



The Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington

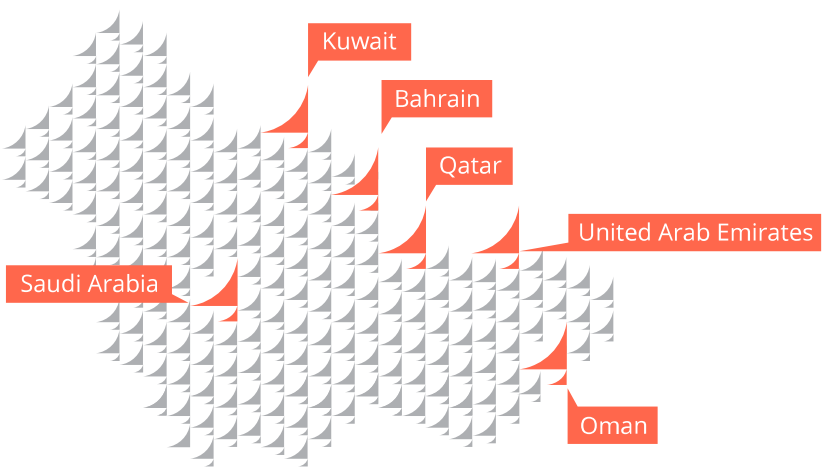
Building bridges of understanding

Annual Report 2019





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Letter from the Chair



A Message from AGSIW Board Chair Ambassador Frank G. Wisner

At this deeply troubling moment, with oil markets roiled and coronavirus spreading around the globe, it is instructive to recall that 2019 also offered its share of worrisome crises, even if they tended to be geopolitical rather than medical or economic. Here then, is a brief recap of the work that distinguished the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington in 2019.

Glancing back at both the volume and variety of AGSIW's 2019 programs and publications, I am reminded how events in the Gulf region commanded the world's attention, and how invaluable it is at these moments to have a dependable source of thoughtful, informed analysis.

As U.S.-Iranian tensions spilled over into the waters of the Gulf, and eventually onto the Arabian Peninsula itself, AGSIW kept pace with a series of events and written analysis that looked beyond the headlines to reveal not just the *what*, but the *why*. AGSIW's scholars and contributors peered behind the curtain of secrecy that surrounds Iran and provided unparalleled analysis of internal dynamics in the Islamic Republic. Likewise, as the world's attention turned toward the security of Gulf energy supplies, AGSIW explored the opportunity maritime security presents to defuse, rather than exacerbate, tensions.

While AGSIW monitored breaking events, it continued to examine long-term trends shaping the Gulf region, from the pace of economic diversification to the challenges posed to traditional energy producers by growing demands to address climate change. The dynamics of Gulf ruling families, the creativity of the region's youth, the complexity of its cities – AGSIW took the time to illuminate these issues because it understands how central they are to the future of the region, and how easily they can be overlooked in the rush of daily events.

This patient, thoughtful approach to the Gulf region is what distinguishes AGSIW and makes all of us who are fortunate enough to be associated with the institute so very proud. The work of AGSIW would not be possible without the support of the institute's donors, and to each of them, I extend my sincere thanks. As we look ahead to the coming year, we can be certain it will pose its own unique challenges, just as we can be confident that AGSIW will help us make sense of these events. I hope you will join us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Frank G. Wisner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Letter from the President



A Message from AGSIW President Ambassador Douglas A. Silliman

It is my great pleasure to share the 2019 Annual Report of the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington. This report highlights the institute's programs and publications that have continued to make our organization a sought-after resource that offers decision makers, corporate leaders, academics, and interested citizens innovative ideas and independent strategic insights into a region of increasing importance.

The Gulf Arab states faced multiple complex challenges in 2019, and their influence continued to extend well beyond the region's borders. As the premier source of nuanced, in-depth, and on-the-ground analysis on the Gulf, AGSIW addressed the evolution of the region with a record number of publications and programs covering the most salient issues. We covered political and security issues such as the conflict in Yemen, unrest and instability in Iraq, increasing Gulf influence in East Africa, and the repercussions of the Trump administration's "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran. We analyzed the key economic trends in the region, including oil and gas policy, the impact of China's Belt and Road Initiative, renewable energy, and the application of artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies. We shed light on key social issues, including youth movements in Oman, rapid social and cultural reform in Saudi Arabia, and trends reshaping the region's urban areas. As the institute approaches its fifth anniversary in 2020, I am very conscious that its fast growth and deep expertise would not have been possible without the support of our generous donors, our accomplished board of directors, our extraordinary staff, our network of non-resident fellows, and an informed and enthusiastic community of friends and colleagues.

If you have not done so already, I invite you to become an active member of our community. I look forward to welcoming you to AGSIW and urge you to read our insightful publications, participate in our live or virtual programs, or wander through the English or Arabic content on our website.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Silliman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

About

The Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington (AGSIW), launched in 2015, is an independent, nonprofit institution dedicated to providing expert research and analysis of the social, economic, and political dimensions of the Gulf Arab states and key neighboring countries and how they affect domestic and foreign policy. AGSIW focuses on issues ranging from politics and security to economics, trade, and business; from social dynamics to civil society and culture. Through programs, publications, and scholarly exchanges the institute seeks to encourage thoughtful debate and inform the U.S. foreign-policy, business, and academic communities regarding this critical geostrategic region.

Overall direction and supervision of AGSIW resides solely with the institute's **Board of Directors**.

Abdel Monem Said Aly, PhD, Founding Director and Honorary Chair; Chairman/CEO, Regional Center for Strategic Studies in Cairo

Ambassador Frank G. Wisner, Chair of the Board; Foreign Affairs Advisor, Squire Patton Boggs

Fatima Al-Shamsi, PhD, Vice Chair of the Board; Deputy Vice Chancellor of Administrative Affairs of Paris-Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi

Ambassador Douglas A. Silliman, President, Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington

Ambassador Marcelle M. Wahba, President Emeritus and Distinguished Fellow, Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington

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H.E. Yousef Al-Ebraheem, PhD, Chairman, Investcorp; Advisor, Diwan of the Emir of Kuwait

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Ambassador Edward W. Gnehm, Jr., Vice Dean, Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University

Nabil Habayeb, Chief Executive Officer, GE in the Middle East, North Africa, and Turkey

Fatima Al Jaber, Chief Operating Officer, Al Jaber Group, Abu Dhabi

Ebtesam Al-Ketbi, PhD, Founder and President, Emirates Policy Center, Abu Dhabi

Ibrahim Al-Muhanna, PhD, Founder, Saudi Energy Consultants

Ambassador Thomas Pickering, Vice Chairman, Hills & Company

George R. Salem, Strategic Advisor, DLA Piper

Khaled Sifri, Former Chief Executive Officer, Emirates Investment Bank

2019

By the Numbers

Events and Publications

Events	Event Attendees	Publications	Newsletter Subscribers
			
32	1,800+	138	4,000+

Topics Covered – Percentage



● Arts and Culture ● Environment ● Energy ● Security ● Economy ● Politics and Governance

Regional and International Security

Significant developments in U.S.-Iranian tensions, the ongoing conflict in Yemen, and Gulf power dynamics drove AGSIW's analysis of key trends in regional and international security.

UAE Security Forum 2019: Reshaping the Future of the Horn of Africa | Conference

On December 12, 2019, AGSIW held its fourth UAE Security Forum, "Reshaping the Future of the Horn of Africa." Convened in Abu Dhabi, the forum brought together a diverse group of policymakers, officials, researchers, and representatives from nongovernmental organizations to analyze the long-term implications of the renewed international interest in the Horn of Africa.

Political Succession in the Islamic Republic of Iran: The Rise of the Revolutionary Guards | Publication

Ali Alfoneh

This paper explores the political dynamics during the transitions in Iran in 1979 and 1989 which reveal a number of similar features that will play into who will succeed Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and the role the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps is playing in the factional power struggle.

Kuwait: Between Mediation and Maximum Pressure | Event

AGSIW hosted a conversation examining Kuwait's domestic political landscape and regional relations.

Dominance versus Disruption: Asymmetry in Gulf Security | Publication

DB Des Roches

This paper examines the defining characteristics of asymmetrical hostilities, in particular, the imbalance created when different security objectives – dominance or disruption – come into play.



(From left) Mina Al-Oraibi, editor in chief, The National; Ambassador Alexander Rondos, EU special representative for the Horn of Africa; Susan Stigant, director of Africa programs, United States Institute of Peace; and Abdul Mohammed, senior political advisor, African Union High Level Implementation Panel for Sudan and South Sudan, during the UAE Security Forum



(From left) Kristin Smith Diwan, AGSIW senior resident scholar; Abdullah K. Alshayji, professor, Kuwait University; Ambassador Deborah K. Jones, former U.S. ambassador to Libya and Kuwait; and Ambassador Susan L. Ziadeh, AGSIW non-resident fellow, during the panel "Kuwait: Between Mediation and Maximum Pressure"

An Assessment of U.S.-Saudi Relations with HRH Prince Turki Al Faisal Al Saud | Event

Al Saud provided his perspective on U.S.-Saudi relations and domestic and regional challenges facing the kingdom's leadership.

New Opportunities and High Stakes for Gulf-South Asia Relations | Publication

Robert Mogielnicki

The strategic implications of interregional engagement between the Gulf and South Asia are becoming clearer and more pronounced, as explained in this paper.

The Seas as the Next Frontier: Is Maritime Security in the Gulf a Flashpoint or Starting Point? | Event

This panel discussion focused on the issue of maritime security in the Gulf in light of attacks on oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz.

Civil Nuclear Energy in the Middle East: Demand, Parity, and Risk | Publication

Robert Mason and Gawdat Bahgat

This paper studies the security policy implications of civil nuclear programs in the Middle East.

Discussion with Mohammed Abulahoum | Event

At this roundtable, Mohammed Abulahoum, of Yemen's Justice and Building Party, discussed the November 2019 power-sharing agreement between the U.N.-recognized Yemeni government of President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi and the pro-secession Southern Transitional Council.



(From left) HRH Prince Turki Al Faisal Al Saud, former ambassador of Saudi Arabia to the United States; Ambassador Douglas A. Silliman, AGSIW president; and Ambassador Stephen A. Seche, AGSIW executive vice president



(From left) Emma Soubrier, AGSIW visiting scholar; Vice Admiral John W. Miller, consultant and policy advisor; Becca Wasser, senior policy analyst, RAND Corporation; and Nick Childs, senior fellow, International Institute for Strategic Studies, during the panel "The Seas as the Next Frontier: Is Maritime Security in the Gulf a Flashpoint or Starting Point?"

Gulf Societies in Transition

With aging leaderships and multiple Gulf societies simultaneously undergoing expansive restructuring, AGSIW analyzed generational shifts, government transitions, and the implications of these reforms across the region.

Bahrain's Royal Family Adjusts for the Future | Publication

Kristin Smith Diwan

The elevation of Bahrain's young prince, Nasser bin Hamad al-Khalifa, to national security advisor is the latest indication of maneuvers to secure the future hierarchy of the monarchy.

Sara Falaknaz: Committing to Service in the UAE's Federal National Council | Publication

Mohammad Al Yousef

As part of its *Millennial Gulf* blog highlighting youth initiatives in the region, AGSIW spoke with Sara Falaknaz about her visions and aspirations as one of the youngest elected members of the UAE Federal National Council.

Kuwait Shakes Up Its Government amid Charges of Corruption | Publication

Kristin Smith Diwan

On November 14, 2019, the government of Prime Minister Jaber al-Mubarak al-Sabah submitted its resignation to Kuwait's emir, provoked by pressure from the parliament.



Sara Falaknaz, left, profiled in AGSIW's *Millennial Gulf* blog, with UAE Vice President Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum in the UAE Federal National Council building in Abu Dhabi, November 14, 2019. (Photo via Sara's official Instagram account)



Kuwaiti Defense Minister and Deputy Prime Minister Nasser Sabah al-Ahmed al-Sabah speaks during a meeting in Beijing, China, December 17, 2018. (Wang Zhao via REUTERS)

Saudi Changes to Guardianship System Ease Restrictions on Women | Publication

Eman Alhussein

The regulations introduced to travel and civil status laws will limit the state's ability to intervene in the private sphere.

The Pope's Visit and Emirati Soft Power | Publication

Kristin Smith Diwan

Pope Francis' historic visit to the UAE, the first by the head of the Roman Catholic Church to the Arabian Peninsula, represents the most high-profile of a series of initiatives positioning the UAE as a champion of interfaith dialogue, moderation, and pluralism.

Taking Stock of the UAE's "Year of Tolerance" | Event

AGSIW hosted a roundtable discussion with H.E. Ali Rashid Al Nuaimi, chairman of Hedayah, the International Center of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism; Maqsoud Kruse, executive director of Hedayah; and Yousef Al Obaidli, director-general of the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque Center.

Ramadan Messaging and the Winds of Change | Publication

Michelle Cioffoletti

The Ramadan series "Al-Asouf" folds seamlessly into the current mainstream Saudi media narrative, as the country focuses on developing its homegrown industries and nationalist rhetoric.

Al-Moatasem al-Mamari: Institutionalizing Omani Youth Movements | Publication

Marwa Fakih

For *Millennial Gulf*, AGSIW spoke with al-Moatasem al-Mamari, a physician engaged with youth and media, about the development of youth movements in Oman.



Ali Rashid Al Nuaimi, chairman of Hedayah, the International Center of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism, left, and Ambassador Douglas A. Silliman, AGSIW president



Omani physician al-Moatasem al-Mamari, profiled in AGSIW's *Millennial Gulf* blog

Changing Economic Dynamics

AGSIW examined how, amid regional insecurity, fluctuating energy markets, and the expansion of new advanced technologies, Gulf Arab states have embarked on ambitious economic and technological transformations.

Roundtable with H.E. Fuad Hussein, Finance Minister, Iraq | Event

As part of AGSIW's *Iraq* series, Hussein explained the wider government effort to rebuild the country after the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.

China's Gulf Investments Reveal Regional Strategy | Publication

Jonathan Fulton

A unique pattern of provincial or regional consortiums from China are deeply engaged in marquee Belt and Road Initiative projects that are shaping the future of China's power in the Gulf.

Value-Added Tax in Gulf Arab States: Balancing Domestic, Regional, and International Interests | Publication

Robert Mogielnicki

This paper examines how, despite beginning as a regional policy, the VAT in the Gulf is becoming an increasingly country-focused initiative.

Aramco's Pickup of SABIC Suggests Diversification is Losing Steam | Publication

Robin Mills

The "back-to-basics" economic strategy now underway in the region represents a partial retreat, or at least a refocusing, from the ambitious diversification goals of past years.



Fuad Hussein, finance minister of Iraq, left, and Ambassador Douglas A. Silliman, AGSIW president



(From left) Samer Mosis, senior analyst, LNG, S&P Global Platts Analytics; Jean-François Seznec, nonresident senior fellow, Global Energy Center, Atlantic Council; Robert Mogielnicki, AGSIW resident scholar; and Rachel Ziemba, adjunct fellow, Center for a New American Security, during the panel "Money Matters: The State of Financial Markets in the Gulf"

Roundtable Discussion with H.E. Nayef Al-Hajraf, Minister of Finance of Kuwait | Event

Al-Hajraf discussed the challenges and opportunities in this era of economic reform with a focus on Kuwait Vision 2035.

Fiscal and Security Pressures Highlight, and Threaten, Oman's Unique Position in the Region | Publication

Robert Mogielnicki

As fiscal constraints increase, tensions in the Gulf rise, and uncertainties surrounding political transition loom, Oman's role in the Gulf Arab region could come under pressure.

Money Matters: The State of Financial Markets in the Gulf | Event

In this panel, speakers explored how modern financial mechanisms have acted as a buffer between Gulf societies at large and the newfound cash reserves of Gulf Arab states over the last 50 years.

Downstream Horizons: What is the Future for Economic Diversification in Gulf Arab States? | Event

This panel critically examined the current state of economic diversification initiatives in Gulf Arab states.

Course Correction Ahead for Gulf-Based Airlines | Publication

Colby Connelly

The model of the low-cost carrier has penetrated the Gulf region, and for the state-owned airlines Emirates, Etihad, and Qatar Airways, maintaining their positions as industry leaders will be contingent on the ability to cut costs where the competition cannot.



(From left) Kristin Smith Diwan, AGSIW senior resident scholar; Nayef Al-Hajraf, minister of finance of Kuwait; and Ambassador Marcelle M. Wahba, AGSIW president emeritus and distinguished fellow



(From left) Ziad Daoud, chief Middle East economist, Bloomberg Economics; Sona Varma, lead economist, Middle East and North Africa region, World Bank; and Robert Mogielnicki, AGSIW resident scholar, during the panel "Downstream Horizons: What is the Future for Economic Diversification in Gulf Arab States?"

Energy and Environment

With significant changes in oil production and demand as well as a push for a global transition to renewables and alternative energy sources, AGSIW examined how the oil and gas industry intersects with economic and political forces in the Gulf states as they navigate a new energy world.

Petro Diplomacy: Challenges to the Energy Transition in the Gulf Countries | Conference

In October 2019, AGSIW held its fifth annual Petro Diplomacy conference, exploring what measures the oil-producing states are adopting to manage the global transition to renewables and alternative energy sources and how this will impact demand for oil in the decades ahead.

Does Saudi Arabia Need OPEC? | Publication

Jim Krane

This paper examines potential incentives for a Saudi withdrawal or restructuring of OPEC, which comes amid challenges to the cartel and suggestions of changes to its long-standing practices.

Roundtable with H.E. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, UAE Minister of Climate Change and Environment | Event

Ahead of his participation at the United Nations 2019 Climate Action Summit, Al Zeyoudi discussed the various climate challenges facing the UAE and the region.

Aramco, Ministry Reshuffle Highlights Role of Oil Giant in Saudi Economic Transformation | Publication

Robin Mills

To be effective, Saudi Arabia needs to keep its oil sector healthy while invigorating the other value-creating parts of the economy.



Ambassador Douglas A. Silliman, AGSIW president, left, moderates the keynote session of the 2019 Petro Diplomacy conference with Ahmed Ali Attiga, CEO of Arab Petroleum Investments Corporation.



Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, UAE minister of climate change and environment, left, and Ambassador Stephen A. Seche, AGSIW executive vice president

Burning the Midnight Oil to Keep the Lights On | Publication

Kate Dourian

The Gulf is extremely vulnerable to climate change and the clock is ticking to keep the lights and air conditioners on without causing harm to its already fragile environment.

Climate Change and Economic Diversification in Saudi Arabia: Integrity, Challenges, and Opportunities | Publication

Aisha Al-Sarihi

This paper explores Saudi Arabia's long involvement in global climate change negotiations and its climate change governance at the domestic level.

Russia and the Gulf States: Pragmatic Energy Partners | Publication

Li-Chen Sim

The Gulf states have ceased to perceive Russia purely as an adversary, regarding Moscow today as a reliable international partner, but also a competitor.

Challenges to Maximizing Renewables in Oman's Energy Mix | Publication

Aisha Al-Sarihi and Hafiz Bello

For the Gulf Arab states, renewables could contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions while also supporting economic goals of meeting increasing domestic energy demand and creating jobs.

Iraq Looks Forward to Energy Independence | Publication

Kate Dourian

Iraq aims to grow its oil and gas production capacity to meet its domestic needs, but this will take time, a commodity the country can ill afford.



Vehicles are seen in a traffic jam, after a heavy rainstorm flooded roadways and streets, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, May 3, 2010. (AP Photo/Hassan Ammar)



Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister for Energy Affairs and Oil Minister Thamir Ghadhban speaks prior to the start of an OPEC meeting in Vienna, Austria, July 1, 2019. (AP Photo/Ronald Zak)

Arts and Culture

The prominence of arts and culture in the Gulf, as well as the key role they play in strengthening national identities, catalyzing social change, and supporting economic diversification efforts, drove AGSIW's analysis of cultural trends.

Cities and Belonging in the Gulf Arab States | Event

AGSIW hosted a panel discussion examining the growth of the modern Gulf Arab city.

Defying Transience: Urban Landscapes in the Gulf States | Publication

Yasser Elsheshtawy

The khaleeji city embraces the fleeting and transitory, yet amid this transience, migrants have attempted to create a home and set down roots.

Podcast Production in the Gulf Arab States | Publication Series

This series explores podcast content creation in the Gulf Arab states by looking at some of the podcasters active in the region. It captures both the potential and the challenges of this growing form of education, community building, and entertainment.

Storytelling in Today's Saudi Arabia | Publication

Sean Foley

The drama series “Al-Asouf” vividly captures the trend of telling Saudi stories with Saudi actors and its power in shaping the public’s perceptions and aspirations.



(From left) Sarah Moser, associate professor, McGill University; Yasser Elsheshtawy, AGSIW non-resident fellow; Farah Al-Nakib, assistant professor, California Polytechnic State University; and Kristin Smith Diwan, AGSIW senior resident scholar, during the panel “Cities and Belonging in the Gulf Arab States”



Students recording an episode for the podcast “al-Jabl,” hosted at Saudi Arabia’s King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals (Saud al-Badeea). AGSIW highlighted young podcasters in the region through the series “Podcast Production in the Gulf Arab States.”

The Restructuring of Saudi Arts and Entertainment | Publication

Michelle Cioffoletti

As part of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's economic and social reform plan, Vision 2030, the kingdom has taken a top-down approach to developing the country's arts and culture sector.

The Rise of Bidun Literature: Representation and Advocacy in Kuwait | Publication

Abrar Alshammari

A number of works about the situation of the biduns, or stateless people, have emerged from Kuwait's contemporary literary scene.

Change from the Bottom Up: Art, Society, and Southern Saudi Arabia | Event

In this presentation, Sean Foley, author of *Changing Saudi Arabia: Art, Culture, and Society in the Kingdom*, drew on his extensive research in Asir, Najran, and Jizan to trace the rise of the Saudi contemporary artistic movement.

Transforming Riyadh: A New Urban Paradigm? | Publication

Yasser Elsheshtawy

Through a series of megaprojects aimed at beautifying the city, Riyadh has the potential to offer a unique model of urbanity that can be a counterpoint to the more speculative trends pervasive in the region.

Saudi Arabia Sings a Nationalist Tune | Publication

Michelle Cioffoletti

Turki Al Sheikh, a larger-than-life figure in the crown prince's close inner circle, is leading a rise of nationalist music in the Saudi mainstream.



Alleyway in the Bur Dubai district of Dubai, highlighted in AGSIW's publication "Defying Transience: Urban Landscapes in the Gulf States"



Readers gather for a charity reading marathon at Takween bookstore in 360 Mall, Kuwait, highlighted in AGSIW's *Millennial Gulf* blog. (Khadeija Al Shammari)

Media and Outreach

Key highlights from AGSIW's appearances in prominent media outlets and U.S., Gulf, and international outreach in 2019

Geopolitical Headwinds Will Not Bring a 2019 Recession, Investcorp Head Says | The National

Mohammed Al Ardhi, AGSIW board member, discussed his views on the global economy, including U.S.-Chinese trade relations and Brexit, as well as Investcorp's planned expansion to India.

How Does Turkey's Offensive In Syria Fit Into Its Broader Agenda? | NPR

In an interview, Ambassador Douglas A. Silliman, AGSIW president, discussed Turkey's incursion into northern Syria and the implications for U.S. foreign policy.

Saudi Arabia, Trying to Lure Tourists, Hosts Music Festival Near Ancient Tombs | The New York Times

Hussein Ibish, AGSIW senior resident scholar, commented on the Saudi government's focus on tourism and entertainment at a time of increased Western scrutiny.

The Paradox of Saudi Arabia's Social Reforms | PBS Frontline

Kristin Smith Diwan, AGSIW senior resident scholar, discussed the impact of social and cultural reforms in Saudi Arabia.

Iran Protests | BBC

Robert Mogielnicki, AGSIW resident scholar, spoke about the economic dimensions of the protests in Iran and the impact of U.S. sanctions on the Iranian economy.

Crude Gets Squeezed in U.S.-Iran Standoff | The Wall Street Journal

Ali Alfoneh, AGSIW senior fellow, discussed the Iranian threat of disrupting the flow of oil to international markets.



Speaking with Al Arabiya, Ambassador Stephen A. Seche, AGSIW executive vice president, left, discussed U.S. General Anthony Zinni's resignation as U.S. special envoy working on the Gulf Cooperation Council dispute with Qatar.



For Yahoo Finance, Ali Alfoneh, AGSIW senior fellow, right, commented on tensions between the United States and Iran.

AGSIW Board of Directors Visit to Kuwait

AGSIW held its spring 2019 board of directors meeting in Kuwait and undertook two days of official engagements with senior Kuwaiti officials. Members of the board also spoke on a panel discussion at the Saud Al-Nasser Al-Sabah Kuwaiti Diplomatic Institute and had interviews with Kuwait TV and the daily newspaper Al-Jarida.

Roundtable with PartnersGlobal | Washington, DC

AGSIW co-hosted a discussion with PartnersGlobal on women candidates in Kuwait's elections with Kristin Smith Diwan, AGSIW senior resident scholar; Stephenie Foster, founding partner at Smash Strategies; and Leanah Al Awadhi, founder of Cross-Cultural Diwaniya.

Arabian Sights Film Festival | Washington, DC

AGSIW was pleased to sponsor the screening of the film "Rashid & Rajab" (United Arab Emirates) at the 2019 Arabian Sights Film Festival in Washington, DC.

Gulf Research Meeting | Cambridge, United Kingdom

At the Gulf Research Meeting, Kristin Smith Diwan, AGSIW senior resident scholar, presented a paper on transnational Islamic politics, and Robert Mogielnicki, AGSIW resident scholar, presented a paper on linkages between artificial intelligence innovation and free zone development processes in Dubai.

Middle East Studies Association | New Orleans, Louisiana

AGSIW participated in the 2019 Middle East Studies Association conference, where Emma Soubrier, AGSIW visiting scholar, presented her research on regional security issues on the panels "Rentierism and Power Dynamics in/of the Gulf Countries: Evolving Nexuses" and "The Gulf Regional Security Complex at 40."



Ambassador Frank G. Wisner, AGSIW board chair, left, meets with Marzouq Al-Ghanim, speaker of Kuwait's national assembly.



(From left) Hussein Ibish, AGSIW senior resident scholar; Ambassador Stephen A. Seche, AGSIW executive vice president; Ambassador Thomas Pickering, AGSIW board member; and Ambassador Marcelle M. Wahba, AGSIW president emeritus and distinguished fellow, led a panel discussion on U.S.-Gulf defense relations at the Global Offset and Countertrade Association conference.

Opening a New Year

AGSIW's **Iraq** series provides a unique opportunity to explain in even greater depth the impact of developments in Iraq and allows our sponsors intimate access to experts involved in informing and deciding policy in the United States, Iraq, and the Gulf.

Strategic Implications of Iraq's Multiple Crises | Event

In January 2020, AGSIW hosted a panel discussion examining the recent crises in Iraq and the fallout from the U.S. airstrike that killed Iran's Quds Force commander Major General Qassim Suleimani.

Discussion with Fareed Yasseen, Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq | Event

In February 2020, Fareed Yasseen, Iraqi ambassador to the United States, examined the future of U.S.-Iraqi relations after the killing of Suleimani.

AGSIW's **Next Gen Gulf** series explores how the latest trends in technology are shaping the economies and governments of Gulf Arab states, and identifies the associated opportunities and risks of the Gulf's digital transformation.

The Political Ramifications of the Gulf's Digital Transformation | Publication

Robert Mogielnicki

Gulf Arab states are striving to become tech-driven, knowledge economies, but the digital path ahead is bound to be bumpy.

Bahrain and Abu Dhabi Compete to be Gulf's Cryptocurrency Hub | Publication

Robert Mogielnicki

The heightened interest in cryptocurrencies across the Gulf is taking place alongside global efforts to both regulate digital assets and attract cryptocurrency firms.



Fareed Yasseen, Iraqi ambassador to the United States, left, and Ambassador Douglas A. Silliman, AGSIW president



A man uses an Ethereum cryptocurrency ATM, May 11, 2018. (AP Photo/Kin Cheung)

Since 2016, AGSIW has offered **Arabic translations**, as well as original Arabic contributions, on our website AGSIW.org, one of the few think tanks to offer this resource. In 2020, AGSIW plans to develop more Arabic content than ever before to expand engagement with our audience in the Gulf and the greater Middle East region.



Recognizing the importance of diversifying and expanding beyond traditional programs and publications to reach our audience in **new and creative formats**, AGSIW plans to offer more video interviews, audio content, dial-in briefings, and webinars in 2020.

Prospects for Negotiations and a United Yemen | Video

Ambassador Stephen A. Seche, AGSIW executive vice president, sat down with Mohammed Abulahoum from Yemen's Justice and Building Party to discuss the potential for a resolution to the conflict and a unified Yemeni state.

The Faceoff over U.S. Arms Sales to the Gulf: What Next? | Dial-In Briefing

DB Des Roches, AGSIW non-resident fellow, and Dana Stroul, senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, discussed congressional tensions over U.S. arms sales to the Gulf.



The Saudi Attacks and U.S. Engagement in the Region

AGSIW Board Members Bernard Haykel, left, and F. Gregory Gause, III discussed the September 2019 attacks on Saudi oil facilities and the future of U.S. engagement in the Middle East, in a video for AGSIW.



Tim Callen Mission Chief for Saudi Arabia, International Monetary Fund

In a video interview for AGSIW, Tim Callen, mission chief for Saudi Arabia at the International Monetary Fund, spoke about Saudi Arabia's economic reform agenda.

AGSIW Corporate Members



Human Energy®



Grants and Partnerships

AGSIW partnered with the following institutions in 2019 for programming and publications:

- Lockheed Martin
- The National (UAE)
- AmCham Dubai
- AmCham Abu Dhabi
- U.S.-UAE Business Council
- Smith Richardson Foundation

AGSIW extends a special thank you to the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates in Washington, DC for its important support of AGSIW's Arabic translation work.

Join AGSIW's Corporate Circle today

Membership in AGSIW's Corporate Circle provides unique access to exclusive programming and bespoke briefings on the major issues shaping the Gulf Arab states that have direct implications for U.S. political and commercial interests in the region. Members receive opportunities to attend invitation-only discussions with U.S. and Gulf policymakers and experts, and may request briefings with AGSIW scholars to dive deeper into areas of interest.

For more information, please contact Michela Roberts, development manager, at michela.roberts@agsiw.org.

Testimonials

AGSIW is a vital resource to its partners and stakeholders. Through programs and publications, and with its unique expertise and balanced perspective, AGSIW informs public, private, and academic thought and work in Washington, DC, and the Gulf.

“Since its inception, AGSIW has become an intellectual hub for the Gulf as a distinct geostrategic region. It came at a time of rapid regional growth and has provided significant insight into political, economic, and social developments in the Gulf.”

–Mohammed Baharoon, Director General, b’huth

“AGSIW has carved for itself a respectable place in Gulf studies and affairs in a record time.”

–Bader Al-Saif, Assistant Professor, Kuwait University

“AGSIW has a deep understanding of the social, economic, and political dynamics within the Gulf Arab states. The organization brings together a broad network of thought leaders to provide key insights on issues of relevance, which has proven significant for us and many of our stakeholders in the region.”

–Robert S. Harward, Chief Executive, Lockheed Martin Middle East



Nayef Al-Hajraf, minister of finance of Kuwait, center, discusses Kuwait Vision 2035 and its goal to transform Kuwait into an attractive financial and trade hub in the region.



Members of the audience at the 2019 UAE Security Forum in Abu Dhabi

Financial Information

Statement of Financial Position

As of year ended December 31, 2019

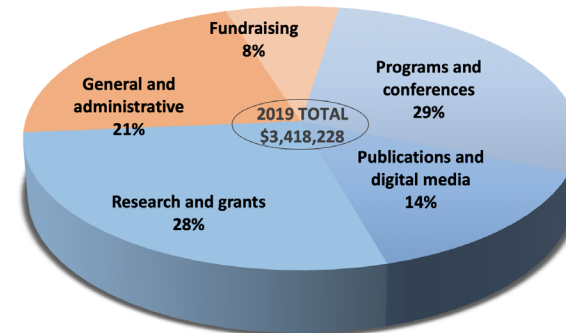
ASSETS	2019
Cash and short-term investments	\$ 3,430,248
Grants and accounts receivable	3,004,802
Property and equipment, net	283,470
Other assets	144,110
TOTAL ASSETS	6,862,630
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
LIABILITIES	
Accounts payable and accrued expenses	198,951
Deferred rent and other liabilities	136,592
TOTAL LIABILITIES	335,543
NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted	3,447,430
Temporary restricted	3,079,657
TOTAL NET ASSETS	6,527,087
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 6,862,630

Statement of Activities and Changes in Net Assets

For the year ended December 31, 2019

REVENUE	2019
Grants and contributions	\$ 3,211,229
Interest income	63,959
In-kind contributions	45,316
TOTAL REVENUE	3,320,504
EXPENSES	
Program services	2,432,007
Support services	986,221
TOTAL EXPENSES	3,418,228
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(97,724)
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF THE YEAR	6,598,385
NET ASSETS, AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2019	\$ 6,500,661

2019 Expenses by Function



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