

**SHARAKA**  
ENHANCING UNDERSTANDING  
AND COOPERATION IN EU-GCC RELATIONS



**شراكة**  
تعزيز التفاهم والتعاون في علاقات الاتحاد  
الاوروبي ودول مجلس التعاون الخليجي

# **SHARAKA FINAL CONFERENCE**

**EU-GCC Relations: Learning from the Past,  
Looking at the Future**

12 November 2013

Muscat, Oman



# AGENDA

**Tuesday, 12 November 2013**

08:00-09:00      **Registration and Welcome Coffee**

09:30-09.45      **Welcome Remarks**

- **Khalid Al Haribi**, Managing Director, Tawasul (Sultanate of Oman)
- **Silvia Colombo**, Sharaka Coordinator, IAI (Italy)

09:45-10:30      **Opening Speech**

- **Ambassador Adam Kułach**, Head of Delegation of the European Union to Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and Saudi Arabia (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)

## **Q&A**

10:30-11:30

### **Session I**

#### **EU-GCC Energy, Environment and Climate Change & Transport and Maritime Security**

##### *Paper-givers:*

- **Dr Emanuele Menichetti**, Director of Renewable Energy Division, OME (France)
- **Prof. Natalino Ronzitti**, Professor of International Law and IAI Scientific Advisor (Italy)

This session will present and discuss the results of the research carried out by the Sharaka team on the topics of EU-GCC energy and maritime security cooperation. What are current patterns of energy production and consumption in the GCC countries? To what extent and through which mechanisms are the GCC countries coping with the challenges of energy efficiency and competitiveness? What are the most promising areas of EU-GCC cooperation in the energy field? Regarding maritime security, how can cooperation between the EU and the GCC be enhanced in light of the threats of piracy, drug trafficking and trafficking in persons harbouring off the coasts of the Gulf countries?

11:30-11.45 **Coffee Break**

11:45-12:45 **Session II**

**EU-GCC Media and Communication & Higher Education and Scientific Research**

Paper-givers:

- **Fatma Al Araimi**, Correspondent at Thomson Reuters (Sultanate of Oman)
- **Ahmed Al Mukhaini**, Independent Researcher (Sultanate of Oman)

Discussants:

- **Dr Ildiko Kaposi**, Assistant Professor of Communications, American University of Kuwait (Kuwait)
- **Dr Abdullah Baabood**, Director, Gulf Studies Program, Qatar University (Qatar)

Media and higher education cooperation has so far been considered as a second-rank goal in EU-GCC relations. Their importance has however been underscored in two Sharaka reports discussing the mismatch existing between the reality and image of the EU in GCC media and vice versa, on the one hand, and the challenges inhibiting progress in the EU-GCC cooperation in the fields of higher education and scientific research, on the other. EU-GCC cooperation in these policy areas is key for relations between the two regions in general to thrive as it provides space for dialogue and understanding. How can relations be improved?

12:45-13:45

**Session III**

**EU-GCC Finance and Investments & Economic and Trade Cooperation**

Paper-giver:

- **Dr Rym Ayadi**, Senior Research Fellow, CEPS (Belgium)

Discussant:

- **Sheikh Salah al Mawali**, Director General, Directorate General of SME Development, Ministry of Commerce and Industry (Sultanate of Oman)

Trade and investment relations have always occupied the centre stage in EU-GCC relations. Yet many obstacles still exist hindering such cooperation. While a frank dialogue on how to resume the negotiations for the free trade agreement has not started yet, the EU could offer the GCC economies some incentives for diversification. How important is the issue of tariffs and subsidies

in the EU-GCC trade relation? What are the lessons learned from the European financial and economic crisis that could be applied to the GCC as well?

13:45-15:00 **Lunch**

15:00-16:30 **Roundtable Discussion:  
Opportunities and Challenges for EU-GCC Cooperation**

Speakers:

- **John O'Rourke**, Head of Division, Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Iraq, European External Action Service (Belgium)
- **Prof. Roberto Aliboni**, Scientific Advisor, IAI (Italy)
- **Dr Christian Koch**, Director, Gulf Research Centre Foundation (Switzerland)
- **Dr Guido Steinberg**, Senior Associate, Middle East and African Division, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (Germany)

**Q&A**

The goal of the final roundtable is to discuss the results of the Sharaka project from a policy-making perspective. What are some key policy implications emerging from the research results? How can these results be best integrated with the needs of policy makers? The overall objective of the project is indeed to provide policy-makers with specific recommendations to foster EU-GCC cooperation and to turn it into a truly strategic relation. What are the best practices that should be advanced? How can the obstacles be overcome?

16:30-17:00 **Closing Remarks**

- **Ambassador Ferdinando Nelli Feroci**, President, IAI (Italy)
- **Khalid Al Haribi**, Managing Director, Tawasul (Sultanate of Oman)