



The Gulf Scramble for Africa

GCC States' Foreign Policy Laboratory

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THE ISSUE

- Arab Gulf states are intervening more assertively in sub-Saharan Africa to capitalize on economic opportunities and protect their security interests.
- They view Africa as a relatively uncontested arena in which they can experiment with foreign interventions as part of their strategy to prove their rising status on the world stage.
- The impact of Gulf states' rivalries in Africa is becoming increasingly damaging, as their zero-sum rivalry has provoked retaliations, which have dangerously destabilized vulnerable parts of Africa, such as during the fallout to the GCC crisis.

When the border dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia descended into bloody conflict in 1998, few could have predicted where a peace agreement would be signed some 20 years later. On September 16, 2018, the Eritrean and Ethiopian leaders sat at desks facing one another in the middle of a lavish hall in the Peace Palace in Jeddah. A huge portrait of Abdulaziz, Saudi Arabia's first king, loomed over them. King Salman bin Abdulaziz sat underneath, with Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman and the secretary general of the United Nations Antonio Guterres on either side. The optics were clear: It was under Saudi sponsorship that decades of conflict ended. The deal would be known as the "Jeddah Peace Agreement."¹

The Jeddah Peace Agreement is the latest example of Arab Gulf states' increasingly assertive interventions in sub-Saharan Africa. Although the Arabian Peninsula shares historic religious, economic, and linguistic links with parts of sub-Saharan Africa, Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states have rapidly deepened their economic and security ties across the African continent in the last decade, and

a growing diplomatic role has followed. Gulf states are seeking to demonstrate their status on the world stage by acting as powerbrokers in African conflicts, and they have also attempted to secure the backing of African states in their own disputes. As they prepare to play a more significant role on the world stage, GCC states have come to view sub-Saharan Africa as a laboratory in which they can test more assertive international interventions.

AFRICA'S ECONOMIC PROMISE

Although Gulf Arabs have traded with Africans for centuries, the global financial crisis from 2007 to 2008 motivated GCC states to deepen their economic ties with Africa. With economies in the West slowing down, Africa's fast-growing economies and expanding middle classes became an increasingly attractive prospect for investors across the world. But three other key factors prompted GCC states to turn to Africa. Building economic ties in Africa helped Gulf states capitalize on their geostrategic location, increase their food security, and enhance their reputation as benevolent Muslim

actors. Expanding their economic influence in Africa has provided GCC states with their most important source of leverage to advance their security and diplomatic goals.

GCC states have advanced their strategies of economic diversification and reduced reliance on oil by investing in African markets, which became even more critical when oil prices crashed in 2014. The UAE invested an estimated \$11 billion in capital in Africa in 2016, overtaking Saudi Arabia to become the largest GCC investor and the second largest in the world after China.² Gulf companies' expertise in the energy sector makes them especially attractive to African states seeking to develop their energy industries, and Saudi Arabia recently announced a \$10 billion investment in South Africa's energy sector.³ Meanwhile, Gulf states' ability to execute large-scale infrastructure projects is also appealing to rapidly-developing African states. Dubai's DP World announced an initial \$50 million investment in an inland logistics facility in Mali in July 2018, complementing larger infrastructure investments in West Africa such as the Dakar port and economic zone. Qatar also signed a \$4 billion deal to manage a Red Sea port with Sudan in March 2018.⁴

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The Gulf's geostrategic location also explains why Africa has been a focus of GCC states' economic activity. By focusing on infrastructure development and trade, GCC states are able to benefit from Asian trade and investment flows to Africa, which dwarf their own figures. China pledged \$60 billion in financing to Africa in 2018 alone and increased its total trade with Africa by 180 percent from 2010 to 2017.⁵ The UAE has leveraged its superior shipping and port infrastructure to plug into this potential, becoming the largest GCC trader with Africa. The UAE imported roughly \$5 billion of goods from Africa each year from 2010 to 2015, before increasing its imports substantially to \$23.9 billion in 2016.⁶ Africa's growing importance to Emirati trade is apparent from an examination of its imports. As a share of the UAE's total imports, those from Africa quadrupled in the last six years.⁷



Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman talks with the president of Senegal Macky Sall during the Future Investment Initiative conference, nicknamed "Davos in the desert," in the Saudi capital Riyadh on October 24, 2018.

GIUSEPPE CACACE/AFP/Getty Images

Gulf states also identified investing in Africa as a way to achieve food security. Saudi Arabia's attempts to produce its own food stumbled a decade ago, and it has since embarked on a new food security strategy. Gulf states considered agricultural investments in Central Asia and Latin America but determined that Africa's rich and underdeveloped agricultural lands held the greatest promise.⁸ Africa's geographic proximity to the Gulf was an advantage; it contains 60 percent of the world's total uncultivated arable lands; and its water shortages were deemed surmountable with appropriate investments.⁹ Saudi Arabia is the top investor in agriculture in Africa, conducting largescale investments such as its purchase of 500,000 hectares of land in Tanzania in 2009.¹⁰ For Qatar, the most dependent of Gulf states on food imports, the 2017 intra-GCC dispute added new urgency to its quest for food security as it relied heavily on food imports from its Gulf neighbors. The Qatari government announced plans in 2018 to invest half a billion dollars in Sudan's agricultural and food sectors.¹¹ However, Gulf states' agricultural investments in Africa are not without controversy, as some of the states they leased land from struggle to produce enough food to feed their own populations. When Qatar entered into talks with Kenya in 2009 to lease 40,000 hectares of land in the Tana Delta, it was met with fierce local opposition.¹²

GCC states have also strengthened aid ties with various African states, largely motivated by their shared religious heritage. As well as GCC states' generous donations to humanitarian appeals in the Horn of Africa, numerous Gulf charities have operated throughout Africa since the 1980s.¹³ The Saudi International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO) and the Kuwaiti African Muslims Agency (AMA) were among the first state-sponsored Islamic charities to work in Africa. As well as their humanitarian objectives, Gulf Islamic organizations also play a missionary role, and many of their activities are influenced by Islam.¹⁴ Gulf charities targeted sub-Saharan Africa's many Sufi orders to "re-educate" them according to their salafi form of Islam, and they also attempted to convert non-Muslims.¹⁵ Alarmed by the spread of Wahhabi Islam in Africa, Libya's former dictator Muammar Gaddafi created the World Islamic Call Society to compete with Gulf charities in Africa and preach a Sufi-influenced version of Islam.¹⁶

The global war on terror in the early twenty-first century forced many Islamic charities to curtail their activities abroad after being accused of supporting terrorism, and it was not until the global financial crisis in 2008 that new openings in Africa emerged.¹⁷ When economies slowed in the West, some African leaders approached GCC states for economic assistance because of their wealth and religious

ties. President Wade of Senegal actively strengthened ties with GCC states when he was in power from 2000 to 2012, emphasizing Senegal's shared religious heritage with Gulf states by playing a prominent role in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.¹⁸ Expanding charitable activities in Africa serves to bolster GCC states' reputations among Muslims in Africa and elsewhere as they are able to present themselves as beneficent actors that pursue philanthropic goals as well as their own economic interests in Africa.

Migrant labor networks are another important element of the economic relationship between GCC states and sub-Saharan Africa. Many migrant workers from the Horn of Africa provide GCC states with cheap, unskilled labor. Although GCC states do not release detailed data on the migrant communities they host, Sudanese, Ethiopians, and Eritreans are thought to be the largest communities. The United Nations estimated that 540,000 Sudanese lived in GCC states in 2015, roughly a third of the entire Sudanese diaspora.¹⁹ Half a million Ethiopians and 100,000 Eritreans are believed to work in Saudi Arabia, while over 100,000 Ethiopians work in the UAE.²⁰ Africans are not the largest migrant communities in GCC states, but their remittance flows are a critical source of income for countries in the Horn of Africa, meaning they represent an important source of GCC states' economic influence in Africa.



The Qatari international NGO Qatar Charity distributes food to internally displaced people (IDPs) in Mogadishu, Somalia, on May 22, 2018. MOHAMED ABDIWAHAB/AFP/Getty Images

EXPANDING SECURITY INTERESTS

As their economic interests in Africa have grown, Gulf states have also expanded their security presence. As well as supporting anti-piracy efforts in waters off Somalia, Gulf states have enhanced their military projection capabilities by building their first overseas bases in the Horn of Africa. They have also increased their military cooperation with African states and play a more prominent role in international counterterrorism operations across Africa. The expansion of Gulf states' security influence in Africa has been possible thanks to their ability to wield their growing economic power.

Gulf states' security interventions in Africa have been principally motivated by threats emanating from the Horn of Africa. In the 1970s, Saudi Arabia joined Egypt, Morocco, Iran, and France to establish

an informal intelligence alliance known as the “Safari Club” to counter the spread of communism in Africa.²¹ Saudi Arabia perceived communism as a potential military and ideological threat, being especially alarmed by Soviet and Cuban military intervention in Ethiopia and the spread of Marxist liberation movements more broadly. More recently, the UAE controversially provided an initial grant of \$50 million to support mercenaries in Puntland, Somalia, to defend its trade routes and fight piracy in waters off the Horn of Africa in 2010.²²

The war in Yemen heightened Saudi Arabia’s and the UAE’s security interests in East Africa, shown by the fact that they built their first overseas military bases in the Horn of Africa to enhance their power projection capabilities. The two countries initially planned to use Djibouti as a base for their operations in Yemen, but a diplomatic spat in 2015 resulted in Djibouti evicting GCC troops from the base.²³ The UAE then turned to the Eritrean deep-water port of Assab and built up its military infrastructure considerably in return for developing the port for Eritrea’s use. Assab now serves as the UAE’s main logistics hub for Yemen operations, hosting helicopters, jets, drones, and naval vessels. The UAE started to build a second base in Berbera, Somaliland, in 2017, adjacent to the port which DP World is developing as part of a \$442 million deal.²⁴ Saudi Arabia finalized a deal to build its first overseas military base in Djibouti in 2017, similarly aiming to protect its strategic interests in the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa.²⁵

Gulf states have also worked to build military partnerships and intelligence sharing relationships with African countries, often offering economic incentives in return. Saudi Arabia and the UAE have recruited African forces to support their operations in Yemen as part of this approach. Saudi Arabia deposited \$1 billion in Sudan’s central bank shortly after it contributed more than a thousand troops to the fight in Yemen in 2015.²⁶ In 2018, a week after Sudanese Defense Minister Ali Ahmed Salim reviewed Sudan’s participation in the Yemen conflict, Saudi Arabia and Sudan signed a number of defense and economic cooperation agreements, resulting in Saudi Arabia promising more investment.²⁷

Gulf states have increased their commitments to peacekeeping and counterterrorism operations in the Horn of Africa in recent years. Qatar deployed peacekeepers to the border between Eritrea and Djibouti for almost a decade, starting in 2008, but Gulf states have shown the most consistent interest fighting extremism in Somalia. As part of an African Union military mission to defeat an Islamist

insurgency, the UAE trained and equipped hundreds of Somali troops from 2014 to 2018.²⁸ When Saudi Arabia launched the Islamic Military Counterterrorism Coalition (IMCTC) in 2016, it announced it would provide Somalia with capacity-building support and training as one of its first steps.²⁹ The IMCTC has enhanced military cooperation and intelligence sharing between GCC and sub-Saharan African states significantly, as all GCC states participate in the coalition and over half of its 41 member countries are sub-Saharan African states.³⁰

But GCC states have also contributed to counterterrorism efforts in areas of significantly less strategic importance than the Horn of Africa. In 2017, Saudi Arabia and the UAE pledged \$118 million and \$35.4 million respectively to a counterterrorism force in West Africa’s Sahel region. Playing a more prominent role in counterterrorism in West Africa appears largely motivated by Gulf states’ desire to enhance their international reputation as serious partners in the fight against extremism, a policy repeatedly advocated by President Trump.³¹ As such, GCC states’ security interventions in Africa have been motivated by a desire to protect economic interests, enhance their power projection capabilities, and also to improve their international reputation.

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BOLSTERING DIPLOMATIC CREDENTIALS

GCC states have expanded their diplomatic ties with sub-Saharan African states to bolster their growing economic and security interests, while also advancing their ambitions to play a more prominent role in international foreign policy. Gulf states have opened dozens of new embassies across sub-Saharan Africa in recent years and have made assertive diplomatic interventions in African conflicts. The perception of the United States’ withdrawal from the region has partially motivated these interventions. Mediating conflicts is a key element of GCC states’ aim to increase their international prestige, and their perceived neutrality and ability to deploy substantial economic incentives to bolster peace agreements has afforded them some notable successes where others have failed.

In recent years, Qatar has opened the largest number of embassies in sub-Saharan Africa of any state other than Turkey. Qatar built 11 new embassies between 2013 and 2015 while the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait opened nine, six, and two respectively between 2010 and 2018.³² The UAE has announced plans to open embassies in Cote d'Ivoire and Mauritius in 2019, while Qatar also plans to open more embassies in sub-Saharan Africa in the near future.³³ As well as the benefits of upgraded diplomatic relations, establishing embassies allows Gulf states to better protect their economic and security interests and coordinate policy more effectively. Prominent Gulf officials have also made an increasing number of official visits to sub-Saharan Africa and GCC states have hosted African dignitaries in recent times. Saudi foreign minister Adel al-Jubeir recently conducted 18 shuttle visits to Africa.³⁴

gain influence in strategic locations, and to create new economic opportunities.³⁵ Shortly after Qatar negotiated a ceasefire between the Sudanese government and the largest opposition group in Darfur, the Justice and Equality Movement, it bought swathes of agricultural land in Sudan to improve its food security.³⁶

Part of GCC states' success in mediation is a result of their ability to offer significant economic incentives. When Sudan and Chad signed a reconciliation deal to stabilize Darfur and neighboring areas of Chad in Saudi Arabia in 2007, the Sudanese minister of state for foreign relations said that Saudi Arabia had promised to "help Sudan and Muslims everywhere," hinting at promises of financial assistance without providing details.³⁷ Saudi Arabia and the UAE recently pledged large aid and investment packages to

Ethiopia and Eritrea while mediating an end to the 20-year conflict. The UAE announced it would provide a total of \$3 billion in aid and investment to Ethiopia in June 2018 and unveiled plans to build an oil pipeline between Ethiopia and Eritrea shortly thereafter.³⁸

The perception that Gulf states are relatively neutral in African conflicts has bolstered their success in mediation. They do not carry the weight of the legacy of European colonialism, for example. The UAE maintained ties with Eritrea when it was isolated by the international community, bolstering its image as a balanced negotiator between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Qatar has strived to develop a reputation as an honest and reliable powerbroker by mediating various conflicts across the Middle East and Africa and has played a prominent role in negotiations between Eritrea and

Sudan, Chad and Sudan, and Eritrea and Djibouti. However, some of these mediation attempts have failed to achieve lasting peace resolutions because of its limited power projection capabilities, a lack of professional personnel on the ground, and a broader lack of experience of mediating highly complex conflicts.³⁹

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Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan receives Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed (L) and Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki (R) at the presidential palace in Abu Dhabi on July 24, 2018. KARIM SAHIB/AFP/Getty Images

The 2018 Jeddah Peace Agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea is Gulf states' most recent mediation success, but they have facilitated peace negotiations in sub-Saharan Africa for more than a decade. As well as aiming to end bloodshed and instability, GCC states have engaged in peace negotiations to bolster their international prestige (as states have done throughout history), to

THE OPPORTUNITIES, RISKS, AND LIMITS OF GCC INFLUENCE

Gulf states have leveraged their growing economic, security, and diplomatic influence in sub-Saharan Africa to push back on their rivals' influence and gain international backing in their own disputes. They have promised aid and investment, offered to enhance security cooperation, and even agreed to improve African migrants' rights in GCC states to encourage sub-Saharan African states to give them diplomatic support. Gulf states successfully used these tools of influence to convince African states to downgrade their ties with Iran, thereby containing Iran's presence in the Horn of Africa. But African states have been most significantly affected by the fallout of the 2017 intra-GCC dispute, as it highlighted the risks and opportunities created by Gulf states' zero-sum rivalry. The Gulf crisis also revealed limits to GCC states' influence, showing that they have not yet managed to achieve the loyalty of most African states.

Saudi Arabia has long sought to contain Iran's influence in Africa, particularly in East Africa. Iran developed a military cooperation and intelligence sharing relationship with Sudan, using it as a shipping point for arms to Iran's partners and proxies in the Middle East until 2015.⁴⁰ Saudi Arabia's offers of substantial

diplomatic and economic incentives to break ties with Iran proved sufficient. It helped free Sudan from its diplomatic isolation and deposited \$1 billion in Sudan's central bank in 2015, shortly before Sudan cut ties with Iran.⁴¹ Saudi Arabia also signed a security agreement with Djibouti as it finalized a deal to build a military base there, enhancing its military projection capabilities and further countering Iran's influence.⁴² These diplomatic, economic, and security tools have reduced Iran's influence in the Horn of Africa significantly.

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Saudi Arabia and the UAE have had less success in containing Qatar's influence in Africa, and the intra-GCC rivalry has had a destabilizing impact on parts of the Horn of Africa. When the Quartet powers of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain, and Egypt broke ties with Qatar on June 5, 2017, they sought the backing of sub-Saharan African states. Comoros, Eritrea, Mauritania, Mauritius, and Senegal

all stood with the Quartet and cut ties with Qatar, while Chad, Djibouti, and Niger downgraded their ties. Many of these states received aid and investment from Saudi and UAE bodies in the following months, indicating that even if they were not offered these incentives as a direct exchange for their diplomatic solidarity, they received economic rewards shortly afterward. The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center provided over \$250 million in aid for refugees in Djibouti in August 2017, and Saudi Arabia signed agreements to advance trade, investment, and tourism cooperation with Mauritius the following month.⁴³ Meanwhile, the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development made \$50 million available for Emirati companies wishing to invest in Chad and gave Comoros a grant of over \$10 million to bolster its electricity network.⁴⁴

However, prominent states in sub-Saharan Africa resisted Saudi and Emirati pressure and remained neutral, revealing limits to GCC states' influence in the region. Despite



Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani meets Ivorian president Alassane Ouattara on December 22, 2017 in Abidjan during his tour of six West African countries six months after the beginning of the Quartet's blockade.

SIA KAMBOU/AFP/Getty Images

receiving significant investment packages from Saudi Arabia in the years preceding the Gulf crisis, Sudan refused to take sides in what its foreign ministry described as a “sorrowful development” and offered to mediate instead.⁴⁵ Qatar was a prominent investor that Sudan could not afford to lose. South Africa also opted to remain neutral, with the South African ambassador to Doha saying his country would resist pressure from the UAE and Saudi Arabia to isolate Qatar because doing so would be “against the values Mandela fought for.”⁴⁶ The Nigerian foreign minister stated that he had come under pressure from both sides to back them but reaffirmed Nigeria’s neutrality.⁴⁷ The president of the African Union, President Alpha Condé of Guinea, wrote to King Salman of Saudi Arabia calling for dialogue and expressing support for Kuwaiti mediation.⁴⁸

Meanwhile, Qatar pushed back by exerting its own influence. The Qatari emir toured Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, and Senegal in December 2017 in a challenge to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Qatar’s agreements to cooperate on counterterrorism with Burkina Faso and Mali were particularly significant, as one of the Quartet’s principal accusations against Qatar was its support for terrorism abroad.⁴⁹ Senegal and Chad reinstated diplomatic relations with Qatar in August 2017 and February 2018 respectively.⁵⁰

Some African countries have managed to benefit from the dispute by enhancing economic ties with Gulf states on both sides of the GCC feud, in effect playing them off against each other. South Africa increased its commercial trade with Qatar by 70 percent after the blockade was imposed and specifically offered to help Qatar overcome its subsequent food insecurity resulting from regional isolation.⁵¹ Meanwhile, South Africa accepted a \$10 billion investment pledge from the UAE, focusing on the mining and tourism sectors, and an additional \$10 billion pledge from Saudi Arabia, focusing on its energy sector.⁵² Sudan has also continued to receive investment from both Qatar and Saudi Arabia since the blockade. In March 2018, Qatar and Sudan signed a \$4 billion deal to manage a Red Sea port jointly, and the Saudi ambassador to Sudan announced in October 2018 that the Kingdom now invests more than \$12 billion in Sudan.⁵³ Ethiopia has benefited from new investment pledges from various Gulf states, as well as negotiating improved rights for its migrant workers in the UAE.⁵⁴ These African states have managed to benefit significantly from Gulf states’ attempts to woo them, while resisting GCC states’ attempts to force them to take sides.

Yet, the zero-sum rivalry between GCC states has also carried great risks for more vulnerable African states.

Somalia came under intense pressure to choose a side in the dispute. It enjoyed close ties with Qatar’s ally Turkey, which donated more than \$1 billion in aid, but was also highly dependent on Saudi Arabia, its largest export partner, and enjoyed a close security partnership with the UAE. When Somali president Farmajo refused to support Saudi Arabia and the UAE, reportedly turning down a large aid package, a diplomatic spat escalated resulting in the UAE increasing its support for Somalia’s federal states and ending a military training program. The European Parliament passed a resolution condemning the UAE and Saudi Arabia for depriving Somalia of regular budgetary support payments, saying the move destabilized the country by weakening the government’s ability to pay its security forces.⁵⁵ Emirati officials said support would only be reinstated when Farmajo apologized for his “unfounded allegations.”⁵⁶ The threat of instability also arose in Djibouti when Qatar withdrew its peacekeeping forces from the Eritrean border in retaliation for Djibouti’s and Eritrea’s support of the Quartet in the dispute.⁵⁷ Eritrea claimed control over the disputed territories of Mount Dumeira and the island of Dumeira, prompting the UN secretary general’s spokesperson to warn that the GCC conflict was affecting the African side of Bab al-Mandeb.⁵⁸

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OUTLOOK

GCC states’ interventions in sub-Saharan Africa bring important opportunities for African states, and some have even benefited from Gulf rivalries. Several sub-Saharan African states have seized the opportunity to expand their economic ties with states on both sides of the dispute, effectively playing them off against each other. More broadly, Gulf states will likely continue their efforts to expand their trade and investment with sub-Saharan Africa as they pursue their economic diversification plans. Saudi Arabia and the UAE’s successful mediation of the Ethiopian-Eritrean conflict may also encourage Gulf states to use their growing influence to expand their role as powerbrokers in Africa or beyond. Emirati officials, for example, suggested that the UAE would be well-placed to negotiate the dispute over the Nile between Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia and is ready to do so.⁵⁹ The Saudi minister of state for Africa recently indicated support for more assertive interventions

throughout Africa. He stated that Saudi Arabia's lack of engagement in Africa had created opportunities for other states to "cause troubles" and remarked that Saudi Arabia was now "on the right track" to deepen ties with every African country.⁶⁰ Meanwhile, Emirati officials said the UAE did not need to change its approach but intended to continue to deepen and broaden ties across Africa.⁶¹

But as GCC states' economic and security interests in Africa grow and their interventions become more assertive, the impact of their rivalries in Africa is becoming increasingly damaging. Their zero-sum rivalry has provoked retaliations, which have dangerously destabilized vulnerable parts of Africa. New tensions are also arising. Although GCC states have effectively contained Iran's influence in East Africa, Iran maintains influence in West Africa, which is increasingly the site of Arab Gulf interventions. Tensions between Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Turkey in the Horn of Africa are also rising. Turkey has increased its interventions in Africa substantially in the past 15 years. Since 2003, Turkey has increased its trade with Africa six-fold to \$17.4 billion, built 29 new embassies, and opened its first overseas African base in Somalia.⁶² Turkey's attempts to bolster its presence in the Red Sea by restoring the Sudanese port on Suakin Island create an additional source of tension with Gulf states.⁶³ For Saudi Arabia, the stakes are getting higher. Meanwhile, the United States' reduced commitment to the region means it is missing opportunities to mitigate the consequences of regional crises.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS IN THE UNITED STATES

As GCC states consolidate their status as important actors in sub-Saharan Africa, new opportunities are emerging for the United States to cooperate with its Gulf partners in the region. U.S. policymakers could further capitalize on GCC states' desire to prove their credentials as serious partners in counterterrorism to share the burden of the security role in sub-Saharan Africa. Similarly, opportunities to collaborate on conflict mediation exist. Peace negotiations could benefit from a combination of GCC states' ability to offer African actors substantial economic incentives and U.S. diplomats' extensive experience with the history and complexity of African conflicts. Gulf states can also help advance the United States' development goals in sub-Saharan Africa. More extensive collaboration in building infrastructure and urban development would be especially worthwhile.

However, as GCC states' presence in sub-Saharan Africa continues to expand, U.S. policymakers should expect them to act increasingly independently and less in concert with

Western states. Gulf states have not always shared the United States' emphasis on and concern for governance issues in Africa. Differing approaches and priorities could increasingly prove an obstacle to collaboration attempts, and given Gulf states' relative success in Africa, there is no reason to assume they would wish to adjust to the U.S. approach. The potential for intra-GCC rivalries to affect Gulf states' policies in sub-Saharan Africa also represents a challenge to collaboration with the United States, as U.S. policymakers may find it harder to predict Gulf states' behavior and reach consensus between them.

U.S. policymakers could further capitalize on GCC states' desire to prove their credentials as serious partners in counterterrorism to share the burden of the security role in sub-Saharan Africa.

More broadly, the United States could learn from GCC states' economic approach to Africa. The United States is currently ceding opportunities for economic investment in Africa to other powers, including China, Turkey, and the Gulf states. Part of the reason for the United States' disengagement from Africa may be that it does not fear security threats emanating from Africa to the same degree Gulf states do. However, that should not prevent the United States from sharing Gulf states' view that Africa is an important area for economic growth.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS IN ARAB GULF STATES

Gulf states often favor a unilateral approach in their interventions in sub-Saharan Africa, but they could benefit from working in partnership with like-minded international powers. As GCC states rapidly expand their global footprint, they will need to commit significant resources to protect it. Although they need to be prepared to step in when instability poses risks to their interests, increasing multilateral cooperation on security would be an effective way of protecting GCC states' economic interests, while also building the capacity of their own security apparatuses and sharing the security burden. As they increase their mediating role in Africa, Gulf states could also benefit from the experience of countries that have historically had deeper ties with sub-Saharan Africa and more extensive involvement in diplomatic negotiations, such as the United States and European powers. When seeking economic collaborations, Gulf policymakers will need to be sensitive

to other powers' differing priorities. Western donors are particularly sensitive about corruption issues, for example, and are more likely to impose strict conditions on investment activities.

As GCC states increase their interventions in Africa, they must continue to broaden and deepen their ties with African states. To secure their economic interests in an arena of greater international competition, they should enhance their lateral engagement with African governments significantly to ensure that their interventions are meeting African governments' needs and priorities. Such engagement will help ensure that African governments continue to view them as attractive partners and make interventions safer and more sustainable. Part of this approach should involve building people-to-people ties. GCC states should expand opportunities for educational exchange, training collaborations, and tourism links with countries in sub-Saharan Africa to capitalize on the potential of young people in Africa and enhance their reputation more broadly. ■

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