

'Vision for Regional Security' of GCC

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Context

For the first time since its inception, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) announced its **'Vision for Regional Security'** in Riyadh.

About

- It is a political and economic alliance of six Middle Eastern countries—**Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman.**
- It was formed in 1981.
- It aims to obtain cohesion among its members based on their common objectives and their comparable political and cultural identities, which are rooted in Arab and Islamic cultures.
- Presidency of the council rotates yearly.

Vision for Regional Security of GCC

- **Security of the Region:** It is based on the concepts of a shared future and indivisible security of the member states, and any threat to one is a threat to all the member States.
 - It aims to preserve regional security and balance, address the challenges facing them and settle disputes through non-violent methods.
- **Counter Terrorism:** It urges the member states to combat terrorism and extremism,

stopping the flow of money to the hands of terrorists and combat money laundering.

- **Maritime Security:** It requires regional and global coordination to make certain maritime security and trade and energy supply routes.
 - As all of the GCC nations are key providers of energy, any disruption within the sea traces of communication will immediately have an effect on their countrywide economies.
- **Peaceful use of Nuclear Energy:** As the chance of a nuclear arms race in the region looms huge with Iran and Israel having nuclear programs, the GCC has advised making the region a **Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone (WMDFZ)**.
- **Comment on Israel-Hamas War:** The document has come at a time when the West Asian region is engulfed in turmoil considering the start of the [Israel-Hamas War](#) in 2023.
 - The vision document makes explicit reference to the [Israel-Palestine issue](#) and calls for activating the Arab Peace Initiative.

India's Relations with GCC

- **Strategic Partnership:** GCC is a main exchange and funding partner for India. While India has near monetary and political ties with all countries, the strategic partnership exists with only Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Oman.
- **Energy Security:** GCC contributes to 35% of India's oil imports and 70% of gas imports. India is executing the second section of its [Strategic Petroleum Reserve \(SPR\)](#). Several GCC countries have expressed their hobby inside the equal.
- **Trade and Investment:** GCC countries contribute to about 1-6th of India's total alternate. However, trade and Foreign Direct Investment from the GCC is dominated by UAE and Saudi Arabia.
 - India additionally has a considerable alternate deficit with the GCC which is driven by India's dependence on GCC nations for oil and fuel imports.
 - Free trade negotiations between the 2 parties have additionally been delayed.
- **Defence Relations:** India's defense engagements with these countries are gaining sizeable momentum.
 - From mere training of security personnel in numerous military institutes, they have prolonged ties to different regions, inclusive of intelligence sharing, counterterrorism, artificial intelligence, digital conflict, and cybersecurity.

Way Ahead

- Realpolitik and strategic interests had been instrumental in bringing India toward the Gulf countries, with both aspects inclined to overlook a number of their ideological variations these days.
- In the longer term, defense commercial cooperation and technology transfers will possibly come to shape a pivotal factor of their strategic cooperation.
- The possibility for such an final result remains high as Gulf states, like India, are also embarking on fast military industrialization packages and looking for opportunity palms vendors.
- The convergence of interests- political, economic, technological and military-security - consequently, could pave the way for the furtherance of India's military diplomacy with

the Gulf states.

Source: The Hindu

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Q. Discuss the significance of Gulf countries in the context of India's foreign policy objectives, regional stability, and economic interests. Highlight the strategies adopted by India to strengthen its engagement in the Gulf region. (250 words)