

EURO-GULF MONITOR

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WEEK IN BRIEF

1. Kuwait named Mishaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as new Crown Prince.
2. Germany facilitated the first historic meeting between Foreign Ministers of the UAE and Israel.
3. Turkey's President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, met with Qatar's Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani in Doha.
4. Saudi Arabia resumes Umrah pilgrimages for 6,000 individuals per day, following a seven-month pause due to COVID-19.
5. Oman became the first Gulf country to reinstate its ambassador in Syria since the 2011 uprising.



ROUND & ABOUT THE GULF

KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN

Wednesday, 7 October–Bahrain and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding cooperation on information exchange on refugees and asylum seekers. The MoU was virtually inked by the Kingdom's Foreign Minister, Abdullatif bin Rashid Al-Zayani, and UNHCR Regional Representative, Khaled Khalifa.

STATE OF KUWAIT

Wednesday, 7 October–Kuwait's Emir Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah named Mishaal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah as Crown Prince, followed by a unanimous approval of the country's Cabinet. The new Crown Prince has been Deputy Head of Kuwait's National Guard since 2004. Addressing the nation, Crown Prince Meshal stated that Kuwait will remain committed to supporting regional peace, democratic approaches and tolerance.

SULTANATE OF OMAN

Monday, 5 October–Oman's Ministry of Energy and Minerals signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for oil exploration and production sharing with the Swedish company, Maha Energy. The energy firm will have the right to explore and produce in the 640-square-kilometre concession Block 70 as Oman seeks to find new oil fields and increase its oil production and reserves.

STATE OF QATAR

Tuesday, 6 October–Qatar will allow foreign citizens to own and use properties in more areas as it aims to attract more investments in the country. The Qatari state will also grant residency to the owners of at least a \$200,000 (USD) worth property and their families.

KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

Sunday, 4 October–Saudi Arabia resumed the Umrah pilgrimages, halted for seven months as a precautionary measure against the spread of COVID-19. Up to six thousands citizens and residents per day will be now allowed to carry out the pilgrimage.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Wednesday, 7 October–The Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO) signed an agreement with the Israel Export Institute (IEI) regarding bilateral trade and investment. The deal provisions bridging companies and strategic entities in the respective markets through industry delegations and the UAE-Israel joint events, increasing investment opportunities and resource access.



- Tuesday, 6 October–The EU Council removed Oman from the list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes as it has passed the required reforms to adjust its tax policies. The decision came as a result of the Sultanate’s establishment of information exchange mechanisms with EU member states and its ratification of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters.

KEY OFFICIAL VISITS

Saturday, 3 October–Qatar’s Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Affairs, Khalid bin Mohamed Al-Attiyah, received US Secretary of Defence, Mark Esper, in Doha amid unofficial reports that Qatar has sent a letter of request to the United States for acquiring the F-35 fighter jets.



- Monday, 5 October–Oman reinstated its Ambassador to Syria, becoming the first Gulf country to do so since the 2011 civil war. Sultanate’s Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador, Turki bin Mahmood Al-Busaidy, met with Syria’s Foreign minister, Walid Al-Moallem, to discuss ways to develop bilateral cooperation. In 2018 the UAE and Bahrain announced the resumption of their embassies’ activities in Syria but they have not appointed ambassadors to the country.

- Tuesday, 6 October–The UAE’s and Israel’s Foreign Ministers, Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan and Gabi Ashkenazi, held their first historic meeting in Berlin. They jointly visited the Holocaust Memorial along with Germany’s Foreign Minister, Heiko Maas. They later held a closed-door meeting to discuss cooperation in energy and industry and regional strategic issues. Minister Maas stated that Germany seeks to reinforce the new relationship between the two countries’ as part of its wider efforts. Abdullah bin Zayed underlined the UAE’s commitment to a two-state solution in the Israeli-Palestinian issue.



- Tuesday, 6 October–Qatar’s Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mohamed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, and the British Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, Dominic Raab discussed bilateral relations, investment opportunities and the Palestinian issue during a meeting in London.



- Tuesday, 6 October–Italy’s Ambassador to Bahrain, Paola Amadei, discussed investment opportunities in renewable energy sectors with Bahrain’s Sustainable Energy Authority (SEA)’s President, Abdul Hussain bin Ali Mirza. On the same day, Bahrain’s Ambassador to Italy, Nasser bin Mohammed Al-Balooshi, stated the Kingdom’s willingness to institute an Italian-Bahraini Business Council.



- Wednesday, 7 October–Turkey’s President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, visited Qatar and Kuwait. In Doha, President Erdogan held a closed-door meeting with Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani and later emphasised the importance of Turkish military presence in Qatar for peace and stability in the region. Erdogan continued to Kuwait to express his condolences to the new Emir, Nawaf al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, over the death of the late Emir Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah.



About the Euro-Gulf Monitor: The Arabian Gulf is rapidly becoming a geopolitical pivot. As a result, it is important to understand the internal and international dynamics unfolding in the region and the countries that compose it. The Euro-Gulf Monitor includes a small, carefully selected, batch of the most important news and events unfolding in the Arab Gulf countries to help you map the region’s trends and the dynamics of its relations with Europe, published weekly by the Euro-Gulf Information Centre.

