

GCC Security Issues, as Their Publics See Them: A Rare Look at Real Data

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Polling results from five Gulf countries show where citizens and their leaders converge and diverge on Iran, U.S. relations, and other crucial foreign policy matters.

The following is an excerpt from a chapter in the October 2019 Gulf International Forum book *The Dilemma of Security and Defense in the Gulf Region*, edited by Dr. Khalid Al-Jaber and Dania Thafer. The book's eleven chapters discuss the changing status of defense and security in the Gulf region between the maintenance of regional security and the preservation of domestic interests. Download the PDF above to read the full chapter; visit [Google Books \(https://books.google.com/books?id=gci5DwAAQBAJ&dq=the+dilemma+of+security+and+defense+in+the+Gulf+region&source=gbs_navlinks_s\)](https://books.google.com/books?id=gci5DwAAQBAJ&dq=the+dilemma+of+security+and+defense+in+the+Gulf+region&source=gbs_navlinks_s) or [Amazon \(https://www.amazon.com/Dilemma-Security-Defense-Gulf-Region-ebook/dp/B07Z6P2TPV/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=The+Dilemma+of+Security+and+Defense+in+the+Gulf+Region&qid=1576175799&sr=8-1\)](https://www.amazon.com/Dilemma-Security-Defense-Gulf-Region-ebook/dp/B07Z6P2TPV/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=The+Dilemma+of+Security+and+Defense+in+the+Gulf+Region&qid=1576175799&sr=8-1) to access the entire volume.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, GCC publics and governments are broadly in line with each other on many key foreign policy and security issues. This is especially true, and especially counterintuitive, regarding the containment of Iran and its regional proxies, like Hezbollah and the Houthis. This consensus augurs well for internal GCC stability, but it will likely face tough tests soon amidst the rising tensions in the region.

On one highly salient issue, however, GCC publics generally diverge from official policies: the widespread popular desire for intra- GCC rapprochement. The irony of course is that greater progress on this problem would undoubtedly help with the problem of Iran. This may therefore be one important case where the wisdom of the

followers could usefully guide the leaders, rather than the other way around... ❖

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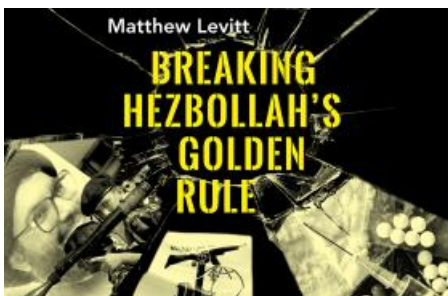
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