



The UK and Gulf: A 'New Chapter' in Partnership

*Dr. Dinoj K Upadhyay and Dr. F R Siddiqui **

Introduction

A new urge for enhancing the UK's partnership with the Gulf countries has been noticed in Prime Minister Theresa May's foreign policy orientation. Prime Minister May addressed the annual summit of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) on 7 December 2016; and stressed the importance to renew the UK's partnership with the region. The UK's foreign policy approach refers towards greater interactions in the realms of security as well as economic, as Prime Minister May categorically mentioned, "Gulf security is our security"¹ and 'your (Gulf) prosperity is our (UK) prosperity'.² She hoped that her visit would start a 'new chapter'³ in the UK-Gulf relationship. Prevailing indigenous and exogenous factors in the UK as well as GCC nations have created new openings in their partnerships. Financial crisis has implications for social well-being in Europe. Contemporary strategic dynamics of the Gulf region is far more complicated. Politically, parts of the Middle East region are in a state of turmoil. Chaos persists in Iraq. Syrian crisis is likely to prolong. The region has been witnessing not only shift in role of regional actors, but also change in policy of global powers. Russia has increased its military footprints through the Syrian crisis. It has successfully thwarted the western resolutions in the UNSC against the Assad government in Syria. Iran is emboldened by the nuclear deal. European countries have shown their interests in engaging economically with Iran after the nuclear deal. Political instability and war in the Middle East have posed security threats to European countries. Threats of international terrorism have further increased. Terror attacks in European cities have increased not only a sense of fear, but also caused severe social and political challenges. Increase in crime against migrants has been registered and far-right parties have enlarged their electoral base. Turbulence in the Middle East, inflow of migrants and consequently, social polarization has put European governments in difficult situation.

Before Prime Minister May, David Cameron, the then Prime Minister of the UK, was also keen in expanding security and commercial ties with Gulf region. The 'Gulf Initiative' was launched in 2010 with obvious objective of prioritizing relations with the Gulf countries. The UK has observed the political and social changes after Arab Spring. Since the Obama administration avoided heavy military deployment and new President Donald Trump seems to be reluctant on heavy military engagement with region. British allies in the Gulf seek its support in addressing the security challenges.⁴ British Prime Minister Theresa May now amply indicated towards increasing British role in the Gulf region. The British government released its first annual report on the National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015 in December 2016. The annual report pointed out that the British government planned to increase the military presence in the Gulf as well as Eastern Europe. In this broader geo-political context, the paper aims to analyze emerging trends in the UK's policy and prospective relations with the Gulf region.

Brief Historical Overview of the UK-Gulf Relations

The UK has a long history of strategic engagement with the Gulf. The Gulf was a security bulwark for the UK against its perceived enemies during the colonial era. The region assumed greater importance for expanding British Empire in the protection of commercial interest as well as trading networks. Considering geo-strategic and geo-economic importance of the region, the entire GCC nations became the protectorate of the British Empire in the 19th and 20th centuries, ceding their sovereignty over foreign affairs in lieu of being ensured security to them. For almost one hundred and fifty years (1820-1971), Britain was dominant and the nature of the dominance evolved from economic influence to political control. The control was largely confined to Arabian side of the Gulf.

As the British control over India deepened through the establishment of the East India Company, which gradually enhanced the security concern of the Empire in the region. Subsequently, the Gulf's security for the smooth flow of trade to and from India became a major concern for the empire and direct involvement in the Gulf on the part of UK was a natural outcome. Earlier phase of British involvement was largely driven by its concern to protect economic interests, later it morphed into direct political control over the region militarily with the objective of dissuading rival imperial powers. In order to enhance its control over the region, British navy had to enter into many battle with locals whom they referred as 'pirate' and finally they entered into a treaty in 1820 known as "General Maritime Treaty" with Arab tribes, number of Sheikhs including those of Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Ajman and Umm al-Quwain.⁵

To preserve the treaty, they developed good relationship with the local rulers, which paved the way for future foundation of close ties with the region. The treaty of 1820 and many subsequent treaties deepened the role of the UK in the Gulf region which almost put the security and foreign relationship of the Gulf rulers under the control of the Empire bringing an era of Pax-Britannica.⁶ It was not merely in the interest of the Britain to strengthen its hold in the region, but the local Sheikhs and rulers also had their interest in their strategic presence and required the biggest power of the time to preserve their throne and secure the territories. The discovery of oil

in early 20th century had accorded a new geostrategic significance to the region on its own and its relevance for the UK was no more hostages to its stake in Indian empire or its importance no longer related to its proximity to India. Immediately after the discovery of oil, the Britain had extracted assurance from Gulf rulers that they would not give oil concession to companies other than approved by them. Gradually they became interested in giving oil concession to the companies owned by Britons. Economic prosperity and rising wealth of Gulf rulers changed the dynamics when the UK was keen to attract investment.⁷

By the early 20th century, the UK had become an uncontested Western power in the entire Gulf region. Global political scenario changed after the World War II, subsequently, weakness of the British Empire was visible. The British control began to lose its dominance in the Gulf like in other parts of the world. After World War II, the role of UK as a security provider was completely overshadowed by the rise of the US, which took over the responsibility of protecting regimes as well as oil and natural wealth.⁸

The Gulf region had always mattered to the UK and it is well reflected in Bahrain which remained the protectorate of the UK till 1971 and even today it enjoys a greater level of influence. Even after withdrawal from the region, the UK has played a very important role of advisors in the security sphere both for Saudi Arabia and Bahrain. The relationship between the two is not merely confined to the historical sphere but there are closed economic and defense ties. It was argued despite military disengagement in 1971, the UK's withdrawal from the region was never absolute.⁹ It has maintained influential advisory position in foreign policy establishment of the Gulf nations. The UK has been the major arms supplier to these countries. With defense agreements, rotation of training, transit and military exercises, the UK maintained its presence in the region.¹⁰ The UK has a defense cooperation arrangement with the GCC. British Royal Navy and Royal Air Force have always been based in the Gulf.¹¹

Current Strategic Dynamics in GCC

Both the GCC and the UK have a strong history of utilizing all the means at their disposal to secure and preserve their core interest in the region. Today, an unprecedented level of desire in the GCC nations to involve the UK in a multiple ways emanates from the newly found threat perception and emerging new security dynamics after the socio-political turmoil. The turmoil has completely disturbed political and strategic status quo in the region. The GCC is seeking a new level of commitment on the part of the UK to deter the exogenous threat originating from the rise of new hegemonic ambition of Iran following the nuclear deal. The GCC nations seem to be worried over the growing stances of intervention of Iran in their internal affairs. An assertive Russian role in the regional quagmire has become a major source of worry for the Gulf nations. Russia has developed new level of synergy with Iran on the regional issues. The GCC governments are apprehensive about the growing Iran-Russia alliance. They perceive that it may prove to be a harmful proposition for immediate and long-term stability in the region.

Apart from other major powers like Turkey and Egypt, several non-state actors are squabbling among themselves. These non-state actors with support of the regional powers pose a threat to survival of GCC governments. The UK and GCC are already in the process of holding conversation on Working Group on terrorism and border security to follow up on series of previous efforts.¹² Both sides will also work through national security dialogue and Working Group on Counter Terrorism to tackle those elements engaged in terrorist activities.¹³

GCC's new desire for deeper strategic relationship with the UK is also a reflective of its intended objective of not allowing Iran to take the lead in the region in the war against terrorism. The GCC governments, in particular Saudi Arabia, would not like to see Iran to sway the region in the name of fighting terrorism. Meanwhile, the GCC would like to have full cooperation of the UK in post-IS Iraq and perhaps post-Assad Syria fearing the fact that any laxity on its part would allow Iran to trample the newly emerging political and strategic sphere for their benefits. The GCC nations also want the full cooperation of the UK in the ongoing crisis in Yemen and Libya, where both sides have already convergence of views on the many complex issues.

The UK: Greater Security Engagement

Prevailing complex security and political scenarios have drawn an enhanced role of the UK in the Gulf. Although the UK has always been a major player in security of Gulf, its role has been increasing in the recent past. In its 'Gulf initiative' 2010, the UK sought to reenergize its military and commercial engagements with the GCC nations. It has entered into defense agreements, training and arms sales agreements, etc. The Gulf countries were often accused of violations of human rights, but then Prime Minister Cameron defended defence deals.¹⁴ A Defense Cooperation Accord between UAE and the UK was signed in 1996, before David Cameron came to power, which sets out arrangements for security cooperation. The defense agreement represents Britain's largest defense commitment outside NATO. But, it is now argued that Tony Blair government as well as Gordon Brown government ignored the defense cooperation with the Emirates. Both countries also signed a MoU in 2009, which covered arrangements for UK forces to utilize air bases in the UAE, including some sustainment flights to Afghanistan. Here it needs to be highlighted that the UAE was the only country, which deployed soldiers in full-scale operations in Afghanistan in support of NATO's Operation Enduring Freedom.¹⁵

In the recent past, the UK and Gulf nations have concluded defense agreements which have strategic significance. The UK has, for instance, signed defence agreement with Bahrain in 2014, which would improve onshore facilities at the Bahrain Defence Force Mina Salman Port in Bahrain, where the UK has four mine-hunter warships permanently based. It supports British destroyers and frigates in the Gulf. The UK planned to bolster the existing facilities at the port for providing its navy with a forward operating base and a place to plan, store equipment for naval operations and accommodate navy personnel.¹⁶ The military base has been inaugurated in November 2016. The royal navy facility has the capacity to house up to 600 UK military personnel. The al-Minhad airbase has used for flying troops in and out of Afghanistan.¹⁷

The UK has signed a MoU with Oman in March 2016 to strengthen security ties. The MoU aims to increase the frequency of joint military exercises in Oman, and military training.¹⁸ The UK has also stepped up security ties with Qatar. Defense Secretary Michael Fallon met Qatar's Minister for Defence Affairs Khalid Bin Mohammed Al Attiyah in July 2016 in London and assured cooperation in tackling terrorism and joint training between the two countries.¹⁹

Defense cooperation with Saudi Arabia, particularly sales of defence and security equipments, is recognized as 'significant', but 'controversial'. Saudi Arabia is one of the British defense industry's largest markets. Nevertheless, the UK has repeatedly ignored the criticism of human rights violations in order to advance strategic and commercial interests.

The National Security Strategy report published in 2009 considered international terrorism as the major threat to UK security. The national strategy noted that international environment had changed after the Cold War and it was focused on non-conventional threats.²⁰ The threat of international terrorism emanating from the Middle East is noted in the National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015 released in December 2016. It noted that traditional state based security is also a threat to the nation. The annual review report of National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015 calls for the UK to undertake plans for more permanent and substantial military presence in the Gulf. The report states that it is investing in infrastructure, including Mina-Salman Naval Base in Bahrain, Minhad airbase in the United Arab Emirates, and Duqm port in Oman. It has increased short-term training missions across the region. More than 30 bilateral or multilateral exercises that develop regional and UK interoperability and nearly 400 individual training places on defence courses in the UK in 2016.²¹

In her address to the GCC Summit, Prime Minister Theresa May said that Britain wanted to 'make a more permanent and more enduring commitment to the long-term security of the Gulf.'²² The UK would increase defence spending and invest more than three billion pounds in the region.²³ Soon after May's visit to the region, it was announced that the new regional British Defense Staff (BDS) would be established in the Gulf, Asia Pacific and West Africa to provide greater focus for the UK's Defense efforts in these regions. The BDS would work with international partners to protect and advance the UK's interests by reinforcing bilateral and multilateral defense and security relationships. The BDS will be based in the Gulf in general, and in Dubai in particular. In the Gulf this builds on permanent presence and strengthening engagement with the GCC countries.²⁴

Containing Iran

The UK played a major role in conclusion of nuclear deal with Iran in July 2015. It showed its commitments for peaceful settlement of nuclear programme. After the nuclear deal, the UK and Iran have taken initiatives to improve their bilateral relations. The UK has reopened its embassy in Tehran which it closed down in 2011. The UK encourages business with Iran. Sanctions against Iran were lifted, however, some sanctions are still in place those related to human rights, nuclear

proliferation and Iran's support for terrorism remain in place.²⁵ Nevertheless, Iranian role in the region is a matter of concern for GCC countries. In her speech, Prime Minister May stated, "so I want to assure you that I am clear-eyed about the threat that Iran poses to the Gulf and the wider Middle East; and the UK is fully committed to our strategic partnership with the Gulf and working with you to counter that threat"²⁶ Iran was quick to respond to the statement of Prime Minister May. Iran's Supreme Guide and spiritual leader Ali Khamenei said that the UK had the plan to destabilize the region and its behavior was a threat to Iran's security. He called Britain an imperialist power and a historical enemy of Iran.²⁷ Ali Khamenei believes that Britain has come to the region through its presence in the Gulf water and unnecessarily trying to destabilize it.

Prime Minister May accused Iran of sending fighters to Syria to support the Assad government, supporting the Houthi rebel movement in Yemen and undermining stability in Lebanon and Iraq. Iran has already made it clear that it would continue to support any nation which stands against Israel. In a statement, the advisor to Iran's President on Minority Affairs, Ali Yunusi said that Iran was prepared to extend all support to any nation, which stands against Israel and any nation, which has malicious design against the country.²⁸

Iran has theological difference and competition for regional dominance with Saudi Arabia. Iran and Saudi have competing ethno-national and religious identities. Secondly, both claim their influence over Persian Gulf and Middle East. Iran believes that it is a 'natural state' and its claim over the influence historical. Other states in Middle East were created at the whim of colonial masters.²⁹ Iran supports the Assad government in Syria, Hizballah in Lebanon, Shia groups in Iraq, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. Both countries take opposite positions on regional issues and conflicts. Here it would be pertinent to state that Iran's relations with Saudi Arabia have not always been tense and hostile. However, after the Arab Spring, rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia is rising in order to influence regional political dynamics.³⁰ Regional responses to the nuclear deal with Iran were mixed. Israel criticized the deal. Saudi Arabia, though seemingly supported but expressed concerns over the possible outcome of the nuclear deal and the regional activities of Iran. The Obama administration believes that any move to revisit the Nuclear Deal would spark an international outcry, isolating the US from its allies. US allies including France, Germany and the UK would not be keen to revise the nuclear deal. The US will find France, Germany and the UK will prove harder to convince. Saudi Arabia's halfhearted support to deal is only due to Western pressure.³¹

Defence cooperation with the UK is inter-alia intended to provide assurance to GCC countries against the increased regional activities of Iran. The UK considers that the nuclear deal with Iran is important, as Prime Minister May has argued that the deal has 'neutralised' Iran nuclear weapons potential.³² However, the UK would work with GCC countries to contain Iran's aggressive regional activities. The UK has also criticized Russia's role in the Syrian crisis. The UK Foreign Office Minister Alan Duncan stated that Russia has been "a very malign influence" while leading the Syrian peace initiative involving Iran and Turkey. He further added that that he was not convinced Moscow wanted to solve the crisis.³³ Russia along with Iran and Turkey is making

diplomatic efforts broker peace between the rebels and Assad government. The Western powers including the UK are not supportive of Russian peace negotiation initiatives.

Improving Economic Engagement

The UK is expecting tough negotiations with the EU in defining post-Brexit relations. With a tough stand on immigration, how Theresa May government would seal the deal with EU, is unclear. European leaders often said that free movement of people is fundamental principle of the EU and access to single market is related to free movement of people. The UK maintained that net migration has reached to an unsustainable level³⁴, thus, it would control immigration to tens of thousands. Nevertheless, it could not able to reduce immigration in two subsequent years. Prime Minister May - known to be tough on immigration - would face hard bargain from her European counterparts. The EU has registered moderate growth and yet to recover from the financial crisis. State of economy is not good in some member states and unemployment is high. Europe is its largest trade partner, and substantial numbers of jobs are generated by their economic linkages. Considering the uncertainty and difficulty on the European front, arguments appear to look towards viable alternative. The UK has been making serious attempts to explore avenues for expanding the cooperation with emerging markets and traditional economic allies. Prime Minister May has equally emphasized on economic engagement with the Gulf region. She desired to 'pave the way for an ambitious trade arrangement' after Brexit.³⁵

The Gulf region offers potentials for enhancing trade opportunities. An assessment of the current relations with GCC countries reflects that the UK is moving towards strengthening trade ties. The UK has substantial trade and investment linkages. Currently, the UAE is the largest civil export market of the UK in the region. It ranks 12th biggest export destination globally in 2013. The total bilateral trade in goods and services accounted for £12.4 billion in 2013. Both countries are targeting £25 billion annual trade by 2020.³⁶ Secondly, Saudi Arabia is a major trade partner of the UK in the Gulf. The UK exported £7.34 billion of goods and services in 2015. Other Gulf countries do not figure in the list of 25 top trade partners of the UK. The UK's exports to Qatar account for £2.6 billion in 2015. The UK-Bahrain total trade was US\$ 419 million, the UK's exports were US\$ 340 million and Bahrain exports is US\$ 79 million in 2014. Gulf countries are substantially involved in real estate market of Britain. They were concerned about a sense of uncertainty in Brexit scenario. It was speculated that real estate sector might slump after Brexit. Sovereign and private investors from Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE have been buyers of assets. They are heavily involved in London real estate business.³⁷

The UK and Gulf now desire to focus on the post-Brexit development and shaping wider economic partnership. It was reported that the UK Foreign Office had identified £30 billion worth of opportunities for British business in the region over the next five years. Qatar and Kuwait have initiated huge infrastructure projects. UK business groups would be interested in infrastructure building and modernization projects. The Qatar National Vision 2030 aims to establish an advanced society, which provides sustaining its development and a high standard of living for everyone. The country will host FIFA World Cup in 2022. Thus, it will be upgrading its

infrastructure including the development of its first underground and light rail system, an inter-Gulf rail network, major road construction and the provision of thousands of extra hotel rooms, not to mention eight FIFA-compliant stadia and 70 associated training grounds and facilities.³⁸ The UK claims to have extensive experience in organizing sports events, is keen to share its experience with Qatar. Saudi Arabia has made large investments in new transport systems and social and physical infrastructure, particularly in healthcare and education. Economic and infrastructure projects would provide business and investment opportunities for the UK. The GCC nations have huge sovereign funds. They can be crucial sources of capital. Qatar has made huge investment in real estate sector of the UK. It has made other high profile investment in buying property and financial institutions. With more than \$100 billion of assets, the Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) is looking for more investment opportunities.

Conclusion

The Gulf region is crucial for security and trade for the UK. Political instability and chaos in the region would undermine the security of the European continent. Prime Minister May is likely to assure Gulf countries an enhanced role of the UK in fighting extremism and playing a greater role in security of the region. While supporting the nuclear deal with Iran for ensuring peace in the region, she warned Tehran of its regional activities. Policy initiatives reflect that the UK has long-term defense cooperation with GCC and is likely to play a significant role, if the US reduces its security engagement. The UK has promised to increase its defense spending in the region. Regional competition will continue and Iran and Saudi Arabia compete for regional dominance. The nuclear deal has emboldened Iran, the UK has stepped up to contain Iranian effort in quest for regional dominance. New US President Donald Trump does not have a positive opinion on the deal. Nevertheless, the UK along with other European countries would not wish the nuclear deal to be revisited but the UK and the US may, however, make diplomatic efforts to isolate Iran.

Economic relations with the Gulf are equally important for the UK. The UK is exploring avenues for economic cooperation with rich nations and emerging economies. The Gulf is the region of energy resources and capital and new demand, and the UK already shares substantial economic linkages in terms of trade and investment with the region. Prime Minister May has promised to expand trade and investment opportunities. Business leaders must have eye on ambitious infrastructure projects, mega sports events and national development programmes. They have potential to boost the economic ties.

Maintaining an extensive security and economic engagement seems to fit into the emerging global order. If the US is reluctant to sustain its security umbrella in the Middle East and Russia along with Iran continue to increase this influence, it would have potential to deteriorate Western influence in the region. The UK would step in to the extent it can.

* Dr. Dinoj K Upadhyay and Dr. F R Siddiqui are Research Fellow with the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi.

Disclaimer: Views expressed are of authors and do not reflect the views of the Council.

End Notes

¹ Prime Minister's Speech to the Gulf Co-operation Council 2016, December 7, 2016, Gulf Co-operation Council, Manama, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-speech-to-the-gulf-co-operation-council-2016> (Accessed on December 10, 2016).

² Prime Minister's Speech to the Gulf Co-operation Council 2016.

³ Press Release, Prime Minister Seeks New Chapter in Relations with the Gulf on Visit to Bahrain, Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street and The Rt Hon Theresa May, December 4, 2016, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-seeks-new-chapter-in-relations-with-the-gulf-on-visit-to-bahrain> (Accessed on December 9, 2016)

⁴ Simon Mayall, "Our Allies in the Gulf Feel Let Down by Britain," *the Telegraph*, April 25, 2016, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/04/26/our-allies-in-the-gulf-feel-let-down-by-britain/> (Accessed on December 10, 2016).

⁵ Kouros Ahmadi, *Islands and the International Politics in the Persian Gulf*, London: Rutledge, 2008, p. 9.

⁶ Louis Allday, "The British in Gulf: An Overview," Qatar Digital Library, <http://www.qdl.qa/en/british-gulf-overview> (Accessed on January 12, 2017)

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Michael T Kiare, "The Carter Doctrine Goes Global," *Progressive Magazine*, December 2004 http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Oil_watch/Carter_Doctrine_Global_Oil.html (Accessed on January 14, 2017)

⁹ Gareth Stansfield and Saul Kelly, "A Return to East of Suez? UK Military Deployment to the Gulf," *Briefing Paper*, RUSI, April, 2013.

¹⁰ Michael Clarke, Foreword, in Gareth Stansfield and Saul Kelly, "A Return to East of Suez? UK Military Deployment to the Gulf", *Briefing Paper*, RUSI, April, 2013.

¹¹ "Broader Context: UK Ties With the Gulf," *Foreign Affairs Committee*, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmfaff/88/8806.htm> (Accessed on January 14, 2017)

¹² Policy Paper, GCC-UK First Summit 6 to 7 December 2016: Joint Communiqué. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gulf-co-operation-council-united-kingdom-first-summit-joint-communication-council-united-kingdom-first-summit-6-to-7-december-2016-kingdom-of-bahrain-joint-communication> (Accessed on 16 January, 2017)

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ "David Cameron Defends Arms Deals with Gulf States," *The Telegraph*, November 5, 2012, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/industry/defence/9656393/David-Cameron-defends-arms-deals-with-Gulf-states.html> (Accessed on January 5, 2017).

¹⁵ Embassy of the United Arab Emirates, "UK-UAE Relations," <http://www.uae-embassy.ae/Embassies/uk/Content/570> (Accessed on December 20, 2016).

¹⁶ "UK-Bahrain Sign Landmark Defence Agreement," Gov.UK, December 5, 2014, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-bahrain-sign-landmark-defence-agreement> (Accessed on December 20, 2016).

¹⁷ Keith Perry, "UK Forces Plan Three New Bases in Middle East to Fight ISIS," *The Telegraph*, September 9, 2014, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iraq/11086118/UK-forces-plan-three-new-bases-in-Middle-East-to-fight-Isis.html> (Accessed on December 13, 2016).

¹⁸ "Oman Strengthens Defence Ties With UK," *Middle East Monitor*, October 13, 2016, <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20161013-oman-strengthens-defence-ties-with-uk/> (Accessed on December 10, 2016).

¹⁹ "Defence Secretary Discusses Tackling Terrorism with Qatar," Gov.UK, July 15, 2016, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/defence-secretary-discusses-tackling-terrorism-with-qatar> (Accessed on December 10, 2016).

²⁰ The National Security Strategy of the United Kingdom: Update 2009: Security for the Next Generation, Cabinet Office, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/229001/7590.pdf (Accessed on 5 January 2017)

²¹ National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015, First Annual Report 2016, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/575378/national_security_strategy_strategic_defence_security_review_annual_report_2016.pdf, p. 22, (Accessed on 5 January 2017)

²² Prime Minister's Speech to the Gulf Co-operation Council 2016.

²³ “Britain to Deepen Security Cooperation with the GCC,” *Aljazeera*, December 7, 2016, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/12/britain-deepen-security-cooperation-gcc-161207102311180.html> (Accessed on December 8, 2016).

²⁴ “Britain Extends Global Defence Reach,” *Ministry of Defence*, the UK, December 12, 2016, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/britain-extends-global-defence-reach> (Accessed on December 15, 2016).

²⁵ “Embargoes and Sanctions on Iran,” Gov.UK, January 18, 2016, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sanctions-on-iran> (Accessed on December 10, 2016).

²⁶ “Theresa May ‘Clear-Eyed’ over Iran,” *Threat*, *BBC*, December 7, 2016.

²⁷ Al-Arabi-Al-Jadeed, January 8, 2016 https://www.alaraby.co.uk/politics/2017/1/8/%D8%AE%D8%A7%D9%85%D9%86%D8%A6%D9%8A-%D9%8A%D8%AA%D9%87%D9%85%D8%A8%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%B7%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%8A%D8%A7-%D8%A8%D8%AA%D9%87%D8%AF%D9%8A%D8%AF-%D8%A3%D9%85%D9%86%D8%A5%D9%8A%D8%B1%D8%A7%D9%86?utm_campaign=magnet&utmsource=article_page&utm_medium=recommended_articles (Accessed on January 16, 2017)

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Simon Mabon, *Saudi Arabia and Iran: Power and Rivalry in the Middle East*, I. B Tauris & Co Ltd, London, 2013, pp. 4-5

³⁰ Simon Mabon, p. IX.

³¹ Eliot Cohen, Eric Edelman, and Ray Takeyh, “Time to Get Tough on Tehran: Iran Policy After the Deal”, *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2016,

³² “Embargoes and Sanctions on Iran,” Gov.UK, January 18, 2016, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/sanctions-on-iran> (Accessed on December 10, 2016).

³³ Patrick Wintour, December 20, 2016.

³⁴ “UK Net Migration Levels ‘Unsustainable’, Says David Cameron,” *BBC*, December 9, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-35055355> (Accessed on December 10, 2016)

³⁵ “Britain to Deepen Security Cooperation With the GCC,” *Aljazeera*, December 7, 2016, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2016/12/britain-deepen-security-cooperation-gcc-161207102311180.html> (Accessed on January 2, 2017)

³⁶ UAE, UK Eye \$35.4bn Trade Ties by 2020, says British PM, <http://www.arabianbusiness.com/uae-uk-eye-35-4bn-trade-ties-by-2020-says-british-pm-626513.html> (Accessed on December 10, 2016).

³⁷ “Gulf Investors Hold Back From UK Property Deals on Brexit Fears,” *Fortune*, June 5, 2016, <http://fortune.com/2016/06/05/gulf-investors-real-estate-brexite/> (Accessed on December 10, 2016).

³⁸ Department of International Trade, Country Profiles, <https://www.events.trade.gov.uk/gulf-tour-to-the-uk-1/page/countries/> (Accessed on December 10, 2016).
