

Brussels, 25 March 2025

Invitation to a seminar on

The challenges of maritime security in the Indian Ocean, with a special focus on the Red Sea and the Gulf Region

Brussels, 26-28 May 2025

The European Union (EU) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) share common maritime security interests in the Indian Ocean, in particular around the Strait of Hormuz and the Strait of Bab el-Mandeb. The EU has recently taken several steps to become a regional maritime security provider and a reliable partner in the region. A communication on strategic partnerships with the Gulf was adopted in May 2022 and the first ever EU-GCC summit took place in October 2024, with promising cooperation on maritime security. This cooperation is much needed. Last year, Houthi attacks in the Red Sea challenged our freedom of navigation and increased trafficking and smuggling. The first EU-GCC structured security dialogue, held in January 2024, established a basis for enhanced EU-GCC cooperation in the field of maritime security, with a view to developing an improved shared understanding of the challenges and exchanging policy approaches, responses and best practices.

To do so, and as a first step, the European Union's European Security and Defence College (ESDC), together with the European External Action Service, will be holding a training seminar on 'The challenges of maritime security in the Indian Ocean, with a special focus on the Red Sea and the Gulf Region'.

We are pleased to invite officials from the Kingdom of Bahrain, the State of Kuwait, the Sultanate of Oman, the State of Qatar, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, as well as from the Gulf Cooperation Council Secretariat, to participate in the seminar. Officials from EU Member States and relevant EU institutions and agencies will also attend. Participants should be mid-ranking to senior officials working in state institutions/agencies in the area of maritime security, including relevant ministries, navies, coastguards and other maritime security-related agencies.

**Sabrina Magris**President of the
École Universitaire Internationale**Fergal O'Regan**Acting Head of the
European Security and Defence College

Administrative remarks

- **Target group:** the seminar is open to civilian, diplomatic, police and military personnel from EU Member States, EU bodies, agencies and institutions and participants coming from the following countries - Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates - and the Gulf Cooperation Council Secretariat. Participants will normally be mid-level staff or senior officials.
- **Places and nominations:** around 50 places will be available to international participants. Typically, one or two places are allocated to each EU Member State, but depending on the total number of requests, one additional place may be offered. As a general rule, three places are allocated to each GCC member state and to the GCC Secretariat. Depending on the number of participants, one additional place may be offered.
- **Applications from EU Member States:** these are to be submitted via the ESDC secure internet system ENLIST, by designated nominators, at <https://esdc.europa.eu/enlist/login> **no later than 25 April 2025**. A list of ENLIST nominators can be found on the ESDC website at <https://esdc.europa.eu/nominators/>. Registration will not be final until confirmed by the ESDC Secretariat, upon completion of the requested personal data in ENLIST by the confirmed participants.
- **Applications from GCC countries:** Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and the Gulf Cooperation Council Secretariat are invited to communicate the full name of the nominee, personal or personalised professional email address (functional mailboxes will not be accepted), sending institution, nationality, date of birth, passport number and its validity via a Note Verbale to the EU delegation competent for their country. Each delegation will forward the nominations to the ESDC training manager, Maria Grazia Romano, at maria-grazia.romano@eeas.europa.eu.
The deadline for nomination is 25 April 2025.
- **Attendance:** attendance is mandatory on all three days of the seminar. Participants will receive an ESDC certificate on the last day only if they have completed the entire seminar. This seminar will be offered in person only.
- **Language:** the seminar will be conducted in English, without interpretation.
- **Residential part of the course:** the seminar will take place from **26 to 28 May 2025** (Monday 09:00 to Wednesday 16:30).

- **Costs:** no tuition fee. Sending authorities must cover all costs for travel, accommodation and meals (including breakfast) for participants from EU Member States, invited countries and the GCC Secretariat.
- **Dress code:** formal dress or service uniform for the first and last days, business casual clothing/work uniform (not combat) for the rest of the course.
- **Liabilities and insurance:** in the event of a medical emergency, participants' medical insurance, provided by the sending country/organisation must cover all costs. The organiser does not provide health or accident insurance for course participants.
- **Additional info:** participants will receive further detailed information about the course (e.g. schedule, precise location, etc.) in good time.

Point of contact at the European Security and Defence College:

Maria Grazia ROMANO Training Manager Mobile: +32 460 84 06 29 Email: Maria-Grazia.ROMANO@eeas.europa.eu	
--	--