Brief Analysis

Watch an expert panel discussion of the political, diplomatic, economic, social, and strategic implications of the 2022 World Cup for Qatar and the wider Middle East.

Qatar, the first Arab country to ever host a FIFA World Cup tournament promises a “World Cup like no other.” The Gulf nation proclaims that is is ready to host the world in November and promote itself as a leader in the new Middle East. Even by FIFA standards, however, the controversies surrounding this tournament are legion and threaten to ruin the Qataris’ coming-out party. The death and mistreatment of foreign workers, accusations of bribes and kickbacks, as well as moving the tournament to November to avoid the scorching heat of the Qatari summer, have already raised concerns from football fans and human rights activists alike.

These present enormous challenges to the host country to produce a world class event that will not only fill their coffers but also raise the reputation of the tiny nation on the world stage. Is Qatar ready for the games? What impact will the games have on Qatar and the region? What precedent is Qatar’s hosting setting for other countries that might be trying to distract the world from problematic practices and human rights issues? The Washington Institute's Aeder Family Link program for young professionals hosted a special expert panel to explore these questions on October 19. Panelists included former U.S. Ambassador to Qatar Susan L. Ziadeh, director of the Human Rights Initiative at CSIS Marti Flacks, and sports and politics expert James M. Dorsey. The Institute’s Morningstar Senior Fellow Patrick Clawson moderated the discussion.
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Susan L. Ziadeh (/experts/susan-l-ziadeh)
Susan L. Ziadeh served for twenty-three years in the U.S. State Department, most recently as deputy assistant secretary for Arabian Peninsula affairs (2014-2016).

Marti Flacks (/experts/marti-flacks)
Marti Flacks is the Khosravi Chair in Principled Internationalism and director of the Human Rights Initiative at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).

James M. Dorsey (/experts/james-m-dorsey)
James M. Dorsey is an expert on geopolitics as well as the relationship between sports and politics.

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Patrick Clawson is Morningstar senior fellow and director of research at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

RECOMMENDED

Inside Saudi Arabia: A Trip Report
November 3, 2022, starting at 12 noon EDT (1600 GNT)

Robert Satloff, David Schenker
(/policy-analysis/inside-saudi-arabia-trip-report)
BRIEF ANALYSIS

Israel Goes to the Polls: The State of the Race Less Than One Week Out

October 27, 2022

David Makovsky,
Tamar Hermann

(/policy-analysis/israel-goes-polls-state-race-less-one-week-out)

BRIEF ANALYSIS

Minister Allocation in Iraq’s New Government

Oct 27, 2022

Nawras Jaff

(/policy-analysis/minister-allocation-iraqs-new-government)

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