes compiling projects, studies, recommendations, and agenda.
- 4) Shall meet six times a year once every two months and shall hold extraordinary meetings as and when requested by at least two member states.
- 5) Shall formulate policies, recommendations and studies, and suggest projects aimed at promoting co-operation among the member states in different spheres.
- 6) Shall encourage various forms of co-operation and co-ordination in the different activities of the private sector.
- 7) Shall ratify the regular reports as well as the internal regulations relating to administrative affairs proposed by the Secretary General. In addition, it shall approve the budget and final accounts of the Co-operation Council's General Secretariat.
- 8) Shall encourage, develop, and co-ordinate the activities linking the member states in various fields, since these activities will be considered binding once they are sanctioned by the Ministerial Council. It shall also charge relevant ministers with the formulation of policies and studies that aid the realisation of the Co-operation Council's objectives.

The General Secretariat :

The Co-operation Council shall be headed by a Secretary General to be appointed by the Supreme Council which shall also determine the conditions and term of his office. It is a prerequisite that the Secretary General be a subject of one of the member states. He shall be directly responsible for the functions of the Assistant Secretaries, the General Secretariat and the progress of work in its various sectors. The General Secretariat shall have its own information bureau.

Functions of the General Secretariat :

- 1) Preparation of studies specially related to co-operation and co-ordination.
- 2) Following up the implementation of resolutions and recommendations proposed by the member states, and ratified by the Supreme Council and the Ministerial Council.
- 3) Preparation of reports and studies requested by the Ministerial Council.
- 4) Preparation of progress reports on the Co-operation Council's achievements.
- 5) Drafting of financial and administrative regulations that help the organisation develop in accordance with the growth of the Co-operation Council and its increasing responsibilities.

The General Secretariat Budget :

The Co-operation Council's General Secretariat shall have a budget to which all member states shall contribute equally.

The Contribution of the Kuwaiti Memo

On February 5, 1981 Kuwait's Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad met with the editors-in-chief of Kuwait's daily newspapers to explain the significance of the Arab Gulf States' Co-operation Charter which was declared by the foreign ministers of six Arab Gulf states at the conclusion of their meeting in Riyadh on February 4.

On the same day Sheikh Sabah summoned the ambassadors of other Arab countries in Kuwait, whom he issued with a copy of the charter and briefed on the proceedings of the conference. He assured the ambassadors that the published charter was all that the foreign

ministers had agreed upon, and that no secret articles or side agreements had been entered into.

The charter reflects the essence of the Kuwaiti memorandum that was initially used by the Kuwaiti government to promote the idea of Gulf co-operation. The important role played by Kuwait and in particular by Sheikh Sabah in moulding the character of the council was acknowledged by Saudi's Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal at a press conference following the Foreign Ministers' meeting in which he referred to Sheikh Sabah as "the father of the idea". In appreciation of the efforts made by Kuwait in preparing the memorandum, the ministers also chose Sheikh Sabah to chair the Riyadh meeting.

Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad, on the other hand, has stressed all along that the idea was the brain child of His Highness the Amir of Kuwait, who received unanimous support from all the leaders of the Gulf states. Iraq's President Saddam Hussein expressed his country's support for any efforts to increase co-operation and co-ordination between the Arabs in general and between the Gulf states in particular, when the Amir broached the subject at the Arab Summit Conference in Amman towards the end of November, 1981. He reiterated this support for the idea when Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad conveyed to him the text of the Kuwaiti memorandum which was circulated to the leaders of the Arab Gulf states prior to the Riyadh meeting.

Through the use of many different channels Kuwait was able to overcome the obstacles standing in the way of such co-operation. In particular the efforts of His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Amir of Kuwait, at the Islamic Summit Conference in Mecca and Taif succeeded in laying the foundations for Gulf solidarity.

The warm response given to the Kuwaiti proposal that eventually led to the declaration of the Gulf Co-operation Charter indicated that a strong desire already existed amongst the peoples and governments of the region to achieve social, political and economic integration, and that it only needed some initiative of the sort made by Kuwait to bring these feelings to the surface.

The Course of Gulf Co-operation

The agreement reached at the meeting in Riyadh was a natural step for the Arab Gulf states to take at a time when they face challenges from all sides as a result of being a centre of the international power struggle. The Arabian Gulf has come to reverberate with threats that could mean the return of sea piracy if the super powers felt that their interests in the region were at risk and that an embargo might be imposed on Arab oil exports.

Although the term "Arab Gulf States" applies to all the Arab states with direct access to the Gulf, and although the dream of Gulf unity has always envisaged the inclusion of all such states, the circumstances prevailing in Iraq have prevented it from joining the Gulf Co-operation Council at present. The Iraqi leadership was nevertheless prompt in announcing its support for any form of coordination between Arabs in general and the Arab Gulf states in particular.

A glance at the geographical position of the six states of the Co-operation Council shows that they constitute an almost natural unity, apart from their sharing a common economic structure, similar political institutions, national aims and aspirations. Recent bilateral agreements exist between the states for co-operation in the field of economics, information media and culture which have heightened the feeling of belonging to one family.

For a long time the Gulf States have all recognised the importance of cohesion, particularly in the face of changing circumstances, until this has been transformed into a reality. Kuwait, for example, started co-operating with its Gulf neighbours in 1952 when it helped finance educational, health, and building facilities in certain Gulf countries, in addition to founding the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development with the object of promoting economic development in the Arab world as a whole, and the Gulf States in particular.

In May 1976, H.H. the Amir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, who was then Prime Minister and Crown Prince, called for

“the establishment of Gulf Unity with the object of realising co-operation in all economic, political, educational, and informational fields and the creation of a form of unity or a union with solid foundations to serve the interests and stability of the peoples in the region”.

The Arabian Gulf region witnessed a number of attempts to unify its political institutions even before they assumed their present forms. Intense efforts were made to unite the seven Trucial Coast Emirates with Bahrain and Qatar as early as the Dubai Agreement of February 27, 1967, but they proved fruitless in the summer of 1971 when a disagreement over the unification announcement of the nine Emirates led to the establishment of a union between the Trucial States which comprised initially Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharja, Ajman, Umm Al-Quwain and Fujairah but to which Ras Al-Khaimah was welcomed in early 1972. In this way the seven Emirates formed the state of the United Arab Emirates, while Qatar and Bahrain declared their independence as two separate states in August and September, 1971, respectively.

The six countries that have agreed to set up the Gulf Co-operation Council (namely the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait) cover an area of nearly 2,500,000 square kilometres, which is inhabited by more than ten million people, and has a total annual oil production of more than 5,250 million barrels.

Although these countries suffer from a shortage of labour for such a vast area, their level of oil production, so covetously sought after by the industrial world, makes the region one of extreme importance on which the attention of both small and large nations alike is focused.

Gulf Unity as a Goal

Since the countries of the Gulf already constitute a natural unity by virtue of their geographical, economic and demographical make-up, by spontaneously integrating their efforts in the political, cultural and social fields, they have an excellent chance of forming an effective unity to face the challenges of both the present and future.

A good example of the strong ties binding these Arab states to one another was the Gulf tour made by H.H. Sheikh Sa'ad Al-Abdulla Al-Sabah, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Kuwait, in late 1978, during which he succeeded in solving the differences and problems existing at that time within the institutions of certain states and in their relations with neighbouring states. Since Gulf Unity was the main purpose of Sheikh Sa'ad's tour, each of the joint communiqués issued in Riyadh, Manama, Doha, Abu Dhabi and Muscat contained assurances of support for its realisation. The following extract is from the joint Kuwaiti-Saudi communique issued on December 6, 1978. "After surveying the situation in the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf region both sides re-emphasise their conviction that positive action to strengthen co-operation between their countries is a duty imposed by their deep-rooted historical ties which are represented in their unity of belief, language, interests, goals and aspirations. Close co-operation is viewed as the ideal means of ensuring the achievement of their people's hopes of power, strength and prosperity. The two sides express their concern that the region should remain one of security, peace and stability, free from international disputes, and that the relations of all its states should be firmly based on mutual respect, co-ordination and solidarity with the aim of gaining the maximum benefit from their considerable joint potential in the service of their people."

From the joint Kuwaiti-Bahraini communique issued on December 9, 1978, comes the following extract: "Upon examining the situation in the Gulf, the two sides acknowledge the critical stage through which region is passing and call for swift action to achieve the unity of the Arab states. This objective has its roots in the historical ties between the states and the hopes of their peoples for greater progress and prosperity. To this end the two sides support the continuation of efforts to achieve greater co-operation and co-ordination between the states of the region so that a united political, economic, social and educational strategy can be adopted."

The joint Kuwaiti-Qatari communique issued on December 12, 1978, stated: "On the question of Gulf relations, the two sides agree that the critical situation facing the region necessitates concerted effort and swift action so that the unity of the Arab states can be

achieved. Such a unity has its roots in their historical ties and is demanded by their peoples' aspiration for greater advancement and prosperity."

Similar words were used in the joint Kuwaiti-Emirates communique of December 16, 1978: "Upon surveying the situation in the Gulf, the two sides recognise its critical nature and call for swift action to consolidate the efforts of the states in the region so as to realise unity, which has its precedent in religious and national ties and the hopes of their peoples for greater progress and prosperity".

The joint Kuwaiti-Omani communique issued on December 20, 1978, stated: "Upon the examination of Gulf relations, the two sides, in reference to the critical situation facing the region, call for urgent action in order to achieve the greatest possible degree of co-operation between their states, since the foundations for this have already been laid in their Islamic faith and the historical relations between them. Such co-operation is in keeping with the peoples' hopes for greater progress and stability."

Consultations between Gulf Leaders

When Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, was asked in Autumn 1979 whether he considered the situation warranted the holding of a Gulf Summit Conference, he replied, "Contacts between the Gulf states and their leaders can take place at any time and on any level. There is no need to call a Gulf Summit Conference because the leaders of these states are in constant consultation with one another."

This statement is significant for its expression of the nature and strength of ties that almost bind the Gulf countries into a single family with common interests, aims and aspirations as they confront common challenges, dangers and experiences.

Five years ago, Bahrain's Crown Prince, Sheikh Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa, declared, "In this age of the super powers, it is blatantly clear that there is no scope for the smaller states to remain isolated from one another for that would result in greater backwardness and vulnerability at a time when the advanced countries are progressing further. This prompts us to uphold the principle of well-motivated and clearly defined co-operation."

H.H. Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates, has also asserted that Gulf unity is an inevitable necessity. The call for Gulf unity is not merely aimed at announcing the formation of a single state with a single flag and national anthem. Rather, it is aimed at laying solid foundations for political, ideological, social and economic unity so that the bonds achieved can withstand any challenge and not collapse in the first storm that rages.

Provision has already been made for the call of unity in the constitutions of the states of the region. The first article in the constitutions of each of Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar, and the sixth article in the constitution of the United Arab Emirates assert that the people of these countries are "part of the Arab Nation". The first article of Bahrain's constitution and the sixth of the UAE's add that each of these countries are "part of the Great Arab Nation". The UAE's constitution even opens the door to Arab states to join the union, since the first article states: "Any independent Arab country can join the union as long as the Supreme Council is unanimous in its approval." The trend towards unification finds further support in Qatar's constitution, of which article 5b states: "The State believes that the unification of the Arab states in the region is a necessity imposed by mutual Arab interests in the Great Arab Nation as a whole and in this region in particular. The State wholeheartedly supports such a union with those states as are bound to it by strong, deeply-rooted ties."

In recent years intense efforts have been made by delegations from the Gulf countries to draw up a practical framework for fruitful co-operation in the economic, financial, and commercial fields. The long-term objective of this joint economic, financial, and commercial pro-

gramme is to form an Arab common market or a sort of Gulf economic unity from which all these countries would benefit. It is envisaged that these efforts to achieve economic unity will in future form the cornerstone of total political unity. If the call for political unity is still premature, other forms of unity, namely economic and cultural, can be achieved by the people of these states to pave the way for political, military and constitutional integration.

It is time for Gulf Unity to move out of the sphere of mere slogans, dreams and hopes into reality. The people of these countries believe in making this region of the Arab Nation a fortress of civilisational progress and resistance to imperialist challenges. It can no longer afford to be an opening through which the power-greedy nations achieve their goals and ambitions, nor a weak point to be exploited in the Great Arab Nation.

Security is a very important element that must be taken into consideration by the people and rulers of the region if we are to succeed in our steps towards Gulf Unity before they are thwarted by conspiracies which contrive to place obstacles on the path of building a new life and prosperous future.

SECURITY AND THE MILITARY SITUATION IN THE GULF

Despite assurances by officials in the Arab Gulf states that the Gulf Co-operation Council is not a military alliance directed against anyone, it has nevertheless been described in both press and diplomatic circles as a significant change in the position of the Gulf which will have far-reaching repercussions on both the Arab and international planes. Within the context of coordination and integration in all fields as prescribed in its charter, the council will undoubtedly deal with the question of Gulf security since it is closely related to the mutual interests and common aims of the states, especially now that the region has become a centre of international conflict as a result of its huge oil reserves and strategically important position at the crossroads of intercontinental land, sea and air communications.

It is only natural that the inhabitants of the Gulf should declare themselves to be solely responsible for maintaining the security of their region or for filling the security vacuum, if such a thing exists, with their own resources. Kuwait's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, said in a press statement on August 2, 1978: "The words 'Gulf security' are constantly on the lips of the scandal-mongers who raise the example of the Gulf as though it is some insoluble problem or an area plagued by crises and turmoil, whereas in fact it is the super powers who stir up trouble and crises in different parts of the world with sinister motives. We are in total agreement with our brothers in the Gulf that we have to solve our own problems, and with this aim in view we are working towards unity in different fields and our efforts are going according to plan."

It may be useful to take a look at the history of Gulf security and the alleged vacuum that certain super powers claim exists to justify

their own military presence at the cost of the region's freedom and interests. A survey of the events that have led to the formation of the so-called 'rapid deployment forces' and the establishment of foreign bases in several Arab countries and islands surrounding the Gulf or controlling its approaches and shipping activities, may shed light on the methods still promoted by certain politicians for the super powers to fill the alleged security vacuum in the Gulf region.

Since the evacuation of British forces from the Gulf at the end of 1971 in accordance with what was termed the policy of withdrawal from the west of Suez to save British the expense of maintaining these forces, cries have been resounding about the security vacuum thus created and the need for it to be filled by the western states. The United States of America in particular has claimed to be capable of filling the alleged vacuum with the aim of achieving two goals; firstly to take control of the energy resources and safeguard the oil outlets, and secondly to prevent any agitation against American interests in the Arab region.

Washington at that time however was still smarting from its wounds received in the Vietnam war and therefore in no position to reveal its intentions and plans. It was saved the trouble of doing so by the regime of the former Shah of Iran which assumed the task of policing the Gulf by swiftly occupying the Arab islands of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tumbs near the Straits of Hormuz. By means of these islands, which are regarded as the key to the straits, the Iranian army was able to extend its control of shipping lanes in the Gulf.

Although the Shah was not toppled until late 1978, constant allusions to US infiltration in the Gulf had been made since the October War in 1973. This would seem to confirm that the reason for stirring up the issue of Gulf security recently is not the disappearance of the Shah's regime as the police force of the Gulf not the prevention of the present Iranian regime from assuming this role. Rather it is a scheme to extend American influence in the region which dates back to a time even prior to the withdrawal of the British in 1971.

The Two Camps' Conflicting Designs

Even before the fall of the Shah the US began equipping a new fleet bearing the name of the "Fifth Fleet", which was stationed in the Indian Ocean near the approaches of the Gulf and on the island of Diego Garcia, which lies 2,000 miles away from the Gulf. Although this American move was supposedly prompted by another foreign build-up of forces in the region, what exists now in the region is a conflict of ambitions between the two super powers. To counter the massing of American troops and bases, Soviet bases, land and naval forces have spread from the south of the Red Sea to the Straits of Bab el Mandeb, the Gulf of Aden, the island of Socotra and several ports in the Indian Ocean region, in addition to the active Soviet military presence in Afghanistan and the geographical proximity of the USSR to the Gulf in northern Iran and Afghanistan.

There is no doubt that if American mobilisation reached the level of military intervention in the region, far from ensuring Gulf security, it would expose the region to more danger by provoking a mobilisation of the other camp, thus transforming the Gulf into an area for international disputes, regardless of the interests of its inhabitants.

All the eight Gulf states are united in their concern to preserve the security of the region and the freedom of navigation in its waters. Not only do the waters of the Gulf represent the main artery of trade for the states on their shores, and the principal outlet for their vital oil exports, but they also constitute an increasingly important source of food for these states. The high rate of shipping activities in the navigable channels of the Gulf, together with the slow rotation of water due to its narrow link with the high seas, makes environmental pollution a major worry for the shoreline states. All the Gulf states are devoting increasing attention to social and economic development projects, which in the case of the big oil producers such as Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, are most ambitious.

The bottle-neck of the Hormuz Straits

The Straits of Hormuz, with a depth of 60 metres and width of 19 miles, forms a bottle-neck in the Gulf, the closure of which for any reason (whether it be the explosion of an oil tanker for political motives, the accidental collision of two or more tankers, or a decision to close it by either the states controlling it or other foreign states) would mean an interruption in mercantile contact between all the Gulf states and the rest of the world. This would affect the Gulf states in varying degrees according to their geographical positions and the existence or lack of alternative outlets for their foreign trade.

Although American threats of invading the Gulf have so far been restricted to a psychological war waged by Washington in this corner of the Arab world, the developments witnessed in the region following the change of regime in Iran, the signing of the isolated peace treaty between Egypt and Israel and the outbreak of the Iraqi-Iranian war, have made it imperative for the Gulf states to take matters into their own hands and assume responsibility for maintaining the security of the region. This can only be done by co-operating with one another, co-ordinating efforts and by overcoming any reservations or sensitive issues that obstruct such efforts. Overcautiousness, which prevailed at the Gulf foreign ministers conference (in which Iran participated) held in Muscat in 1976 under the title "Ensuring the Security of the Gulf", not only caused the conference to fail, but also caused subsequent efforts to hold a conference on the subject to fail. If the press has spoken in the past about schemes for removing the justifications for American intervention in the region on the pretext of protecting the oil wells, including calls for Gulf neutrality in the American-Soviet struggle, recent developments call for new schemes and stances.

Defence expenditure in relation to the national budget

The stress placed by the Gulf states that have formed the Gulf

Co-operation Council on the need for effective defence forces is demonstrated by the large slice of their total expenditure allocated to defence. Figures taken from the London Institute for Strategic Studies' 1980-81 Report on Military Balance, and the 1980-81 Europa Survey of the Middle East and North Africa, indicate that the United Arab Emirates allocated the largest percentage of its expenditure to defence in 1980. Out of a total expenditure of UAE dirham 14,069m, Dh 4,500m was spent on defence, namely 32 per cent. Oman comes second in the league with 31.3 per cent being spent on defence in 1980 (total expenditure RO 971m, defence budget RO 304m). In 1980/81 Saudi Arabia allocated 28.1 per cent of a SR 245 bn. total expenditure to defence (SR 68.9bn). Kuwait's 1979/80 defence budget of KD 274m accounted for 12.2 per cent of its KD 2,250m total expenditure, while Bahrain spent BD 37.5m on defence in the same year, out of a total BD 280m, a percentage of 13.4. Qatar comes last in the league with 3.7 per cent of its QR 6,500m total expenditure being spent on defence in 1978 (QR 238m).

The reason for such massive defence spending was explained by the President of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan, when he said, "It is not merely for the sake of acquiring arms, or for initiating aggression. We do that (i.e. buy arms) because we recognise that weakness invites hostility and arouses the interest of power-greedy nations."

The preoccupation of the Gulf states with defence arises from the belief that keeping the Gulf out of all forms of international conflict is in the interests of the Arab Nation. As a result, all Arab countries support the conviction of these states that the security of the Gulf is the responsibility of its people and the Arabs, and that there is no vacuum to be filled as covetous powers claim. Any attempt to interfere in the affairs of the Gulf would be regarded as aggression which is rejected by all parties.

DEFENCE FORCE ESTIMATES FOR THE SIX GULF STATES

The 1980-81 report published by the International Institute for Strategic Studies gives the following figures for the defence budgets of the six Arab Gulf states:

The United Arab Emirates

Population: 920,000

Total armed forces: 25,150

Estimated GDP 1978: \$12 bn.

Defence expenditure 1979: 2.88 bn dirhams (\$750 m)

Army: 23,500

Navy: 900

Air Force: 750

Combat aircraft: 52

Bahrain

Population: 373,000

Total armed forces: 2,500

Estimated GNP 1977: \$1.7bn.

Defence expenditure 1979: 37.5 m. dinar (\$98 m.)

Coastguard: 200

Army: 2,300

Saudi Arabia

Population: 8,224,000

Total armed forces: 47,000

Estimated GDP 1979: \$94.6 bn.

Defence expenditure 1980-81: 68.9 bn. Saudi riyals (\$20.7 bn.)

Army: 31,000

Navy: 1,500
Air Force: 14,500
Combat aircraft: 136

Oman

Population: 930,000
Total armed forces: 14,200 (excl. expat. personnel)
Estimated GNP 1977: \$2.55 bn.
Defence expenditure 1980: 304 m. rial omani (\$879 m.)
Army: 11,500
Navy: 900
Air Force: 1,800
Para-Military Forces: 3,300

Qatar

Population: 250,000 (1980 census)
Total armed forces: 4,700
Estimated GNP 1977: \$1 bn.
Defence expenditure 1978: 238 m. riyals (\$61 m.)
Army: 4,000
Navy: 400
Air Force: 300
Combat aircraft: 4

Kuwait

Population: 1,355,827 (1980 census)
Total armed forces: 12,400
Estimated GNP 1977: \$11.9 bn.
Defence expenditure 1979: 274 m. dinars (\$979 m.)
Army: 10,000
Coastguards: 500
Air Force: 1,900
Combat aircraft: 50

THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE GULF

The Arabian Gulf extends from the Straits of Hormuz in the south to the Shatt al-Arab waterway in the north, dividing Iran on the east from the Arabian Peninsula on the west. The Straits of Hormuz connect the Gulf with the Gulf of Oman, the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. Seven Arab states lie on the north, west and south-west shores of the Gulf, namely Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman, while Iran lies to the east and north-east.

The Gulf region is practically floating over a lake of crude oil, which makes its states some of the biggest producers of this strategically important material in the world. The Gulf possesses the largest known deposits of oil.

Great economic and strategic importance is attached to the Gulf by the West due to its dependence on Gulf oil for a large proportion of its needs. More than half of the oil consumed in West European countries comes from the Gulf, which also helps meet the needs of Australia, New Zealand and South Asia. In addition, the American forces operating in South East Asia and the NATO forces in West Europe depend to a great extent on the Gulf for their oil requirements.

Consequently the approaches of the Gulf have come to assume an exaggerated importance that has affected the strategy of the super powers, since their falling into the hands of a power hostile to the Arabs would mean economic disaster for Western Europe. Within this context one can understand the strong connection between the interests of the super powers in the region and the build-up of their naval presence in the Indian Ocean. The strategic importance of the Arabian Gulf region has nearly made it the most dangerous collision area, where the super powers face one another in delicate balance over a new centre of gravity.

Moreover, these dangers have escalated in recent months with the outbreak of the Iraqi-Iranian war that has made the region a focus of world attention.

Sources of threat to the Arabian Gulf region

- 1) The numerous islands in the Gulf region are considered strategic targets from which the main entrance, and consequently navigation, can be controlled.
- 2) The discovery of oil has introduced the region into the sphere of international conflict due to its being the principal source of energy in the world.
- 3) The dependence of most Gulf states on oil as the basis of their national economy is extremely dangerous, since it is liable to dry up.
- 4) The oil revenues accumulating in foreign banks is extremely damaging for the states of the region since it prevents them from investing the money and makes their assets vulnerable to foreign currency fluctuations which usually result in the assets losing their value.

Foreign ambitions in the Gulf region

Foreign ambitions in the Gulf region are generally aimed at achieving the following goals:

- 1) To obtain oil concessions with the largest possible proportion of profits.
- 2) To benefit from the capital of the states in the region.
- 3) To create differences and conflicts between the states in the region in order to prevent any co-operation or unity being established and consequently keep them divided and weak.
- 4) To encourage the migration of foreigners to the region in order to efface its Arab character.
- 5) To obtain special concessions to build military bases or facilities for foreign troops, or to form military alliances that serve the super powers in their struggle over the region.

The elements necessary for strategic security

The expression 'strategic security' embraces security in the fields of social affairs, food supplies, monetary and economic affairs, cultural, intellectual and spiritual matters, and media, in addition to military security. The means of ensuring security in these fields are as follows:

- 1) The creation of a highly efficient transport and communications network between all the Gulf states.
- 2) The prudent use of manpower in the region.
- 3) The provision of strategic reserves of water and oil for local consumption and the guarantee of food and medical supplies and other requirements for domestic security.
- 4) The establishment of a Gulf information bank.
- 5) The exchange of expertise between the Gulf states in all fields in order to reap maximum benefit from the manpower in the region.
- 6) The drawing up of a unified media strategy for the Gulf aimed at increasing national awareness.
- 7) The attraction of foreign investment to the states of the region.
- 8) The development of education programmes in accordance with the new concepts and responsibilities imposed by recent events in and around the Gulf.
- 9) The linking of Gulf security to that of the Red Sea and the Middle East as a single strategic entity.
- 10) The establishment of maintenance and repair centres in all the Gulf states to form a technical basis for industrial and vocational development in the region.
- 11) The production of spare parts for basic machinery and the even distribution of production and service centres for the use of the Gulf states.
- 12) The introduction of military service in all the states of the region with training programmes on the latest weapons which need time to master properly.
- 13) The establishment of a special fund for Gulf security to which all the states concerned should contribute according to agreed principles.

OIL EXPORTS OF THE SIX STATES

Oil is the element which, together with its geographical and strategic importance, gives the Arabian Gulf region increasing significance for both the great and small nations of the world, since it supplies their ever-growing need for energy at the best prices and by the easiest means.

The oil exports of these states to many countries in the world give the region an indisputable precedence in the super nations' power struggle in this part of the globe. When we examine Gulf oil exports, we find that they provide constant supplies to sixteen west European countries, in addition to other leading industrial countries such as the USA, Japan, Australia and Canada.

In the first half of 1980 the oil exports of the six Gulf states forming the Gulf Co-operation Council were as follows:

- 1) Kuwait exported 575,800 barrels a day to 16 European countries, 161,200 b/d to Japan, 37,500 b/d to the USA, 25,800 b/d to Canada, and 12,400 b/d to Australia, bringing its total exports to the 20 countries to 812,700 b/d.
- 2) Saudi Arabia exported 3,689,900 b/d to the 16 European countries, 1,370,100 b/d to the USA, 1,371,700 b/d to Japan, 199,900 b/d to Canada, and 55,000 b/d to Australia, bringing its total exports to 6,686,600 b/d.
- 3) The United Arab Emirates exported 671,600 b/d to 16 European countries, 231,700 b/d to the USA, 551,400 b/d to Japan, 7,200 b/d to Australia and 5,900 b/d to Canada, bringing its total exports to 1,467,800 b/d.
- 4) Qatar exported 208,800 b/d to 16 European countries, 118,300 b/d to Japan, 32,300 b/d to the USA and 5,500 b/d to Australia, bringing its total oil exports to 364,900 b/d.

- 5) Oman exported 34,000 b/d to 16 European countries, 38,400 b/d to the USA and 146,200 b/d to Japan, bringing its total exports to 218,600 b/d.
- 6) Bahrain's total exports to the 20 countries amounted to 1,800 b/d.

Thus the total amount of oil exported by these six states a day is 9,552,400 barrels.

There is no doubt that these huge quantities of Gulf oil are at the heart of western threats of rapid intervention, supposedly to protect Gulf security, but more correctly to ensure the continued supply of Gulf oil to the West.

**CO-ORDINATION AND CO-OPERATION
BETWEEN KUWAIT AND OTHER GULF
STATES**

The Gulf Co-operation Council, far from being created out of a vacuum, is merely a new phase in the strengthening and development of co-operation and co-ordination which has already passed through many stages of mutual relations between the six states. This fact is acknowledged by the Riyadh Charter that defines the council's function as being the development of co-operation and co-ordination between the member states, when it refers to "the special mutual relations arising from their common belief, the similarity of their organisations, their unity of heritage, the resemblance between their political, social and demographic structures and their cultural affinity."

The foundations for ties between the Gulf states based on co-operation and a belief in the need for solidarity and co-ordination were laid about thirty years ago. In the summer of 1953 the Public Authority for the South and the Arabian Gulf, which had been established by Kuwait, began to offer its services in the field of education to the Trucial States, as the emirates of Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm Al-Qaiwain, Ras Al-Khaimah and Fujairah were called at that time. The aid began modestly with the opening of the first regular school in Sharjah for the scholastic year 1953/54, but in later years more schools were opened, until in 1971/72 they numbered 45. Of these Kuwait founded 33 and helped build three, in addition to two teacher training institutes founded by Kuwait in Dubai and Sharjah. An evening institute for commercial studies was annexed to Dubai Boys' Secondary School to give those already working the opportunity to obtain commercial qualifications. The number of teachers in these six emirates totalled 923 in 1971/72.

In the field of health the Government of Kuwait sent a mission to the Gulf emirates in 1962 to provide medical assistance. The Public Authority also embarked on a programme of medical aid with the establishment of four hospitals and five clinics in the six emirates, which the authority staffed, equipped and administered until it handed both its educational and health institutions over to the newly formed government of the United Arab Emirates on September 21, 1972.

Apart from these services, the Public Authority for the South and the Arabian Gulf also set up a television station in Dubai, which was officially opened on September 7, 1969, under the name of "Kuwait Television from Dubai". The authority continued to supervise the station's operations until December 1972 when it was handed over to the United Arab Emirates.

Education and Health Services in Bahrain

In fulfilment of the duty Kuwait feels towards other Gulf states, an office was opened in Manama, Bahrain in May 1973 to supervise the building of schools and hospitals donated to the Bahraini people by Kuwait. The 1973/74 budget provided for the first stage of a large teacher training institute for men and women. The 1974/75 budget covered other ambitious projects such as the building of a girls' primary schools in Hawra, a boys' primary school in Manama, a girls' primary school in Muharraq, a boys' primary school in Qiryat Ali, a health centre in Manama and the completion of the teacher training institute.

The third stage, covered by the 1975/76 budget, included the completion of Al-Kabeer Hospital in Manama, a boys' secondary school in East Rifaa, several primary schools, two health centres, and the completion of Bahrain Television Station including a scenery and carpentry workshop.

Under the fourth stage in 1976/77 a maternity hospital and doctors' accommodation were built in Jid Hafs, a health centre in Umm Al-

Hasm, several primary and secondary schools in different towns, and a mobile transmission unit at Bahrain Television. The fifth stage in 1977/78 involved the building of two health centres, two schools and an extension to the broadcasting building.

Several more schools and three health centres were completed under the sixth phase in 1978/79, while the seventh phase saw the establishment of arts and science colleges in Isa Town, in addition to a new nurses hostel. Under the eighth phase several new schools in different parts of the island are planned. All the buildings mentioned above are fully equipped and furnished before being handed over to the Bahraini government.

Economic, Cultural and Media Co-operation between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia

In pursuit of fostering closer relations with other Gulf states, Kuwait formed a supreme committee in 1972 under the chairmanship of the Foreign Minister. Its members included the Vice Chairman of Kuwait's Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Trade, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education, the Secretary General of the Council of Ministers, and the heads of some ministry departments related to the committee's work. The Foreign Minister subsequently stepped down from the committee's chairmanship under the pressure of other responsibilities, appointing the Undersecretary to take his place.

Since its formation the committee has succeeded in concluding a number of bilateral agreements with other Gulf states, including co-operation agreements with Saudi Arabia in the fields of economics, culture and mass communications, all of which were signed on March 12, 1975. As a result, a joint Kuwaiti-Saudi committee has held a number of meetings at which recommendations have been made in the following fields:

1) The Field of Economics

The committee recommended the exemption of agricultural and animal products from customs duties and tax. It also called for the continuation of work on the proposed joint company for overland transportation.

2) The Field of Industry

Both sides agreed on the proposed organisational structure for the Joint Permanent Committee for the Promotion and Co-ordination of Industrial and Technical Co-operation to which proposals for the establishment of joint industries should be submitted for review. As for non-industrial joint investment schemes, the two sides agreed that establishments and companies wishing to set up such schemes should contact the Chambers of Commerce and Industry in the two countries.

3) Economic Integration

The committee discussed the proposal of a Gulf common market and recommended measures to facilitate the passage of transit goods through the ports of the two countries.

4) The Field of Mass Communications

It was agreed that visits should be exchanged in the field of broadcasting and television to promote the exchange of programmes. The committee also recommended that joint media enterprises be undertaken with the help of private capital, such as a corporation for the production of documentary and historical films.

Bilateral Relations between Kuwait and Qatar

A joint Kuwaiti-Qatari committee met from February 16-18, 1976, and agreed on the following measures:

and Bahrain in the fields of health and education, an economic, educational and media co-operation agreement was signed between the two states on May 19, 1973. As a result, meetings of the Joint Kuwaiti-Bahraini Committee drew up the following recommendations:

1) The Field of Economics

The two sides agreed to exempt agricultural and animal products, natural resources, and locally manufactured products from customs duties on the condition that they be accompanied by a certificate of origin stamped by the authorities concerned in each of the two countries.

The two sides also agreed to allow existing joint establishments in Bahrain, namely the Bank of Bahrain and Kuwait, and the Bahraini-Kuwaiti Insurance Company, to open branches in Kuwait. This principle would also apply to all such companies established in future.

In addition the two side agreed that individuals, companies and establishments should be free to conduct business in each of the two countries so long as such enterprises are owned by citizens of those countries.

2) The Field of Industry

The two sides studied proposals for the Petrochemicals Industry Company, the Air-conditioning and Cooling Equipment Factories Company, the Iron Bar and Elbow Manufacturing Company and the Building Materials Manufacturing Company.

3) The Field of Investment

The committee proposed the following investment enterprises:

- a) Agricultural and livestock projects
- b) Co-operation in the field of fishing and fisheries

1) The Field of Economics

Both sides stressed the importance of forming a supreme committee for industrial co-ordination between the states of the region, with several sub-committees one of which would study the setting up of a Gulf common market.

2) The Field of Monetary Unification

The committee examined studies prepared on the possibility of monetary unification and its effect on the common market.

3) The Field of Industry

The Kuwaiti side proposed a number of schemes to establish joint industries in which each state would have 50 per cent of the shares to offer for public subscription. The enterprises proposed were:

- a) The Petrochemicals Industry Company
- b) The Air-conditioning and Cooling Equipment Factories Company
- c) The Iron Bar and Elbow Manufacturing Company
- d) The Building Materials Manufacturing Company

4) The Field of Investment Schemes

The Kuwaiti side proposed the establishment of a number of investment schemes such as:

- a) Agricultural and livestock enterprises
- b) Co-operation in the field of fishing and fisheries
- c) The establishment of residential complexes
- d) The establishment of commercial markets and centres
- e) The establishment of tourist enterprises.

Economic Relations between Kuwait and Bahrain

In addition to the aforementioned co-operation between Kuwait

- c) The establishment of residential complexes
- d) The establishment of commercial markets and centres
- e) The establishment of touristic enterprises.

4) The Field of Education and Mass Communications

The two sides agreed to set up a permanent committee for media co-operation between the signatories of the Media Co-operation Agreement.

Co-operation between Kuwait and the UAE

In the field of economic, educational and media co-operation between Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, an agreement was signed on June 30, 1973, in accordance with which meetings of the Joint Kuwaiti-Emirates Committee were held, and the following recommendations made:

1) The Field of Economics

In accordance with Article 5 of the Agreement for Economic Co-operation between the two countries, it was agreed to exempt agricultural and animal products, natural resources and locally produced goods from customs duties, so long as they are accompanied by a certificate of origin stamped by the authorities concerned in each of the countries.

2) The Field of Investment

The two sides agreed on the importance of co-ordinating investment organisations and companies in each of the countries, and of setting up joint investment companies.

3) The Field of Education and Mass Communications

It was agreed to form a permanent committee for media co-oper-

ation between the signatories of the Media Co-operation Agreement.

4) The Field of Housing and Urban Planning

The Emirates side raised this subject in order to benefit from Kuwait's experience and it was agreed to study the possibilities of co-operation in this field.

Giving Gulf Citizens the Same Treatment as Kuwaitis

Due to the critical stage the Gulf region is passing through, and will continue to pass through in future, Kuwait has made every effort to foster co-ordination and co-operation between the states of the Gulf so as to form an economic and political entity comparable to the major nations of the world. These efforts have not been confined to the establishment of bilateral co-ordination, but have been aimed at comprehensive integration. Kuwait's objective is not the formation of political blocs, but rather the service of public interests, the spread of stability and the eventual unity of the Gulf.

With this objective in mind Kuwait passed Act no. 73 for 1975, which stated that Saudis, Bahrainis and citizens of the UAE should be given the same treatment as Kuwaitis. Kuwait envisaged that this act would give the citizens of these Gulf states the same rights and privileges as Kuwaitis, and pave the way for further civilisational progress and economic prosperity.

Co-operation between Kuwait and Oman

The Public Authority for the South and the Arabian Gulf consulted the Omani Government on the fields in which Kuwait could offer help

to the Omani people. In the first phase that started in 1977 the following schemes were implemented :

- 1) The paving of the road from Hajeef to Dhofar
- 2) The establishment of a large administrative centre in Tuwa Ateer, comprising a primary school, clinic, mosque and post office.

Under the second phase of 1978/79 a secondary school was built for girls in Khuwair with a dormitory section.

The 1980/81 budget for the Public Authority for the South and the Arabian Gulf is about KD 12.3 million, that will be spent on education, health, media and economic services to the states of the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula.

INTER-GULF CO-OPERATION

Apart from the fact that the six Arab Gulf states involved in the Gulf Co-operation Council have similar economies and political institutions, agreements recently signed between them in the fields of economics, science and media form a solid basis on which to build a more comprehensive unity.

The aims of Gulf unity can be summarised as follows:

- 1) To preserve the oil deposits and prevent any state from overexploiting its resources or accepting less than profitable prices for its products on the international market.
- 2) To create suitable conditions for industrialisation, by which light industries can be developed into heavy industries
- 3) To protect the region from foreign influence and ambitions and create an atmosphere of security and stability conducive to the growth and prosperity of a united Gulf society.

One method of achieving Gulf unity is undoubtedly the development of trade between member states, the drawing up of a unified investment programme and the co-ordination of financial and economic policies. Great strides have already been made towards these goals in the form of bilateral and collective economic agreements which give each of the states concerned the right to preferential treatment. Examples of such bilateral agreements are:

- 1) The agreement signed by Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates on February 23, 1976, and the agreement signed by Kuwait and Bahrain on February 18, 1976.
- 2) The economic agreement between Saudi Arabia and Bahrain, signed in Riyadh on April 12, 1975.
- 3) The Economic Co-operation Agreement between Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates signed on June 30, 1973.

4) The Economic Co-operation Agreement between Kuwait and Saudi Arabia signed on March 23, 1975.

Agreements such as the following, signed by more than two states, promote collective co-operation:

- 1) The agreement signed on December 14, 1975 relating to the establishment of the Gulf International Bank.
- 2) The agreement signed on January 19, 1976, relating to the establishment of the Arab Shipping Company.
- 3) The agreement ratified by Kuwait on October 25, 1976 relating to the foundation of the Arab Gulf States Joint Programme Production Institution.
- 4) The agreement ratified by Kuwait on October 25, 1976 relating to the Gulf Industrial Investment Organisation.

Apart from such Gulf accords, there are a number of agreements and enterprises in which Gulf states have participated together with other Arab states, such as:

- 1) Arab Maritime Petroleum Transport Company, established on September 6, 1973.
- 2) Arab Shipbuilding and Repair Yard Company, established on December 8, 1973.
- 3) Arab Petroleum Investment Company established on November 23, 1975.
- 4) Arab Petroleum Services Company, established on November 23, 1975.

Following this quick survey of Gulf unity from the point of view of agreements signed by the Gulf states with the aim of economic integration and co-operation, mention should also be made of joint enterprises currently under consideration, which include the Gulf Common Market, the Gulf Dinar and Gulf security.

Firstly: The Gulf Common Market Project

This is aimed at co-ordinating the industrial and commercial activities of the Gulf states in order to reap the maximum benefit from their financial possibilities and to co-ordinate with similar international markets. The Gulf market would co-operate with world markets by means of a trade exchange based on the need of these markets for raw materials, local consumption and investment of capital available in the Gulf states.

Studies promoting the establishment of such a market have justified it on the following grounds:

- 1) The world trend towards the formation of economic blocs.
- 2) The removal of customs barriers between the market's states.
- 3) The dependence of the current economic situation on agreements that lack consistency and the existence of a body capable of preparing studies.
- 4) The importance of forming regional economic blocs for the Arab Nation as a whole.
- 5) The protection of the states in the region which by virtue of their possessing the largest known oil deposits in the world and enjoying an outstanding strategic position, are subject to foreign designs.
- 6) The growth of non-oil sectors which has been hindered by the limited local market, the shortage of labour and arable land.
- 7) The development of local industries to curb the increase in imports and the flow of money abroad.
- 8) The certainty that a market is the best form of economic grouping for the circumstances in the region.
- 9) The necessity of forming a body specially for preparing studies and submitting scientifically based recommendations to committees authorised to take decisions. Such committees should comprise one minister from each state, who has the authority to decide on market matters. The committees, which would act as both executive and consultative bodies, would compile studies and propose schemes and programmes. Co-ordination committees, of which there would be one for each sector in the member states, would

study the co-ordination and unification of enterprises, organisations, legislation and procedures as well as the budget necessary to cover the market's expenses.

Secondly: The Gulf Dinar Project

The idea of a unified Gulf dinar has been proposed and is currently under consideration.

Thirdly: The Gulf Security Project

Gulf security is a sort of collective participation in preserving the security of the region so that it should not be the sole responsibility of one state. Collective security is seen as the best means of ensuring the stability of the region since it is not directed against anyone in particular, but against all those who seek to disrupt the region's security. The enormous wealth and relatively small size of the states in the region make them the object of covetous ambitions on the part of more powerful nations. The states of the region are faced with the choice of accepting the situation as it exists or of uniting and reinforcing their efforts in order to confront the challenges they face.

Although Kuwait has not come forward with specific proposals for Gulf security, it has firmly rejected the principle of entering into alliances, and sees the strengthening of relations between the states of the region as the means of protecting the security of the Gulf.

KUWAIT'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE GULF CO-OPERATION COUNCIL

As has been seen, Kuwait initiated the consultations that led to the establishment of the Co-operation Council of Arab Gulf States, and has always adopted a positive attitude of unconditional support for the council.

In the Amiri Address at the inauguration of the first session of the Fifth National Assembly on March 9, 1981, His Highness the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, Sheikh Sa'ad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah, referred to the Gulf Co-operation Council as follows:

“In the last few years the world has witnessed international conflicts in which many different parties have contended over attitudes and interests. Many of these disputes have had repercussions on the Arab world as a whole, and on the Gulf region in particular.

“The same years have witnessed numerous divisions and crises in the Arab world while the Arab Gulf states, in contrast, have moved closer together. This is a development that we have looked forward to and participated in, and which together with our brothers in the Gulf, we have begun to translate into effective practical measures. Kuwait's outstanding role on the international scene emanates from a total belief in Arab and Islamic ties, a commitment to defend peoples' freedom and independence and preserve the region's stability and security, and support for the principle of foreign non-interference in its affairs.”

At a press conference held by His Highness Sheikh Sa'ad Al-Abdullah Al-Sabah on February 16, 1981 he was asked, “Is it anticipated that any other Arab states, whether in the Arabian Peninsula or elsewhere, will join the Gulf Co-operation Council, and to what extent would that be determined by economic factors? Is it true that oil plays an important role in this co-operation? And how do you react to those who claim that Gulf rapprochement represents a move against certain states in the region?”

Sheikh Sa'ad replied, “Thank you for raising this question, that I should like to answer frankly and comprehensively. I shall begin by

answering the last part of your question relating to some people's belief that the establishment of the Gulf Co-operation Council means the formation of a bloc against some party. In fact quite the reverse is true. I have noticed in some foreign newspapers a sort of plot to distort the glowing image of the council, so as to give some countries the impression that the council has been formed at the instigation of foreign parties. A response was given to one such misleading article by Kuwait News Agency. The real object behind forming the Co-operation Council is the achievement of greater co-ordination, co-operation and understanding. We in Kuwait are convinced that the strength of the Arab Gulf states lies in their continued cohesion and co-operation whether it be in the field of politics, economics, culture, information media or other fields which serve the interests of states in the region.

“Regarding the first part of your question, I think you have all read the statement released by all Arab broadcasting stations following the formation of the council which at present comprises the Arab Gulf states in this region. I cannot predict now what might happen in the future. The council now comprises six states, as you know, which will have to determine the nature of the council as it progresses.”

Another journalist asked His Highness, “Regarding the situation in the Gulf, will the Kuwaiti elections have any effect on other Gulf countries? And how, in your opinion, can outside interference in the affairs of the Gulf be resisted?”

Sheikh Sa'ad responded, “With regard to the first part of your question concerning political developments in the Gulf states, I cannot really answer this question on behalf of officials in those states. Every state has its own particular political and social circumstances, but I hope with all my heart that our brothers in the Gulf states will benefit from Kuwait's experience of parliamentary life. This does not mean that every state should adopt the Kuwaiti constitution, because every state has its own pattern of organisation and circumstances. We are convinced that the situation prevailing in Kuwait demands the imple-

mentation of the Amiri promise of a resumption of parliamentary life, for which elections will take place next Monday. Whether Kuwait's experience is passed on to other Gulf states is a matter for the peoples of those states to decide.

“As regards the second part of your question relating to the intervention of super powers in the region, we in Kuwait see the Gulf region as being vitally important for the world, due to its natural resources, strategic position and shipping lanes. We are therefore keeping a close eye on the activities of the super powers to see if they have any presence in the region, and we are optimistic about the awareness of people in the region, and the continuation of co-operation and understanding between its states. We can under no circumstances afford to give any foreign party the opportunity to interfere in the affairs of these states, either directly or indirectly.

“I am very optimistic that the formation of the Gulf Co-operation Council will encourage other Arab countries to adopt firm stands with regard to the defence of Arab causes, especially the Palestinian cause.”

In an interview published by the Saudi newspaper 'Okaz' on March 18, 1981, Deputy Premier, Foreign Minister and acting Information Minister, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad, observed that the formation of the Gulf Co-operation Council indicates the importance officials in the six states attach to the interests of their peoples which are threatened by conflicting currents. He expressed the belief that the council would be able to withstand the challenges to its unity in any field, noting that it was “originally created to repel and deter any idea of interference in our affairs.”

Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad denied that the council had been founded to bridge a gap between the Gulf states, saying that no such gap exists, and that those who throw scorn on Gulf co-operation show no concern for the stability and peace of this important region of the world. Reiterating Kuwait's rejection of foreign intervention in the Gulf, whether it be military or otherwise, Sheikh Sabah declared that the

states of the region are quite capable of defending themselves. He also expressed the hope that the Iraqi-Iranian war, which he termed regrettable, would not lead to the stationing of foreign troops in the region to protect international shipping in the Gulf.

**THE VIEWS OF RESEARCHES AND
SCHOLARS ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
THE GULF CO-OPERATION COUNCIL**

The setting up of the Gulf Co-operation Council has attracted considerable attention from both the Arab and international press, as many academics specialised in Gulf affairs continue to write commentaries on this important national event, examining its background, analysing its results and anticipating its future effects.

The Kuwaiti Arabic newspaper 'Al-Qabas' published a serialised discussion on the significance of the Gulf Co-operation Council to mark its inception, in which a number of academics and people directly concerned with the council participated. Finally the paper published a resume of the views of each participant, which we present here in translation.

Muhammad Rishayd Al-Fil

Dr. Muhammad Rishayd Al-Fil, a professor of geography at Kuwait University, outlined the priorities of the council as being the drawing up of a joint policy for the growth of manpower and the provision of food and military supplies. He observed that the new Gulf Co-operation Council is an important step towards Gulf unity, which has been precipitated by the circumstances prevailing in the region. He said that the present form of unity in no way conflicts with the ministerial commissions that already exist, and in which Iraq participates, but rather runs parallel to them. He emphasised that Iraq is a Gulf state that supports any move towards unity in the Arab world, and will doubtlessly join the initiative of the other Gulf states as soon as circumstances permit. It is only a matter of time.

Dr. Al-Fil stressed the necessity of fostering relations at the grass-roots level between the peoples of the region, since these are

stronger and longer-lasting than political relations between their leaders, and would therefore give the unity process a more solid basis.

Dr. Al-Fil spoke at length of economic, demographic and food supply problems faced by the unity process in the Gulf region, which necessitate priority being given to the promotion of a united work force and the training of people in the region to bear responsibility for the development, defence and irrigation of their land, and to provide the Gulf's source of revenue when the oil dries up.

Referring to the external and internal factors that had precipitated the establishment of the Co-operation Council between the Arab Gulf states, Dr. Al-Fil said these included the Iranian Revolution, the international military presence in the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea and the Gulf, and internal challenges which made it imperative for the states to seek co-operation in order to achieve their peoples' advancement and prosperity. He added that the internal factors were no less important than the external ones.

Isa Majid Al-Shaheen

Mr. Isa Majid Al-Shaheen, Secretary General of the Arabian Gulf States' Co-operation Committee in the Foreign Ministry, and a deputy for Rawda in the new National Assembly, expressed optimism over the future of Gulf co-operation. He praised the method of stages being followed which he said was the most suitable way for the governments and peoples of the region to achieve Gulf unity.

Mr. Shaheen outlined three bases for joint Gulf action, namely:

- 1) Paying attention to previous experience in the field of joint Gulf action on both the bilateral and collective levels, and noting the elements of progress and success, so that anticipated obstacles might be avoided.
- 2) Paying attention to the formation and jurisdiction of the executive

body of the council, namely the General Secretariat, since this will be the gauge for the next phase of its activities.

- 3) The necessity of relying on the Islamic faith and Shari'a (Islamic law) in drawing up and executing social and economic policies within this new forum for co-operation. He noted that this is nothing new for the peoples and governments of the region, whose faith, both in theory and practice, is Islam.

Mr. Shaheen summarised the challenges that Gulf co-operation will face as falling into four main categories. The first and most powerful is foreign interference, which has an interest in the area remaining fragmented so it can implement the schemes that best serve its own ends.

He referred to the second challenge as being the border disputes between the six states involved in the council. These, he said, are a hang-over from the colonial era, and call for more brotherly relations between the states of the region so that solutions can be found.

The third challenge Mr. Shaheen cited as being the expatriate work force which has grown to levels that jeopardise the constituent elements of Gulf society. This makes it imperative for the Co-operation Council to preserve the Arab and Islamic identity of the region.

He saw the fourth challenge as being the extent of popular participation in the government of the Gulf states and the direction of their national wealth. The governments of the region hold widely differing views on this matter, which necessitates a radical solution being found to the question of popular participation in government through recognised institutions.

Dr. Adil Al-Tabtaba'i

Dr. Adil Al-Tabtaba'i, professor of Common Law in the Faculty of Law and Shari'a at Kuwait University, regarded the Gulf Co-operation

Council as a pioneering step in the field of Arab nationalist action, since it is official recognition of the policy of Gulf co-operation that has been pursued by the states of the region since the 1930's.

He noted that the declaration of the council's inception, which is regarded as the council's charter, was too brief, and should have been more detailed in order to ease the task of the committees that will draw up supplementary documents in future.

Dr. Al-Tabtaba'i proposed that Iraq be included in all the ministerial committees in their new form, without joining the Supreme Council until circumstances allow it to commit itself fully to the Co-operation Council. He spoke of uniting the foreign policy and oil policy of the member states as the council's most important task that should be given top priority.

The importance of unifying the systems of education in the member countries was also stressed by Dr. Al-Tabtaba'i who proposed that admission to universities in the region should be open to all Gulf subjects regardless of their grades. He also saw a need for co-ordination between the media organs of the various states, so that unified stands might be adopted on Arab and international issues. Such co-ordination demands the formation of a supreme council for news media, as do the fields of oil, economics and investment. Dr. Al-Tabtaba'i emphasised the need for all administrative and legal obstacles in the way of co-ordination to be removed.

Dr. Al-Tabtaba'i noted that there was a certain ambiguity in the declaration of the Co-operation Council, particularly in the eighth article concerning the jurisdiction of the Ministerial Council. This states that new activities proposed and approved by the council will be binding on the member states. He said that it is illogical for the same body as proposes the activities to approve them. Having proposed them they should be submitted to a higher body for approval thus making them effective.

Also in reference to the declaration of the council, Dr. Al-Tabtaba'i wondered whether the commitment to similarity in legal and legislative affairs as stated in the preamble, means that the member states that have different constitutions and legislative systems will really come to resemble each other in this respect in future. He noted that Kuwait, for example, has taken practical steps to bring back democracy and hold elections for the National Assembly. This was doubtlessly taken into consideration when drawing up the declaration, which means that the rest of the Gulf states will move towards the formation of elected legislative assemblies. He said no one would deny the importance of such assemblies since the participation of the people in the decision-making process relating to their future gives any decision so taken more legitimacy and effectiveness than if it were taken without consulting the people.

Dr. Waleed Mubarak

Dr. Waleed Mubarak, a professor of Political Science at Kuwait University, said that co-operation and co-ordination between the Gulf states was essential for the region's political stability. Speaking of Kuwait's role in bringing about this form of unity in the Gulf, Dr. Mubarak said that Kuwait realised long ago that this was the best basis for political stability in the region. He noted that Kuwait's foreign policy is based on three principles, namely the refutation of the so-called security vacuum, neutrality in existing disputes between its neighbours, and co-operation with all political organisations in the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula.

Speaking of the external and internal circumstances that have necessitated this step, Dr. Mubarak mentioned the repercussions of the Iranian Revolution on the Gulf states, the Iranian-Iraqi war, the Soviet-American rivalry in the Gulf and the Indian Ocean which has been accentuated by Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, and the establishment of military bases in the region by both sides. Apart from the geographical, historical and cultural factors that already give the states of

the region a homogeneous nature, there are certain problems from which the region suffers as a whole. These include the high proportion of expatriate workers in relation to the indigenous population, border disputes between the smaller states and the economic challenge arising from a total dependence on oil.

Noting that the eighties demand new attitudes to conform with circumstances that differ from the seventies which were preoccupied with oil and its prices, Dr. Mubarak called for co-ordination in foreign policy, commerce and industrial enterprises.

Dr. Mubarak stated that the declaration differs from all previous attempts at co-operation between the Gulf states since the new Co-operation Council is a sort of "functional corporation" that recognises the sovereignty of the states involved while trying to increase co-operation between them through joint economic and building enterprises and similar legislation.

Abdul Muhsin Taqiy Muzaffar

While regarding the council as an important step along the road towards Gulf unity, which is in turn a step towards total Arab unity, Mr. Abdul Muhsin Taqiy Muzaffar, Secretary General of the Arab Institute of Planning, expressed some reservation about the motives for establishing the council. His main concern was that the announcement of the council was more linked to "the security of the Gulf" than to any economic or social issues, and that border disputes between the Gulf states might lead to the thwarting of the council's objectives.

Mr. Muzaffar noted that the absence of Iraq and the two Yemens from the new council might widen the gap between the rich and the poor in the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula, which might in future obstruct the lower levels of co-operation and integration within the Arabian Peninsula alone. The council would in this way sanctify the differences between these countries instead of achieving their unity.

Mr. Muzaffar listed a number of steps as being essential to the

achievement of Gulf integration. The first of these was the unification of the Gulf states' development funds, since there are separate funds in each of Kuwait, the UAE and Saudi Arabia, apart from the contribution Qatar makes to Arab development. If these three funds pooled their resources and adopted a united approach, they would be able to aid the poor Arab states more effectively. In particular, such a united fund should concentrate on social and economic development in the two Yemens. Mr. Muzaffar also called for the amalgamation of airlines, and a joint solution to the problems of foreign immigrant labour, which poses both political and military threats, by replacing it with Arab labour.

He also referred to other possible sphere of co-operation such as Gulf industrial and commercial companies and economic and cultural institutions.

Finally Mr. Muzaffar spoke of the need for the new council to clarify its foreign policy particularly regarding the relations of the six member states with the USA and USSR and the attitude of these states to the Camp David Accord especially as one of these states has adopted a compliant stance towards it. He also called for a united foreign policy and unified diplomatic representation abroad.

Muhammad Abdul Ghani Saudi

Dr. Muhammad Abdul Ghani Saudi, a professor of Political Geography at Kuwait University, prefaced his comments on the Gulf Cooperation Council with a full analysis of the strategic, labour, economic, social and political character of the Gulf, touching on American and Soviet relations with the Gulf.

Dr. Saudi mentioned a number of points in favour of joint co-operation including geographical, economic, political and security factors. Speaking of the elements involved in Gulf security and co-operation since the first contacts on a government level aimed at achieving co-operation, Dr. Saudi referred to the misgivings of the Arab Gulf states towards the Shah's regime and its view of the philosophy of Gulf co-

operation particularly following its military role in quelling the rebellion in Dhofar and its occupation of the three Arab islands in the Gulf. These acts reinforced the belief that the Shah sought to revive Iran's glory as it was in the time of Cyrus the Great. This policy has continued since the overthrow of the Shah's regime, Dr. Saudi stated.

On the other hand Dr. Saudi spoke of Iraq's position with regard to the new council, stressing that it would join sooner or later, especially since it participates in all the ministerial committees for joint Gulf action.

He laid great store by the Conciliation Commission attached directly to the Supreme Council, saying that its being linked to the heads of state indicates the importance attributed to this body that will seek to solve disputes.

Nazeeh Burqawi

The economist Mr. Nazeeh Burqawi stated in his analysis that there is no state or group of states that has not at some time faced the same economic and political problems facing the Arab Gulf states at present. These are represented by the existence of mainly liquid wealth, the source of which will dry up in future, together with the political and economic designs that jeopardise the region.

Mr. Nazeeh saw the challenge faced by the Gulf states as being twofold. The first aspect is how to keep the oil in the ground as long as possible, and the second is related to Gulf security and the protection of the oilfields. He enjoined the Gulf states to seek suitable forms of co-operation that would bring them together since, with the exception of Saudi Arabia, they are all small in area and population. Mr. Nazeeh reviewed previous attempts to reconcile points of view, particularly in the field of economics through numerous agreements some of which exempted particular products from customs duties while others gave retired citizens certain privileges.

Mr. Nazeeh cited the economic problems facing all the Gulf states as being inflation, a shortage of labour and expertise, limited fresh water resources, a lack of non-oil production units, low agricultural production and the hazards of pollution. Other problems include the different levels of economic progress in the Gulf states, the varying per capita income, and the presence of surplus and deficient states in the same group.

The Co-operation Council's main task was seen by Mr. Nazeeh as being the unification of monetary and economic policies, the transformation of the region into a finance market by uniting the various development funds, and the suspension of work on similar projects since these are a waste of resources. Integrated projects should be planned instead. However the biggest task facing the council is to ensure food supplies for the states in the region since they all depend on food imports which makes them extremely vulnerable.

Dr. Muhammad Al-Rumaihi

Dr. Muhammad Al-Rumaihi, an assistant professor in the Arts Faculty of Kuwait University welcomed the format of the Gulf Co-operation Council, but suggested that the Ministerial Council be on the level of prime ministers rather than foreign ministers, so as to give it a more executive rather than political character. He also stressed the necessity of finding a better way to distribute wealth in the states of the region, and the need for social justice so as to realise the citizens' hopes of having a positive and direct interest in this new form of joint action.

KUNA'S DIARY ON THE CO-OPERATION COUNCIL

Kuwait News Agency has closely followed developments related to the inception and progress of the Gulf Co-operation Council in its daily bulletin. The events that have taken place with regard to the council since the declaration of its inception on February 5, 1981, until publication of this digest, have been summarised in the next few pages to form a source of reference for researchers in future.

The Council's Functions and Jurisdictions

Riyadh, Feb. 5 : Following a meeting in Riyadh yesterday of the foreign ministers from six Gulf states, namely Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman, concrete proposals have been made for the functions and jurisdictions of the first political organisation specially for the Gulf region ever to be proclaimed.

Although consultations seeking inter-Gulf co-operation have been under way for the past few years, co-operation efforts have manifestly intensified in the last two years, in the wake of recent events in the Gulf, such as the Iranian Revolution and the ensuing Gulf war, and the increasing American and Soviet military presence in the region.

The Riyadh agreement, which provides for regular meetings for the heads of state of the member countries and their foreign ministers, has been described by political observers in the region as the climax of this rapprochement, with a view to confronting any threat to the stability and security of the oil-rich Gulf.

In the light of recommendations to be made by experts from the six countries in Riyadh on February 24, and in Muscat on March 4, the

foreign ministers shall reconvene on March 8, 1981, to draw up an integrated organisational structure for the new council.

A statement released on the ministers' meeting yesterday emphasised the affinity of the Gulf states with the rest of the Arab world and its causes, saying: "This step (the Co-operation Council) complies with the objectives of the Arab Nation and lies within the scope of the Arab League Charter, which encourages regional co-operation as a means of strengthening the Arab Nation. The council is a confirmation of these states' support for the Arab League and a promotion of their role in realising the objectives of its charter which serve both Arab and Islamic causes."

Joint Arab Action Materialised

Kuwait, Feb. 7: Member states in the Gulf Co-operation Council agreed during their discussions on the setting up of the council to appoint ministers for Gulf affairs in their cabinets, who shall be responsible for maintaining contact with their counterparts in other member states, an official source at the Foreign Ministry stated today.

The source, who was present at the Riyadh meeting of foreign ministers, added that Gulf co-operation and the council shall be a standing item on the agenda of cabinet and other government meetings.

The source stressed that all that had been agreed upon at the meeting had been openly announced, and that no secret talks had been held. In addition, any resolutions taken in future will be announced so as to avoid any attempts at distortion.

The experts' meeting due to be held in Muscat in March will draw up the detailed administrative, financial and constitutional regulations relating to the council and the formation of the General Secretariat, the source stated.

The functioning of the Supreme Council will be a real test of earnest Arab action and collective co-operation on a regional level. Far from contradicting the Arab League Charter, the establishment of the council realises its ninth article which calls for the promotion of progress. The source noted that the council will begin by implementing viable objectives, so as to avoid the pitfalls of previous Arab unification attempts, which were too ambitious. In this way unity will be built on solid foundations. Member states shall maintain their present regimes and retain their national independence and territorial integrity, the source added.

A Turnabout in Gulf Relations

Doha, Feb. 7: Radio Qatar today described the Gulf Co-operation Council as an historic and momentous turnabout in the relations existing between the Arab Gulf states. Commenting on the declaration of the council, the radio said it is a giant leap for joint Arab action that represents a link in the chain of efforts towards realising Arab and Islamic objectives in the future.

By virtue of its being a voluntary act, the establishment of the council carries weight and gives expression to the true relations between the Gulf states. It is aimed at achieving genuine stability in the region, by relying on the capabilities of its states, which are known internationally for their rejection of alliances and axes.

The Elimination of Sensitive Issues that Impede Unity

Riyadh, Feb. 8: Radio Riyadh stated today that the establishment of the Co-operation Council dispels all doubts as to region's freedom from conflicting political attitudes or regional concepts.

Such alignment is conclusive evidence of the member states'

ability to overcome sensitive issues that impede the process of unity, the radio said. It expressed the hope that the Arab states would work together out of a feeling of common destiny and history so as to achieve total integration through co-operation.

The Stance Adopted by the Arab League

Tunis, Feb. 9: Chedli Klibi, Secretary General of the Arab League, today declared his approval of the Gulf Co-operation Council in an interview with Gulf News Agency.

He described the move made the six Gulf states as a positive and constructive one towards the realisation of objectives pursued by the Arab League to foster co-operation among Arab states in all spheres of common interest.

Mr. Klibi indicated that the council is aimed at promoting relations between its members and is compatible with Article 9 of the Arab League Charter which urges states seeking closer co-operation to sign agreements for that purpose.

In Response to the Charges of Pravda Newspaper

Kuwait, Feb. 12: An official source denied here today that the formation of the Gulf Co-operation Council has any connection with either the East or West, saying that the agreement only served the interests of the six founder states.

This denial came in response to charges launched by the Soviet newspaper Pravda, which were circulated by Tass News Agency on February 10. The newspaper charged that the council would be more concerned with military affairs than expanding economic co-operation.

In a statement to KUNA, the source recalled that, according to the agreement between the six states, the council would be a means for realising a maximum extent of integration, co-operation and unity between its members in all spheres. One of its functions would be to map-out homogeneous systems in the fields of economy, culture, health, information, legal and legislative affairs.

The source criticised Pravda for taking what the American press had said as a basis for its commentary, in the knowledge that certain American newspapers tend to distort genuine attitudes. Pravda noted in its commentary that the American press had repeatedly mentioned that the USA and her NATO allies were actively preparing for a security pact in the Gulf which is willing to co-operate with the West.

The source quoted the declaration made by Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad, Kuwait's Foreign Minister, that the threat of imminent Soviet intervention in the region does not loom on the horizon. He also emphasised that the member states are fully agreed that the security of the region is the sole responsibility of its peoples.

Tunisia Applauds the Declaration of the Council

Tunis, Feb. 12: Tunisia has welcomed the establishment of the Gulf Co-operation Council, calling it a means of promoting Arab co-operation and rapprochement between neighbouring Arab countries that have common interests.

A spokesman for the Tunisian Foreign Ministry said here yesterday that regional unity between adjacent states is viewed as a positive step towards the realisation of total Arab unity. Tunisia, he said, supported the realisation of such a unity in the Maghrib (north-west Africa) and hoped that the obstacles in the way of such unity would soon be removed.

The Council is not Directed against other Powers

Riyadh, Feb. 13: Oman's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Qays Abdul Munim Al-Zawawi, has declared that the Co-operation Council is not directed against anyone. In a statement made to the Saudi newspaper Al-Yamama, he said that on the contrary it is in the interests of the region and the entire world.

Al-Zawawi stated that co-operation between the Gulf states is "an inherent right that conforms to the Charter of the Arab League." Denying the presence of alien forces in Oman, the Minister of State said the region's stability and security generates from the collective security of its states while standing clear of the contentions of giant powers.

Prince Fahad Expounds on the Council

Riyadh, Feb. 14: Saudi Arabia's Deputy Prime Minister and Crown Prince, Fahad bin Abdul-Aziz, has said that the Co-operation Council is not a bloc or axis against other powers.

Responding to a question posed by Saudi News Agency transmitted last night, about whether the council is a prologue to an effective unity between its member states, Prince Fahad stated that the Gulf Co-operation Council is what its name implies: a forum for promoting integration and co-operation between the region's states with a view to consolidating relations in all fields.

Asked about the prospects for co-operation in the fields of foreign policy and defence, Prince Fahad retorted that political and security co-ordination already exists among the Gulf states, adding that the council's declaration had not overlooked the existence of such co-ordination.

In response to a question on why the council's membership had been restricted to six Arab states, Prince Fahad declared that these states are linked by common characteristics and analogous organisational which make it only natural for them to adopt a resolution for the establishment of the council in its present form to be a comprehensive organisational framework for the realisation of their mutual goals.

The Gulf seeks the Prosperity of the World at Large

Riyadh, Feb. 15: The Saudi Information Minister, Dr. Muhammad Abduh Yamani, reiterated last night that the council is not directed against anyone, but seeks to achieve optimum co-operation and co-ordination between its members in all spheres.

In an interview with Saudi Television, Dr. Yamani said the council is not a bloc or alliance, since the states concerned do not hold with such concepts, and seek only the welfare of the entire world.

The minister declared that Saudi Arabia has never and will never permit the establishment of foreign military bases on its territory or provide military facilities, because it believes that the stability of the region depends on keeping it out of international conflicts.

He indicated that the Gulf Co-operation Council will work to strengthen the ties between the Gulf states that have dedicated all their resources to the prosperity of the world and that will continue to fulfil their duties towards other countries all over the world.

Chinese Comment on the Soviet Stance

Peking, Feb. 16: A Chinese newspaper said here today that the Soviet criticisms of the creation of the Gulf Co-operation Council prove that such co-operation will help to repel Soviet hostilities and expansion in the region.

The newspaper 'The People' was responding to criticism published by the Soviet newspaper 'Pravda' of the six Arab Gulf states, saying that they were treading a dangerous course.

'The People' said that such criticism on the part of the USSR would make the Arab Gulf states more aware of the need for solidarity in the face of foreign domination, noting that the Soviet Union had exploited the situation arising from the Iraqi-Iranian war to increase its air and naval presence in the Gulf region.

King Hassan Congratulates the Gulf Leaders

Rabat, Feb. 18: The text of a congratulatory message from King Hassan II of Morocco to the heads of the six Arab Gulf states was released here today. In it he expressed his satisfaction over the proclamation of the council which he described as a positive and constructive step that would enhance Arab solidarity.

A Message of Support from Britain's Prime Minister

Muscat, Feb. 19: Mr. Douglas Hurd, the British Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, communicated a message from Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to Sultan Qaboos bin Saeed Sultan yesterday, in which she expressed her country's support for the Gulf Co-operation Council.

Keeping Aloof from Foreign Pressures

Kuwait, Feb. 21: Bahrain's Information Minister, Tariq Al-Muayyad has declared that the nascent Gulf Co-operation Council is not a political grouping of wealthy Arab states aimed at removing them from the Arab League and Arab issues.

In a statement to the Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Siyassah, Mr. Muayyad said that the Gulf states regard themselves as being in confrontation with the Zionist enemy, hence they are mobilising their potentials to liberate Palestine. He noted that the council is part of a strategic plan formulated by the Gulf states in the early seventies to promote economic and manpower development.

The minister stressed that the council had not been formed as a result of outside pressure, international developments or the escalation in the Cold War being waged in the region as a consequence of the Iraqi-Iranian war.

Mr. Muayyad said that the Gulf states were agreed in their rejection of any foreign military presence on their territory because such a presence would automatically involve them in a policy of alliances and hence the Cold War between the super powers.

Experts' Committee on the Basic Statutes

Riyadh, Feb. 25: The Experts' Committee entrusted with drawing up the basic statutes of the Gulf Co-operation Council wound up its meetings here yesterday. During its two-day session, the committee deliberated the draft basic statutes prior to their ratification by the foreign ministers of the six member states at their meeting scheduled for March 8 in Muscat. The committee, comprising representatives from each of the member states, agreed to resume its proceedings in Muscat on March 4.

Washington: A Step to Confront Challenges

Washington, Feb. 26: The Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, John Tower, yesterday praised the formation of the Gulf Co-operation Council, saying, "Given the various challenges to Gulf security, this step towards regional co-operation is important."

Speaking at a news conference following his return from a 17-day

trip to Europe, the Middle East and the Gulf, Tower called American assessment of its ability to defend the Gulf against the Soviets “too pessimistic” and said that US forces can project power into the area and are working towards even greater capability.

In his assessment of the US potential in the Gulf, Tower appeared to be taking a stand closer to Secretary of State Alexander Haig than Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger. Haig has said that the US can project power into the Gulf with current capabilities while Weinberger has warned that the US cannot live up to the Carter doctrine’s commitment to defend the Gulf states against Soviet intervention.

Yugoslavia Welcomes the Formation of the Council

Belgrade, Feb. 27: Yugoslavia welcomed today the decision of the six Gulf states to form the Co-operation Council, calling it a step towards the development of these states and their economies.

A spokesman for the government said that his country views the initiative adopted by the Gulf states as a crucial move towards the consolidation of the region’s independence, stability and security.

Drafting the Basic Statutes

Muscat, March. 7: The Experts’ Committee charged with drawing up the basic statutes of the Gulf Co-operation Council resumed its meetings here today, to put the finishing touches to the draft basic statutes in preparation for the meeting of the foreign ministers, who will initial them, before submitting them to the heads of state for endorsement.

Meanwhile Oman’s Foreign Minister, Yusuf Al-Alawi, was quoted

today as saying that Oman will present a working paper to the committee containing certain suggestions relating to the council's charter. He noted that the charter outlines the council's prime objectives, the procedures for setting up its General Secretariat, and administrative matters related to the regulation of work.

The minister stressed that the council is not a uniting of forces against anyone, but is designed to serve the public good. He condemned the negative reactions to the council's formation by socialist countries such as South Yemen and the USSR. He stated that these states seek to interfere in the internal affairs of the Gulf states, a policy that history has shown to be futile.

Experts' Committee Winds up Proceeding

Muscat, March 8: The Experts' Committee charged with drawing up the basic statutes of the Gulf Co-operation Council wound up their meetings here this evening having concluded their deliberations on the final version of the statutes and allied regulations.

The head of Oman's delegation, who is also the Director of Political Affairs in the Foreign Ministry, Salim Suwaid, said that the meetings had been fruitful and the atmosphere one of true co-operation. The basic statutes drawn up fall into 22 articles, outlining the council's objectives, the functions of each of its organs and the jurisdictions of the General Secretariat.

Mr. Suwaid said that the committee had studied two working papers, one Kuwaiti and the other Omani, but gave no indication of their content except that they expressed what was decided by the foreign ministers at their meeting in Riyadh. He added that the statutes provide for two meetings a year of the Supreme Council and six meetings of the Ministerial Council, although there is a proposal that this number be reduced to alleviate the burden on the General Secretariat.

Proceedings of the Foreign Ministers' Conference

Muscat, March 9: The foreign ministers of the six Gulf states that have formed the Gulf Co-operation Council opened talks here this evening that will cover the basic statutes drawn up by the ad hoc Experts' Committee annexed to the council.

These statutes outline the council's objectives, its organisational structure and the procedures related to the operation of its three main organs, namely the Supreme Council, comprising the heads of member states, the Ministerial Council, comprising their foreign ministers, and the General Secretariat.

At their meeting in Riyadh last February the foreign ministers drew up the broad outlines of the council, and delegated the Experts' Committee to work out the details in preparation for their ratification.

Kuwait's delegation to the foreign ministers' meetings, that will last two days, is headed by Deputy Premier, Foreign Minister, and acting Information Minister, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber.

A Gulf Summit in Abu Dhabi

Muscat, March 10: The foreign ministers of six Gulf states wound up their meetings here today, having agreed on the convening of a summit conference in Abu Dhabi in May.

Oman's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Qays Abdul-Munim Al-Zawawi, stated after the meeting that the foreign ministers had unanimously agreed on the matters they reviewed relating to the establishment of the Gulf Co-operation Council.

He added that deliberations had centred on the formation of the Supreme Council, the Ministerial Council, the General Secretariat, and the Conciliation Commission that will be annexed to the Supreme

Council for the settlement of disputes.

The Minister of State declared that the ministers will submit to their heads of state a proposal for holding a summit conference on May 26 to be preceded by a preparatory meeting at the foreign minister level.

A Statement by Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad

Kuwait, March 10: Kuwait's Deputy Premier, Foreign Minister and acting Information Minister, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad, returned home this evening after heading Kuwait's delegation to the meeting of foreign ministers of Arab Gulf states held in Muscat.

In a statement upon his arrival Sheikh Sabah said, "As I return from our second preparatory meeting in Muscat, it gives me great pleasure to announce that we have finished drawing up the Co-operation Council's statutes. We have initialled the Basic Statute of the council and its internal regulations in preparation for their ratification by the heads of member states when they meet in Abu Dhabi on May 26, following a meeting of foreign ministers and experts from the 20th to the 24th of the same month."

The Foreign Minister added, "An atmosphere of total understanding pervaded the meetings with regard to all the issues raised, and we hope to continue following this path that will surely bring prosperity to our peoples and states... On this occasion I should like to extend my thanks and appreciation to officials in Oman, headed by Sultan Qaboos bin Saeed, for their warm hospitality."

Broad Outlines for Gulf Co-operation

Riyadh, March 10: Riyadh Radio today called on the Gulf Co-operation Council to benefit from the relations of mutual interest linking the Arab Gulf states with Europe and America by bringing these coun-

tries round to the Arab cause.

Commenting on the meeting of foreign ministers from six Gulf states which was concluded in Muscat today, the radio said that it had drawn up the broad outlines for the nature of co-operation between the Arab Gulf states, adding that the meeting had asserted to the world once again that the Gulf states are totally committed to the path of unity they have chosen for themselves.

The radio noted that the objectives pursued by the Gulf states in no way conflict with the aspirations of world organisations that seek to realise security and stability.

Mauritania Welcomes the Establishment of the Council

Abu Dhabi, March 12: Mauritania has expressed its approbation of the proclamation of the Gulf Co-operation Council. In a memorandum received today by the Foreign Ministry of the United Arab Emirates, the Mauritanian Government asserted that the establishment of the council gives expression to the aspirations of the Arab Nation for solidarity and serves the aims of the Arab League.

The memorandum was delivered by Mauritania's ambassador to the UAE during a meeting with the Undersecretary of the Foreign Ministry.

Fatah Representative Stresses the Council's Significance

Riyadh, March 14: A representative of the Palestinian commando organisation, Fatah, stressed here today the significance of the Co-operation Council.

In a statement published by the Saudi newspaper Okaz, Rafeeq Al-Natsha said, "We consider the Arab people one people from the point of view of culture, blood ties, religion and aspirations." He praised Saudi Arabia's attitude towards the Palestinian cause and described Saudi-Palestinian relations as excellent. Mr. Al-Natsha also denounced Israel's repeated attacks on South Lebanon.

Iraq Lends Support to the Co-operation Council

Riyadh, March 22: Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister and member of the Revolutionary Command Council, Tariq Aziz, today announced his country's support for the establishment of the Gulf Co-operation Council, which he described as a noble step.

Mr. Aziz stated in an interview with the Saudi newspaper Al-Jazeera that the council is confirmation of the fact that the Gulf states are in no need of anyone's protection, and an expression of the spirit of the Arab League Charter.

Kuwait's Defence Minister: Realisation of the Dream of Unity

Kuwait, April 8: Kuwait's Defence Minister, Sheikh Salim Sabah Al-Salim praised the Gulf Co-operation Council, which he said is aimed at realising the dream of the member states for unity.

The minister said that unity cannot be achieved quickly, but must come in phases the most important of which is co-operation in the social, economic and political fields so that an integrated community can be built.

Sheikh Salim added that such co-operation is a means of protection against foreign intervention and subversive elements.

Reduction of Diplomatic Representation between Member States

Kuwait, April 11: Saudi Arabia is studying the possibility of cancelling diplomatic representation between the Co-operation Council states at the ambassadorial level, according to a Kuwaiti newspaper.

Al-Qabas newspaper said in a report from Riyadh that this is a proposal to be considered by the heads of member states at their conference in Abu Dhabi at the end of May. It said that Riyadh considers this step as a move towards political unity. The Saudi proposal envisages that the consulates of the six states will be sufficient to deal with the affairs of citizens and administrative matters between the states and that any Gulf citizen should be able to avail himself of the consular services offered by any Gulf state.

Kuwait Welcomes the Saudi Proposal

Kuwait, April 12: Kuwait has welcomed the Saudi proposal calling for the cancellation of embassies between the six member states, according to a report in the Arabic daily Al-Qabas.

The paper quoted today the Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, Abdul-Aziz Hussein, as saying that Kuwait has as yet not received any information about this step, but that it welcomes the idea.

The Minister of State added that a detailed study will have to be carried out on the measures to be taken for the proposal's implementation.

Meanwhile, no Saudi comment has been released about the report published in Al-Qabas yesterday to the effect that the Saudi Government is studying a number of proposals to put before the summit meeting scheduled for the end of May in Abu Dhabi, including the plan to reduce diplomatic representation between council states.

Al-Qabandi on the Gulf Co-operation Council

Kuwait, April 13: The Director-General of Public Security, Brigadier-General Muhammad Al-Qabandi, has described the Gulf Co-operation Council as a source of power and a reinforcement of security measures in each of the six member states. He said it will be an incentive for the police to perform their duty of maintaining stability in the region.

Oman Supports the Establishment of the Council

Riyadh, April 17: Oman's ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Sheikh Ibrahim Al-Harithi, has praised the establishment of the Gulf Co-operation Council which he described as a practical step towards the realisation of mutual co-operation between the states in the region.

In a statement published by the Saudi newspaper Al-Jazeera, Sheikh Ibrahim said that Oman believes the security of the Gulf region is the sole responsibility of its own citizens.

North Yemen Applauds the Co-operation Council

Sana, April 24: North Yemen's Foreign Minister, Ali Lutf Al-Thawr, has welcomed the formation of the Gulf Co-operation Council since it embraces a geographical unity that gives its states common characteristics and ambitions.

In an interview with the weekly newspaper "June 12", the minister confirmed his country's support for unity in the Arab ranks and for the principle of Arab co-operation whether through the efforts of individual states or groups of states.

Sheikh Sabah Reassures Moscow

Moscow, April 24: At the conclusion of talks between Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad, Kuwait's Deputy Premier, Foreign Minister and acting Information Minister, and Andrei Gromyko, the Soviet Foreign Minister and member of the Politburo, Sheikh Sabah informed Kuwait News Agency that the talks had been frank and amicable. They covered bilateral relations between the two countries and touched on the Gulf Co-operation Council.

He said, "We explained to Soviet officials the object of setting up this council and assured them that it is not directed against anyone, in so far as it is to serve the interests of states with similar institutions in the region."

Sheikh Sabah added, "We seek cordial and fruitful relations with all states without domination by anyone. The efforts of the Gulf states have resulted in the formation of the Gulf Co-operation Council which seeks social and economic co-ordination. No-one has imposed the council on us, rather our desire to direct our forces against foreign influence has prompted us to form it... We hope that our friends in the Soviet Union will view our effort in a positive spirit."

The Deputy Premier stated, "We have found in President Brezhnev's call regarding the Gulf some positive points that cannot be overlooked and I am sure that in the Gulf Co-operation Council you will find some positive points that cannot be overlooked."

Turkey and the Co-operation Council

Riyadh, April 30: Turkey's Information Minister, Ilhan Evliyaoglu, has described the Gulf Co-operation Council as the most positive step taken by the Gulf states to stand united in the face of the challenges to which they might be exposed.

In a statement published by the Saudi newspaper 'Al-Bilad' the Turkish Minister said that the council represents a bold step towards unification and effective co-operation between the Gulf states for the purpose of achieving greater prosperity for their peoples.

Preparations for the Council's Summit Conference

Abu Dhabi, May 1: The Undersecretary of the United Arab Emirates' Foreign Ministry, Abdul-Rahman Al-Jarwan, has stated that preparations have been completed for the summit conference of the member states of the Gulf Co-operation Council which is due to be held in Abu Dhabi this month.

The undersecretary informed 'Al-Ittihad' newspaper that member states are currently being contacted to submit topics for the conference's agenda to the UAE Foreign Ministry.

On the other hand Mr. Al-Jarwan indicated that the border agreement recently signed between the Emirates and Oman did not take place through the Gulf Co-operation Council, but by means of a bilateral agreement determined by the good relations between the two countries.

Summit Brought Forward One Day

Abu Dhabi, May 2: It has been announced here that the date for the summit conference of the six Gulf leaders involved in the Co-operation Council has been brought forward to May 25 from May 26.

The Emirates News Agency quoted the UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Rashid Abdullah Al-Naeemi, as saying that the new date had been agreed upon after contacting all the states concerned. The reason for the change of date was not mentioned. The foreign ministers of the council's member states will meet in Abu Dhabi on

May 23 to prepare for the summit, and an experts' committee will meet on May 19.

A Solid Basis for Co-ordination and Co-operation

Riyadh, May 2: Kuwait's Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, Abdul-Aziz Hussein, has asserted that the formation of the Gulf Co-operation Council falls within the scope of joint Arab action and reinforces the efforts of the Arab League.

In an interview published by the Saudi newspaper 'Al-Medina' the Minister of State said that the Co-operation Council which is built on a solid basis, aims to achieve co-ordination and integration between the member states so as to solve all the difficulties they face.

THE SIX GULF STATES FACTS AND FIGURES

THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The seven sheikhdoms which form the United Arab Emirates cover some 83,650 sq.km. along the southern coast of the Arabian Gulf and part of the Gulf of Oman.

Both European and Arab pirates were very active in the Gulf during the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Attacks on British flag vessels carrying gold, silver, spices and slaves from the east led to British expeditions in 1806, 1809 and finally in 1818 against the pirate headquarters at Ras Al-Khaimah and other harbours along the 150 miles of "Pirate Coast". In 1820 a General Treaty of Peace for suppressing piracy and slave traffic was concluded between Great Britain and the Arab tribes of the Gulf.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century France, Germany and Russia showed increasing interest in the Gulf area and in 1892 Britain entered into separate but identical "exclusive" treaties with the Trucial rulers, whereby the Sheikhs undertook not to dispose of parts of their territories to anyone except the British Government, nor to enter into any relationship with a foreign government other than the British without British consent. Britain had already undertaken to protect the states from outside attack in the Perpetual Maritime Treaty of 1853.

The advent of commercial oil production in mid-1962 gave Britain more reason to build a substantial military base at Sharjah that expanded gradually from 1966 to 1968 to reach an estimated 3,000 men, thereby becoming the principal base in the Gulf. In early 1968 Britain announced that all its forces would be withdrawn from the area by the end of 1971.

The original proposals for the formation of a federation on the de-

parture of British influence included Bahrain and Qatar as well as the seven Trucial States, but negotiations on the participation of the larger and more developed states eventually broke down in 1971, and they opted for separate independence. On December 1, 1971, Britain terminated all existing treaties with the Trucial States. The following day Abu Dubai, Dubai, Sharjah, Umm Al-Quwain, Ajman and Fujairah formed the United Arab Emirates and a treaty of friendship was signed with Britain. The seizure of the two Tumb islands in the Gulf by Iran and the danger it entailed convinced Ras al-Khaimah to join the Union in February 1972. The United Arab Emirates joined the U.N. and the Arab League in December, 1971.

A provisional constitution for the U.A.E. was drawn up in December, 1971. This laid the foundation for the federal structure of the Union of the seven Sheikhdoms, previously known as the Trucial States.

The highest federal authority is the Supreme Council which comprises the rulers of the seven Emirates. It elects a president and vice-president from among its members. The president appoints a prime minister and cabinet. The legislature is the National Council, a consultative assembly comprising 40 members appointed by the Emirates for a two-year term.

Article 45 of the provisional constitution of the U.A.E. specifies the composition of the Union's authorities as follows:

- The Supreme Council.
- The President and the Vice-President.
- The Council of Ministers.
- The National Council.
- The Judiciary.

The Executive comprises the following:

- The Supreme Council.
- The President and the Vice-President.

- The Council of Ministers.

In its formation, the Supreme Council emphasizes two principles. On the one hand it asserts the principle of collective leadership, and on the other it emphasizes the states' independence with equal participation of each and every state in the Executive Power Administration. The later excludes the States of Abu Dhabi and Dubai which, according to article 49 of the constitution, enjoy a right of veto.

Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al Nahayan, the ruler of Abu Dhabi was elected President of the Union in 1971 and Sheikh Rashid bin Sa'id al

Maqtoom as Vice-President. They were both re-elected in 1976 at the end of their five year term of office.

In May 1975, at a session of the Supreme Council, the seven Emirs gave their consent in principle to further steps for centralisation. In November of the same year, Sharjah merged the Sharjah National Guard with the Union Defence Force, and also handed control of its broadcasting station to the union's Ministry of Communications, its police to the Ministry of the Interior and its courts to the Ministry of Justice.

A 40-member legislature consists of eight seats each for Abu Dhabi and Dubai, six seats each for Ras al Khaimah and Sharjah, and four for each of the other emirates.

Each Emirate appoints its representatives to the Council which studies the laws issued by the Council of Ministers and then decides upon their amendment, rejection or approval.

Abu Dhabi

Abu Dhabi, the largest of the seven emirates, covers an area of 68,340 sq. km. extending over 200 islands scattered along a 350 mile coast line. The main islands are :-

- **Abu Dhabi** : The capital of the U.A.E. and the headquarters of all the ministries, the President's office and the Diplomatic Missions.
- **Das** : One of the main oil well centres.
- **Da'a** : Famed for its pearl diving and fresh waters.
- **Sair Bani Yas** : The largest island, with a port for the export of crude oil.
- **Al Sa'adiyat** : This island has established an agricultural research centre.

Cities of the Emirate :

- **Al Ain** : In the eastern part of the state, famed for its agriculture.
- **Al Beraimi** : Located near some mountains that supply it with fresh waters.
- **Al Dafrah** : A region that embraces more than 60 villages, called Li-wa.
- **Al Tarif** : Located on the coast.

The population census of 1976 declared Abu Dhabi's population to be 235,662 which constituted 36 per cent of the total population of the U.A.E.

Dubai

The second largest of the Emirates, Dubai has a population of about 207,000 spread over 3,900 sq. km. It has a long trading tradition and in the wake of the Gulf oil boom, has developed its potential to become one of the most important financial and commercial centres in the Gulf.

Dubai city is the capital which is divided in two by the Khor bay. The southern part where the capital Dubai is located is the centre of governmental activities while the northern part, Deerah, is the centre of commercial activities.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s development was concentrated on the expansion of Port Rashid and the encouragement of banking. Further projects being implemented to consolidate Dubai's financial and commercial position include a dry dock, a trade and exhibition centre, port and airport expansion and more hotels. The dry dock is by far the most ambitious project. Other projects include the natural gas and oil refinery project, the aluminium complex and the iron and steel plant.

Sharjah

Sharjah is the most developed of the five northern Emirates. The area is 2,600 sq. km. with a population of over 83,000. Since oil production began in 1974 the pace of economic development has accelerated, with emphasis being placed on finance and commerce. Port Khaled in Sharjah town has been developed to operate container services, and Khor Fakkan on the Omani coast is to become a major container cargo port.

Ras Al Khaimah

Ras Al Khaimah has an area of 1,700 sq. km. and a population of over 57,000 according to the 1976 census. The Emirate has the most advanced agricultural sector in the UAE. There is a cement plant with an anticipated production capacity of 4,500 tons a day.

Umm Al Quwain • Fujairah • Ajman

With an area that constitutes 2.8 per cent of the total UAE area, and a population which is 11 per cent of the total, these three Emirates have a modest income and relatively poor source of livelihood that includes fishing and agriculture.

Achievements of the United Arab Emirates

Inaugurating the third session of the Union's National Assembly, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahayan summarised the achievements of the U.A.E. in his address as follows:

- Establishment of a Guard Force to secure the borders and ensure public safety and peace inside the country.
- Co-ordination between the Emirates' security systems.
- Unification of media censorship in the Emirates.
- Abolishment of the customs barriers between the Emirates.
- Establishment of the U.A.E.'s University in 1977-1978.

BAHRAIN

The State of Bahrain consists of a group of islands situated midway down the Arabian Gulf about 18 miles from the east coast of Saudi Arabia.

The total area of the Bahrain group of islands is 258.5 square miles. To the north-east of Bahrain, and linked to it by a causeway and motor road lies Muharraq island, which is approximately 4 miles long. The archipelago comprising the State of Bahrain consists of thirty-three islands, including Nabih Salih, Sutrah, Umm Na'san and Jasrah. The total population in 1979 was about 340,000.

History

After several centuries of independence Bahrain passed firstly under the rule of the Portuguese (1521-1620) and then it occasionally came under Iranian rule (1602-1782). The Iranians were expelled in 1783 by the Khalifa family, but continued to claim the islands until 1980. In the nineteenth century European powers began to interest themselves in the Gulf area, and Britain was principally concerned to prevent French, Russian and German penetration towards India, and to suppress the slave and arms trades. In 1861 in consequence of political claims put forward by Iran and Turkey, the Sheikh of Bahrain undertook to abstain from the prosecution of war, piracy and slavery by sea in return for British support against aggression. In 1880 and 1892 the Sheikh further undertook not to cede, mortgage or otherwise dispose of his territories, nor to enter into any relationship with a foreign government other than the British without British consent.

By mid-1971 Bahrain was ready for complete independence, and in August full independence was proclaimed, a new treaty of friendship signed with the U.K., and Sheikh Isa took the title of Amir. In December 1972 elections were held for a Constituent Assembly which produced a new Constitution. In September 1971, Bahrain became a member of the Arab League and the U.N.

Economy

Oil in commercial quantity was found in 1932. The Bahrain Petroleum Company (BAPCO), which has been the main concessionaire, was formerly owned jointly by the Standard Oil Company of California and Texaco Inc. In 1974 an agreement giving 60 per cent participation to the Bahrain Government was reached, and in March 1975 the Bahrain Government announced that it intended to take over full ownership of BAPCO.

Although the State now control crude production, which averaged 59,000 barrels per day at the end of 1976, it has not taken over the BAPCO refinery which handles large supplies of crude by submarine pipeline from Saudi Arabia.

Bahrain has the second largest refinery in the Middle East. In 1978 it had an average throughput of 260,000 barrels a day, of which 80 per cent originated from Saudi Arabia. The Low Sulphur Fuel Oil project, which was brought into commission in late 1973, has meant that the refinery can manufacture 50,000 barrels of oil daily with a sulphur content of 0.5 per cent.

Agriculture and cattle breeding are practised throughout the islands, the main crops being vegetables, lucerne, fodder crops and some dates. Traditional occupations such as dhow building, fishing and pearling continue but on a much smaller scale than before. In December 1971 the new Bahrain International Airport Terminal Building was opened. The first terminal designed specifically for Jumbo Jets, this building can handle the passengers of two 747s simultaneously. A dry dock project, backed by the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries has been planned.

Foreign investors have found Bahrain attractive because of its freedom from taxation, its good air, cable and telex communications, and its large surplus of low-cost natural gas. Besides the ship repair facilities and the fishing companies, other companies are now produc-

ing offshore oil wellhead structures, manufactured domestic and industrial plastic products, assembly of air-conditioning units and furniture assembly.

A £ 60 million aluminium smelter began production in 1970 and in 1976 it produced a record 122,000 tons compared with 116,000 tons in 1975. Under a twenty year contract production of natural gas was begun in 1971 by the Bahrain Petroleum Company to provide fuel for the turbine complex of the plant. Another long-term contract was signed with Western Australian interests to provide alumina for the smelter. Ancillary industries are now being established; a factory to produce aluminium powder and an aluminium extrusion plant are in production.

In October 1975 the Bahrain Government launched a plan which could make Bahrain a major commercial centre in its own right, comparable to the position Singapore holds in the Far East. By March 1980 some 53 international banks had been given approval by the Bahrain Monetary Agency to set up "Offshore Banking Units" (OBUs) in Bahrain.

The Gulf Petrochemical Company, established by a joint partnership between Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia with a \$ 150 million capital, for the production of methanol and ammonia is scheduled to start production in 1984.

In the health field, the Bahrain Government has always secured special care for health services such as setting up modern-equipped hospitals and mobile clinics. Several Medical Centres have been established in Bahrain recently such as Sabah al-Salim Centre in Manameh and Isa City and Sutrah Centres.

Bahrain has the longest history of government education in the Gulf, with the first government school for boys being founded in 1919. The first girls' school was opened ten years later, and since then education has developed to meet the country's growing need for qualified manpower. The first education law issued in 1975 defined the objec-

tives of each of the educational levels, while schooling was made compulsory and free for all in 1977. Programmes for adult education and the eradication of illiteracy were outlined in a 1974 law.

SAUDI ARABIA

The Arabian peninsula is a strongly marked geographical unit that extends over one million square miles and is divided politically into several states. The largest of these is Saudi Arabia, which occupies over 2,000,000 sq. km.; to the east and south lie much smaller territories. Along the shores of the Arabian Gulf and Gulf of Oman there are first the State of Kuwait, then after a stretch of Saudi coast, the island of Bahrain and the Qatar peninsula, followed by the United Arab Emirates and the much larger state of Oman. The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen occupies most of the peninsula's southern coastline. To the north of it, facing the Red Sea, lies the Yemen Arab Republic.

History

Ibn Sa'ud proclaimed himself King of the Hijaz on January 8, 1926, marking the establishment of the Saudi Arabian Kingdom. This new status was recognised by Britain in the Treaty of Jeddah. Saudi Arabia was an original member of the Arab League formed in 1945. On November 9, 1953 King Ibn Sa'ud died and was succeeded by the Crown Prince Sa'ud, who was formally deposed in November 1964. Then Prince Faisal became King, as well as head of the Council of Ministers with exclusive power of appointing and dismissing ministers.

Since 1970 the development of the Saudi economy has been guided by a series of five-year plans, which have provided for a massive programme of industrialisation and modernisation throughout the country. A major feature of the second plan was the intention to create

two completely new industrial cities, one at Jubail on the Gulf and the other at Yanbu on the Red Sea. Jubail was to have three oil refineries, seven petrochemical plants, and aluminium smelter, and a steel mill as well as support industries, an industrial port and large-scale urban development. Yanbu was planned on a smaller scale: two oil refineries, a natural gas processing plant, and a petrochemicals complex.

Following the establishment of basic transport and communication facilities, the third five-year plan (1980-1985) is intended to shift the emphasis away from infrastructure projects into the productive sectors with particular importance accorded to agriculture.

Oil Industry

The most important industry in Saudi Arabia is the production of crude petroleum and its products. The Arabian American Oil Company (ARAMCO) began exploration for oil in 1933 and was soon drilling. In 1978 Aramco's proven reserves of crude oil were estimated to be 113,300 million barrels. Probable reserves are estimated at 177,800 barrels. Saudi Arabia is the biggest oil producer within OPEC. Aramco produces about 97% of the total Saudi output.

Saudi Arabian is in the throes of major industrial development financed by oil revenues under the aegis of development plans (1975-1985). The cornerstone of the industrialisation programme is the construction of refineries and processing industries to exploit the country's oil and natural gas reserves. Oil revenues provide over 90% of the State's budget revenue. Defence and internal security normally form the largest single item in budget expenditure.

Agriculture

Agriculture contributed 2.4% of non-oil GDP in 1978. Cultivation is confined to irrigated regions. Various crops are being cultivated on arable soil, while fruits of many varieties grow in abundance at oases,

and both dairy and poultry farming are on the increase.

The Government has recognised the importance of developing agriculture as a means of reducing the dependence on imported food, diversifying the economy and raising rural living standards. An ambitious programme has been launched to overcome the obstacle of water scarcity, a factor that is limiting the development of agriculture. Consequently, budget allocations for the agricultural sector have increased in recent years. Apart from lack of water, the main constraint on agriculture is the shortage of labour.

Education

The education system in Saudi Arabia resembles that of other Arab countries. It is run by the government, although the private sector plays a significant role. Kindergarten education is provided on a small scale, mainly in urban areas. Elementary education is of six years' duration, while intermediate education lasts for three years.

Industrial and commercial education is an optional stage. Vocational craft training institutes are also available. There are six universities in Saudi Arabia, in addition to a Higher Islamic Judicial Institute, and girls' education colleges.

Foreign Aid

Foreign aid given by Saudi Arabia is equivalent to 2.32% of its GNP. Most Saudi aid goes to Arab and Muslim states. The country has generally been the biggest contributor to various Arab funds, and has lent considerable sums to the World Bank.

OMAN

The Sultanate of Oman lies on the east of the Arabian Peninsula and is flanked by the United Arab Emirates on the north and west, by Saudi Arabia on the west and by South Yemen on the south-west. Its sea coast extends for 1,600 km. and its total area, including Dhofar, is about 105,000 square miles.

History

The arrival of the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean in 1507 marks the beginning of foreign occupation. They established themselves in the Omani ports, while the British and Dutch traders who followed in the wake of the Portuguese, did not establish themselves by force of arms in Oman in the same way. In 1650 the Imam Nasir bin Murshid of the Yaariba dynasty, effectively turned the Portuguese out of Muscat and the rest of Oman.

The country was, however, ravaged by civil war in the first half of the eighteenth century when the strength and authority of the Imam diminished. During this period the Iranians were called in to assist one of the contenders for the Imamate, but they were finally expelled by Ahmad bin Said who was elected Imam in 1749 and was the founder of the Al Bu Said dynasty, which still rules Oman. He ruled Oman from 1804 until 1856. He was a strong and much beloved ruler, who also gained the respect and friendship of European nations, in particular the British. Treaties providing for the exchange of consular relations were negotiated with the British in 1839, the United States in 1833, France in 1844 and the Netherlands in 1877. Britain's only formal links with the Sultanate have been a series of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation Treaties signed in 1891, 1939 and 1951.

On July 24, 1970, the Sultan was deposed by a coup led by his son, Qaboos bin Said, at the royal palace in Salalah. Qaboos, aged 29 and trained at Sandhurst, thus became Sultan of Oman. The new Sultan announced his intention to transform the country by using the oil

revenues for development. In 1970 "Muscat" was dropped from the title of the country, which became simply the "Sultanate of Oman". Oman's admission to the UN was achieved in 1971, and so was its admission to the Arab League.

Education and Health Services

Until 1970 there were only three primary schools, offering a six-year course of basic education for boys only. In the years since the accession of Sultan Qaboos emphasis has been placed on the expansion of education horizontally as well as vertically all over the Sultanate. From the three primary schools before 1970 there are now over 357 schools. Out of these 58 are for girls and there is co-education in the lower classes of 77 primary schools.

The health authority in the Sultanate has increased its facilities for the citizens and has established medical centres all over the country. Paediatric units, psychiatric clinics and a nursing institute have been included in the expansion plans of the health services.

Agriculture

About 70 per cent of the working population is engaged in agriculture and the Sultanate's long-term plans for development foresee a considerable increase in agricultural production. In encouraging agricultural development the Department of Agriculture hopes to increase the production of export crops and reduce the level of food imports. The Department has five experimental and production farms and 22 extension centres throughout the country. A contract worth \$6 million has been given to the American Farm Machinery Corporation for the establishment of demonstration and experimental farms.

Oil

The economy of Oman is dominated by the oil industry which provides almost all Government revenue. In 1964 Petroleum Development (Oman) Ltd. and a consortium of three major companies announced that drilling had proved sufficient reserves for the company to go into commercial production. The production began in 1967 at a rate of 200,000 barrels per day and expanded to 360,000 barrels per day by the end of 1969. In 1973 the four connected oil fields at Fahud, Natih, Yibal and Al-Huwaisah together produced at an average rate of 292,947 barrels per day. The average rose to about 340,000 b/d in 1975, and increased to 385,900 b/d in December 1975. Petroleum Development (Oman) Ltd. is also drilling in the north of Dhofar where quantities of relatively heavy oil are known to exist. There are plans for a \$90 million pipeline project to transport natural gas from the interior to the capital area. This will subsequently assist industrial development.

Oman gas reserves are estimated at 4,000 billion cubic foot. In 1980 the budget allocation was RO304 million, compared with RO 238 million in 1979. Infrastructural and communication projects are gradually being completed. Radar was installed at Salalah airport in 1978. The opening of twelve new berths at Mina Qaboos has improved port facilities and a West German firm is engaged on harbour expansion at Mina Raysut. A road network for the mountainous region inland from Salalah is planned at a cost of \$72 million. The targets of the 1979-80 development plan concentrated on establishing a workable basis for light industry and agriculture. The Omani Development Bank was established in December 1977 to encourage private sector investment.

Q A T A R

The State of Qatar is a peninsula roughly 100 miles in length, with a breadth varying between 35-50 miles, on the west coast of the Arabian Gulf. The total area is 4,000 sq. miles with a population estimated at

250,000 in 1980. Qatar is stony, sandy and barren, with limited supplies of brackish underground water and pleasant weather.

History

In 1916 Great Britain made an agreement with the Sheikh of Qatar, who undertook not to cede, mortgage or otherwise dispose of parts of his territories to anyone except the British Government, nor to enter into any relationship with a foreign government other than the British without the latter's consent. In return Britain undertook to protect Qatar from all aggression and to lend her good offices in case of an overland attack.

The State of Qatar decided to remain outside a Gulf Federation, and became independent on September 1, 1971. In the same month, it joined the Arab League and the United Nations three weeks later.

In 1972 Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad Al-Thani seized power in a bloodless coup with the support of the ruling al-Thani family. Changes have since occurred in Qatar, but the Islamic pattern of life is still preserved. Following his accession, Sheikh Khalifa decreed the first Advisory Council to complement the ministerial government.

Oil Industry

Interest in the oil possibilities of Qatar was first stimulated by the entry of Standard Oil of California into Bahrain in 1930. A concession originally granted to the Anglo-Iranian Company was later transferred to Petroleum Concessions Ltd. Its operating company, Petroleum Development Ltd., started exploration in 1937 and oil was discovered in 1939.

An offshore grant was awarded to the Shell Overseas Exploration Company in 1952. The Shell Company of Qatar Ltd. began commercial production of oil in 1966 at an annual rate of more than 5,000,000 barrels. In 1963 the Continental Oil Company of Qatar was granted a

concession over land and offshore areas. In 1969 Qatar and Abu Dhabi concluded a Joint Exploration Agreement, the outputs of which were shared by the two countries.

In 1972 the Amir signed a law to create the Qatar National Petroleum Co. with power to carry out a comprehensive range of production, refining and marketing functions. Later, in 1973, Qatar entered into participation agreements with local crude-producing companies whereby it acquired a 25% share in the operations of each company.

In order to avoid complete dependence on oil, the Government has encouraged the growth of other industries, and the proportion of the revenue from oil used to finance development projects has been rising steadily since 1972. The most significant completed project is an ammonia and urea fertiliser plant based on the conversion of waste gas, which produced 371,000 metric tons of ammonia and 497,000 tons of urea in 1979. Other enterprises include the Qatar Flour Mills Company, which was set up at the prompting of the Government. The National Fishing Company, formed in 1966 as an extension of the local shrimp-fishing industry, is capable of handling seven tons of shrimps daily. The Qatar National Cement Manufacturing Company began production early in 1969; its capacity has since been expanded with completion of a second plant in 1978.

Agriculture is still developing outside the capital. The Department of Agriculture has succeeded in making the country self-sufficient in vegetables some of which are exported to other Gulf states.

Welfare

The benefits of oil revenues have resulted in increased allocations for social services and education. Hospitals and other health services have large allocations in the development budget.

All education in Qatar is free and numerous scholarships are awarded for study overseas. The state education system was inaugu-

rated in 1956. The six-year primary stage is followed by a three-year preparatory stage, and a further three-year secondary stage. General secondary education facilities are complemented by a teacher training institute, a technical school, a school of commerce and an institute of religious studies. A number of Qatari nationals are currently registered at higher education institutes abroad. Education allocations and expenditure indicate the importance given to education in Qatar.

Relations with the Arab World

Qatar has played a prominent and influential role in consolidating relations and promoting co-operation with Arab countries. It has repeatedly called for solidarity among Arab states in various fields as a means of realising the aims of the Arab struggle.

In pursuance of this stance, Qatar extends all possible aid to the PLO and the Palestinians. Active support has been given by Qatar to all activities aimed at promoting the development of the Gulf area. The Government has also fostered relations with Islamic countries and proffered financial aid to Islamic organisations and associations in different parts of the world.

KUWAIT

Kuwait lies at the head of the Arabian Gulf, bordering Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The area of Kuwait is 17,818 sq. km. including the Kuwaiti share of the Neutral Zone.

The territory of Kuwait is mainly flat desert with a few oases, and a low annual rainfall. There is little drinking water within the state, and supplies are largely distilled from sea water, and brought by pipeline from the Shatt Al-Arab. Kuwait's population has increased very rapidly in recent years, with an average annual increase of 10.0% which may

be deemed as the highest growth rate recorded in any independent country. The birth rate for the Kuwaiti population alone exceeded 50 per 1,000 in some recent years.

Political History

The foundation of the present Sabah ruling dynasty dates from about 1750, and the reign of Sheikh Mubarak from 1896 to 1915 marked the rise of Kuwait from an undefined status to an autonomous state. In June 1961 the United Kingdom and Kuwait terminated the 1899 agreement which had given the U.K. responsibility for the conduct of Kuwait's foreign policy, and Kuwait thereby became a fully independent state. The ruling Sheikh took the new title of Amir, and the state was granted membership to the Arab League. On May 14, 1963 Kuwait became the 111th member of the United Nations. In December 1961, for the first time in Kuwait's history, an election was held to elect 20 members of the Constituent Assembly. Parliamentary life in Kuwait was suspended in 1976, but was then resumed on February 23, 1981 and the Fifth National Assembly was inaugurated on March 9, 1981.

Oil and Economy

The rapid development of the oil industry in Kuwait since 1950, has had a dramatic impact on life in Kuwait. In 1976, Kuwait's oil output was the seventh largest in the world. The revenue from oil, estimated at U.S. \$16.000million for 1979, has brought to the area a prosperity unimaginable in 1950. An important part of the oil revenue has been spent on health, education, and other social services such as the distillation of drinking water from sea water, and as a result the standard of living in Kuwait is at present among the highest in the world. Most of the social services are free for both expatriates and Kuwaiti citizens, and it has been said that as a welfare state, Kuwait now has no parallel. In recent years the government has distributed some of its wealth to other parts of the Arab World by loans and grants. In

1933, the British Petroleum Company Ltd. and Gulf Oil Corporation, applied jointly to the Government of Kuwait for a concession to explore the territory. The two companies formed an operating unit called Kuwait Oil Company, and a concession was granted but with the onset of World War II exploration activities were delayed until 1945. By 1956 Kuwait's oil production had increased to 54 million tons and was then the largest in the Middle East. To handle this vast production a huge tanker port has been set up at Mina Al-Ahmadi, where there is also a refinery with a daily throughput capacity of 300,000 barrels. In November 1976 the Amir laid the foundation stone for the Kuwait Oil Company's Gas Project. It is one of the largest development projects undertaken by Kuwait and involves the construction of extensive facilities for gas utilisation.

The government has done much to foster the growth of other industries in order to diversify the economy and provide an alternative source of employment to oil. A petrochemical industries company was formed in 1963 to manufacture fertilizers, and in 1964, Kuwait Chemical Fertilizer Company was set up. An industrial area has been developed at Shuaiba, between Kuwait city and Ahmadi. With a new fertilizer plant, Kuwait now has a potential production capacity of 1.65 million tons/annum mainly in the form of urea and ammonia products.

Feasibility studies have been undertaken for a possible olefin complex, costing about U.S. \$500 million. Kuwait has favoured joint projects with Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. There are several factories in Kuwait supplying consumer requirements, such as processed food and soft drinks, and there is a flour mill company. The construction industry is of importance, owing to the vast amount of house and office building, as well as roads, power stations, schools and hospitals.

Agriculture and Fisheries in Kuwait

Owing to the present lack of water, little grain is grown and most of the food in Kuwait has to be imported. In 1977, the total cultivable area was estimated at 1,7000 dunums of which vegetables and crops ac-

counted for 6,000 dunums. However the government has done much to encourage animal husbandry, and there is an experimental farm of 90 acres owned by the government. In the private sector there is a growing poultry and dairy industry. The first phase of the Kuwait United Poultry Company project for egg farms and a feedmill was completed in August 1978. Fishing, on the other hand is of some importance, because Kuwait's territorial waters abound in sea creatures, notably shrimps. There were four fishing companies until they were amalgamated into Kuwait United Fisheries in 1972.

Education in Kuwait

A comprehensive system of compulsory education between the ages of 6-14 was introduced in 1966-67. The general policy of the government is to provide free education to all Kuwaiti citizens and expatriates. Pupils are also provided, free of cost, with food, textbooks, clothing, and medical treatment. There are also a commercial institute, an institute of technology, a health institute, a religious institute, and eleven institutes for handicapped children. Scholarships are granted to students to pursue courses abroad which are not offered by the University of Kuwait.

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