



GCC

Chair Report

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Gulf Cooperation Council

GCC VIMUN 2.0 Chair Report

“Should Iraq be included in the GCC?”

INTRODUCTION FROM THE SECRETARIAT

SECRETARY-GENERAL OF GCC - RAWAN ALANZI

Welcome delegates to VIMUN 2.0! My name is Rawan Alanzi, Secretary-General of this committee and it is my pleasure to be chairing you along with Abdulrahman and Murtaza. I am 16 years old, I am from Saudi Arabia and I have just completed my IGCSE courses and will be moving on to my A-Levels this fall. My MUN journey began in 7th grade, where I participated as a delegate for the first time, seven of which I was a delegate and two of which I was a chair. Since then, I have attended eight more MUN conferences making this conference my 9th MUN, and my second at VIMUN. My hobbies include volunteering, swimming, basketball and binge-watching movies. The GCC committee is a very interesting committee, and I am positive that you all will enjoy it and I can't wait to see you all debate! I'm looking forward to getting to know you all and share my love of MUN with you.

CHAIR - ABDULRAHMAN TAHA

Hello delegates! My name is Abdulrahman Taha and I am privileged to be co-chairing this committee alongside Rawan and Murtaza. I am 17 years old and I am from Saudi Arabia, going into my final year in school. I have been a part of my school's MUN club for 2 years and have attended a total of 12 conferences, 3 of which were as a chair and I am extremely honoured to be a part of this conference, making it my 4th time as a chair. I enjoy partaking in sports activities such as football and basketball, as well as reading books, playing video games, watching movies and T.V. shows, and spending time with my family and friends. This committee has a very interesting topic at hand and I am very excited to see you all share your ideas and debate them throughout the duration of this conference. I hope that you all will enjoy this conference as I have many times over as a delegate!

CHAIR - MURTAZA AKBARI

Hello everyone! My name is Murtaza Akbari and I am a Grade 12 high school student in Toronto, Canada. After spending half of my life growing up in Bahrain, I have had the unique opportunity to experience living in two countries with contrasting political views. I began my MUN journey three years ago as I had an interest in debating and I wanted to explore something new. Three years later, after attending nine MUN conferences, including the first VIMUN conference, I can confidently affirm that MUN offers so much more aside from politics. It provides delegates the opportunity to expand their knowledge in understanding social, economic and environmental issues impacting nations globally, and researching to understand these issues will benefit delegates academically as well. I enjoy taking part in a variety of sports, including biking, cricket and swimming. I am eager to meet all of you and hope that you all enjoy this conference as much as I did in the last one.

COMMITTEE INTRODUCTION

The Gulf Cooperation Council was established in 1981 with the purpose of uniting the Arabian states of the Persian Gulf, excluding Iraq: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman. The main language of the committee is Arabic. This Middle Eastern Alliance was formed to strengthen relations among its member countries and to promote cooperation among the country's citizens. The unity among members of the council and the citizens are based on their common objectives and their similar political and cultural identities, which lead back to their Arab and Islamic culture. Meetings in the council occur frequently and when in need as the objectives of the committee are:

1. Having coordination, integration, and interconnection among member states in all fields
2. Strengthening between member state citizens and people
3. Creating similar laws and regulations in fields such as economy, finance, trades, customs, administration, and education
4. Fostering scientific and technical in fields such as industry, mining agriculture, water, and animal resources
5. Establishing scientific research centres
6. Starting similar businesses by means of setting up joint ventures and encouraging cooperation of the public and private sector

The Structure of the GCC consists of the Supreme Council, the Ministerial Council, and the Secretariat General, which is located in Riyadh. The highest authority of the GCC is the Supreme Council, meetings in this council occur annually along with the chairperson and presidency. It is of high authority as it is responsible for determining the overall policy of the GCC and for ratifying recommendations presented to it by the Ministerial Council or the Secretariat General. The Ministerial Council draws up policies and makes recommendations on means of developing cooperation and coordination amongst the Member States in the economic, social and cultural spheres. The Secretariat General prepares reports, studies, accounts as well as budgets for the GCC. Emergency meetings in all councils can be organised by any two member states. Achievements of GCC include improving military forces amongst the Middle Eastern states and participating in ending the Iran-Iraq war.

TOPIC INTRODUCTION

Ever since the establishment of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) - on the 25th of May, 1981 - there has only ever been a total of 6 member states of the GCC; Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE, and Oman. This has not stopped other neighbouring countries to push for their inclusion in the GCC. Most notably Iraq has been fervent in becoming a part of the GCC, with Kuwait being a strong supporter.

Although being the only country bordering the Persian/Arabian Gulf that is not a member of the GCC, its lack of membership is cited to be due to its low-income economy, its vast Shia population, its republican political system, and its invasion of member state Kuwait during the Gulf War. Despite all this, Iraq is still pushing to be a part of the GCC, yet member nations are still concerned as to what Iraq can bring to the table when it comes to joining the GCC; how much will they be of sufficient support to the other member nations and can it even be trusted based on the recent events that has transpired in the country.

These are one of many questions that member nations of the GCC are stating, as to why Iraq should not join the GCC. This does not mean that Iraq does not hold strong relations with member states of the GCC, countries like Saudi Arabia and UAE are allied with Iraq, it is just their inclusion in the GCC that may not be as beneficial as it would seem, as mentioned by the reasons above.

Discussions are still continuing as to how Iraq can join the GCC and will Iraq be of any benefit to the GCC or will it bring harm to the GCC when it comes to trade and political relations. It may seem that this issue is simple and not that concerning, but in truth, it means the future of the unity of the GCC, as right now the GCC are at a crossroads when it comes to countries that are in support or against Qatar staying in the GCC, but that's another issue. This is why this issue is being heavily discussed by members of the GCC and is not being taken lightly.

HISTORY OF THE TOPIC

THE GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL

In 1968, Britain announced that it would leave the Gulf in 1971. This decision sent a wave of shock and panic across the region. Leaders in the gulf scrambled to search for a new and reliable economical and security infrastructure. This took several steps to accomplish and eventually ended in the formation of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) on May 25th, 1981, shortly after the eruption of the Iran-Iraq war. It was signed by the heads of six states (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait), and created unity among all members due to their common objectives and similar political and cultural identities. While Iraq is an Arab-speaking country with similar cultural identities, it differs in its political identity and holds a very insignificant portion of land bordering the Persian Gulf. It is for these reasons that Iraq was not considered to be in the GCC. While Iraq expressed interest in participating in the GCC, they did not object to their exclusion due to the council's support in their Iranian invasion, and Saudi Arabia's crucial role in putting an end to it.

THE IRAN-IRAQ WAR

Iraq invaded Iran on the 22nd September 1980, which significantly destabilized the region economically. The Iraqi leader at the time, Saddam Hussein, wanted to reassert his country's sovereignty over both banks of the Shatt al-Arab and seize control of the rich oil-producing Iranian region of Khuzestan. Hussein believed that the region rightfully belonged to Iraq due to the similarities in language and culture in the population of Khuzestan. He was also concerned by Iranian Revolution that had recently taken place, and was afraid that a similar event would occur among the Shia-majority population in Iraq. Therefore, Hussein decided to initiate the attack quickly, taking advantage of Iran's new government, the seizure of the US embassy in Tehran by Iranian militants, and the low morale within Iran's military. Hussein's forces managed to bog down 80-120km into Iran and capture several crucial cities; they were supported and openly financed by the GCC (mostly Saudi Arabia and Kuwait) due to their common animosity towards Iran.

However, the Iraqi forces faced unexpected resistance in 1981 from Iran's counterattacks, involving its revolutionary militia, which was used to bolster its regular armed forces. In late 1982, Iraq voluntarily withdrew its forces from Iran and began

seeking a peace deal. However, under the leadership of Ruhollah Khomeini, Iran continued its counterattack towards Iraq in retaliation. The two sides reached a stalemate once Iraqi troops had left Iranian soil, with both sides bombarding each other with missile attacks on opposing cities. This continued until August 20th, 1988, when Iran accepted a United Nations-mediated cease-fire that it had previously rejected, due to its deteriorating economy and recent Iraqi gains due to their coalition with Saudi Arabia. After the war, relations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq were arguably at their best in history.

THE GULF WAR

Ever since Kuwait declared independence in 1961, Iraqi governments have attempted to reclaim and annex Kuwait several times. After the Iran-Iraq war, Iraq was unable to pay over USD\$80 billion that had been borrowed to finance the war. This was also due to Kuwaiti overproduction of oil, which decreased oil revenue for Iraq. President Hussein found this as an opportunity for an offense against Kuwait. On August 2nd 1990, Iraq launched an invasion of Kuwait. Within two days, they were able to annex the entire country and gain control of 20% of the world's oil reserves. The UNSC unanimously denounced the invasion on the same day that it began, and demanded Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait. However, Hussein refused to comply with the UNSC's request, resulting in the beginning of the Gulf War.

Even when Iraq was invading Kuwait, King Fahd (the King of Saudi Arabia) did not immediately respond, in efforts to maintain diplomatic ties with Iraq. It was not until he felt threatened by the offense that they decided to react accordingly. Shortly after the annexation, the USA (under President George W. Bush) began sending troops and equipment to Saudi Arabia to protect it from an attack against Kuwait. This resulted in severe backlash from the Iraqi government, calling Mecca "an American hostage" and King Fahd "the traitor of the two holy mosques". Officials from the USA desperately engaged in peace talks with the Iraqi foreign minister in Geneva in efforts to solve the crisis peacefully. Eventually, the UNSC deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait expired on January 15th 1991.

On January 17th, the USA and its coalition launched a campaign of air strikes on locations in Iraq and Kuwait. This continued for several weeks, destroying Iraq's

defences. Iraq retaliated launching missiles at Israel and Saudi Arabia. This continued until February 24th, when the USA and its allies began its ground attack into Kuwait. By February 26th, the USA had asserted its dominance to the point where President Saddam Hussein announced that he will withdraw his troops from Kuwait. The next day, US and allied forces entered Kuwait City, the capital of the nation, and declared an end to the offensive combat operations against Iraq. Two days later on February 28th, Iraq announced that it will adhere to all UNSC resolutions regarding the conflict, putting the war to an end.

PRESENT RELATIONS BETWEEN IRAQ AND THE GCC

Understanding the two wars above is crucial in examining Iraq's historical relations with the GCC, and why it was not initially considered for it. Ever since Saddam Hussein was captured by US coalition forces, Iraq's relations between some countries have changed.

While still being strained, diplomatic ties between Iraq and Kuwait have greatly improved. In April 2007, a Kuwaiti lawmaker announced the reopening of Kuwait's embassy in Baghdad, which has been delayed ever since due to the unstable security situation in Iraq. Iraq, however, has an embassy in Kuwait.

Tensions between Iraq and Saudi Arabia heightened in the mid-2000s. The population of Shia Muslims was rapidly increasing in Iraq. This increased the threat of external Iranian for Saudi Arabia, and forced the Kingdom to weaken this influence by covertly supporting Al-Qaeda in Iraq in 2004. Iraq, as a result, has always supported Iran over Saudi Arabia as their stronger ally. The first signs of improvement in diplomatic ties between the two nations occurred in 2014, when Iraqi government appointed a part-time ambassador to fly between the two nations. Later that year, Iraq set up an embassy in Riyadh for the first time since the Gulf War. King Abdullah also attempted to improve relations by supporting a coalition to fight ISIS in Iraq. Nowadays, relations between both countries have improved greatly, with both leaders emphasizing the close historical, religious, ethnic, tribal, cultural and geographic ties with each other. In 2019, Saudi Arabia opened up its consulate in Baghdad, and donated USD\$767M to support exports and development projects in Iraq.

Iraq's relations with the other four member nations has also greatly improved- Oman slightly less than the others. After the fall of the Ba'ath regime, major economic opportunities with Iraq opened up for all countries in the Gulf.



KEY TERMS

1. Persian/Arabian Gulf

The Persian Gulf is a Mediterranean sea in Western Asia. The body of water is an extension of the Indian Ocean (Gulf of Oman) through the Strait of Hormuz and lies between Iran to the northeast and the Arabian Peninsula to the southwest. The Shatt al-Arab river delta forms the northwest shoreline.

2. The Peninsula Shield Force

The Peninsula Shield Force is the military arm of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). It is intended to deter, and respond to, military aggression against any of the GCC member countries: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates.

3. Absolute Monarchy

Absolute monarchy (or absolutism as doctrine) is a form of monarchy in which the monarch holds supreme autocratic authority, principally not being restricted by written laws, legislature, or customs. These are often hereditary monarchies.

4. Federal Monarchy

A federal monarchy is a federation of states with a single monarch as overall head of the federation, but also having lesser monarchs, or a republican system of government, in the various states joined to the federation.

5. Gulf War

A war that began in 1990 when Iraq invaded Kuwait and ended in 1991 when a coalition of countries led by the United States expelled the Iraqi army from Kuwait and destroyed much of Iraq's military capability. (also known as the Persian War)

6. Shatt al-Arab

A river that was historically the border between the two countries (Iran and Iraq)

7. Khūzestān

Khuzestan Province is one of the 31 provinces of Iran. It is in the southwest of the country, bordering Iraq and the Persian Gulf

8. Iraqi Baathist Government

Ba'athist Iraq, formally the Iraqi Republic, covers the history of Iraq between 1968 and 2003, during the period of the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party's rule. This period began with high economic growth and soaring prosperity, but ended with Iraq facing social, political, and economic stagnation.

9. Kuwaiti resistance movement

Kuwaitis founded a local armed resistance movement following the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait. Most of the Kuwaitis who were arrested, tortured, and executed during the occupation were civilians. The Kuwaiti resistance's casualty rate far exceeded that of the coalition military forces and Western hostages.^[40] The resistance predominantly consisted of ordinary citizens who lacked any form of training and supervision.

10. United Nations Security Council Resolution 660

United Nations Security Council resolution 660, adopted on 2 August 1990, after noting its alarm of the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, the Council condemned the invasion and demanded Iraq withdraw immediately and unconditionally to positions as they were on 1 August 1990.



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

The following questions will help you in your research about the topic:

1. Who are your assigned country's allies and enemies?
2. Should the opinions of the people of Iraq be taken into consideration when deciding if Iraq should join the GCC?
3. Does Iraq deserve to become part of the GCC?
4. How did the Gulf War impact the Middle East? And how was Iraq involved in the Gulf war?
5. What are some reasons that Iraq is not currently in the GCC?
6. How will Iraq benefit from joining the GCC and becoming an official member state?
7. What are the strategic dynamics of Iraq-GCC relations?
8. What are the countries that support Iraq becoming a member state of the GCC? And which countries don't?
9. How much can the GCC benefit from Iraq's inclusion? If not, how so?
10. To what length does the Gulf War affect Iraq's inclusion in the GCC

USEFUL RESOURCES

The following links will help you in your research about the topic:

1. <https://www.gcc-sg.org/en-us/CognitiveSources/DigitalLibrary/Lists/DigitalLibrary/The%20GCC%20Process%20and%20achievement/7161447306380.pdf>
2. https://mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Gulf_Cooperation_Council_MEA_Website.pdf
3. <https://www.gcc-sg.org/en-us/Pages/default.aspx>
4. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Gulf-Cooperation-Council>
5. <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/iransource/reflecting-on-the-iran-iraq-war-thirty-years-later/>
6. <https://www.kuna.net.kw/ArticleDetails.aspx?id=2664289&language=en#:~:text=One%20of%20the%20most%20prominent,UAE%20islands%2C%20supporting%20the%20Palestinian>
7. <https://mepc.org/journal/gcc-and-iraq>