

The Gulf: The next generation

The intense competition for Gulf Arab leadership

Oxford Analytica Conference Call

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Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries agree on the need to check Iran's regional aspirations. They feel emboldened to do so by the open support of the Trump administration in Washington, which is reversing President Barack Obama's perceived abandonment of them in favour of Tehran. But the Gulf monarchies differ radically on how to achieve this goal -- pushing Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to open confrontation with Qatar and leaving Kuwait and Oman caught uncomfortably in the middle.

These divisions will be hard to resolve. Increased Gulf hostility towards Iran will fuel sectarian rivalry in the region, with impacts on conflicts from Syria to Yemen. The importance of economic ties with Iran to some Gulf Arab countries will make it even more difficult to hold a common line, challenging Saudi Arabia's traditional leadership of the region. At the same time, the Gulf Arab states face significant challenges in adjusting their economies against the day the oil runs out.

Who will emerge from this contest the more influential? Saudi Deputy Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman or Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed?

Will Qatar's Emir, Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, follow in his father's footsteps and take a more independent line over Iran and the Muslim Brotherhood, or will he surrender to force majeure with his country's food security and hard-won hosting of the 2022 FIFA World Cup at risk?

Join us on Tuesday, June 13 to put your questions about these issues and others on the changing geopolitics of the region to three of Oxford Analytica's expert advisors.

Chair

Paul Maidment, Director of Analysis and Managing Editor, Oxford Analytica

Paul Maidment joined Oxford Analytica in December 2014 as the Director of Analysis and Managing Editor of the Oxford Analytica Daily Brief.

He is an award-winning journalist who founded the New York-based digital editorial consultancy Bystander Media in 2010. A pioneer in combining digital and print journalism, he was previously Editor of Forbes.com and Executive Editor of Forbes, transforming a magazine website into the leading online destination for business, finance and up-scale lifestyle. Before joining Forbes in 2001, Paul was the founding Editor of the Financial Times' award-winning web site FT.com and Assistant Editor of the newspaper. His early career as an editor and foreign correspondent encompassed The Economist, the Asian Wall Street Journal and the BBC in the U.K. the U.S. and Asia — a depth of journalistic experience and breadth of media that gives him a unique perspective on the changes transforming publishing and the world economy. Paul was inducted into the Digital Hall of Fame in New York in 2010.

Panellists

Gerald Butt, Middle East Region Head, Oxford Analytica

A consultant on the politics and energy of the Middle East, Gerald born and brought up in the region. In the 1980s and 1990s he was the BBC Middle East correspondent, based in Beirut and then Jerusalem. Since then he has been editor of Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) and Middle East International (MEI). Gerald is the author of several books on the region and is a frequent contributor of analysis articles to BBC News Online and Petroleum Economist.

David Butter, Associate Fellow, Middle East & North Africa Programme, Chatham House

Analyst of politics, economics and business in the MENA region, David has been an associate fellow at Chatham House since August 2012. He was previously regional director for the Middle East at the Economist Intelligence Unit, and prior to that worked for MEED magazine, where he was editor between 2000 and 2002. Chatham House has published his two briefing papers on the Syrian economy, in 2015 and 2016.

Jane Kinninmont, Deputy Head, MENA, Chatham House

Jane is deputy head of the MENA programme at Chatham House, an independent not-for-profit policy research institute, and directs a research project examining future trends in the Gulf monarchies (Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, UAE and Qatar). Her areas of research also include political economy across the MENA region, the politics of Sunni-Shia sectarianism, gender issues, and Western policies towards the region in the context of an increasingly multipolar world. She was previously a MENA editor and economist at the Economist Intelligence Unit and Business Monitor International and retains a strong interest in business trends and investor perceptions of the region.