

FAIR OBSERVER

EDITORIAL GUIDELINES 2023

01. Skim read the article and decide the level of editing: extensive, intermediate or light.
02. Identify the type of author: experienced, advanced, intermediate or basic.
03. Decide if the article is worth editing. If not, then send it back to the author for rewriting with suggestions for improving the piece.

04. Edit the article if it is worth publishing. Reject anything that appears slanderous or libelous. CONTACT SENIOR EDITORS IN SUCH CASES.
05. Check submission for plagiarism. Use this [online tool](#). Contact the author and ask for an explanation. Copy submissions@fairobserver.com into the email.
06. Go to [shutterstock.com](https://www.shutterstock.com) and search for an image that you think would be appropriate given the subject of the piece. Copy the link for it, and include the link in the document after the summary as a note for the uploading team.
07. Create subheadings that break the text and retain reader interest.
08. Write a catchy headline. Use this [online tool](#) to come up with one that works for Google SEO. The title should give a good idea of what the article is about. A punchy phrase is NOT enough.
09. Write a summary for the piece. The summary should be one to three crisp sentences.
10. If we are republishing the article, mention where it was published first at the bottom in italics and square brackets ([example](#)). Use active voice: [[TomDispatch](#) first published this piece.] Use the word “piece” rather than “article.”
11. If you are editing the article, put down your name at the bottom in italics and square brackets ([example](#)). [[Lane Gibson](#) edited this piece.] Hyperlink your LinkedIn profile to your name.
12. Use short sentences. Transition is key. So, make sure they connect with preceding and succeeding sentences.
13. Use short paragraphs as well. Let your text breathe. Remember transition from one paragraph to another is important.
14. Use American English for spelling.
15. For names in non-English languages that use the Latin alphabet, preserve special characters whenever possible. (Kılıçdaroğlu, not Kilicdaroglu.) When in doubt, check Wikipedia.

16. Use italics for:

- Titles of publications such as *The New York Times* and *The Economist*,
- Names of books such as *Animal Farm* and *War and Peace*,
- Names of movies such as *The Godfather* and *Citizen Kane*, and
- Foreign words.

17. Make sure the author hyperlinks facts and figures to their sources. Hyperlink one or two words only. The authors should:

- Steer clear of sources known for sensationalism such as *The Daily Mail*,
- Be wary of sources that refer to Wikipedia, and
- Use credible sources such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

18. Highlight any passages that are difficult to understand or contain contestable assertions unsupported by evidence. Write reservations as comments for the author to review.

19. Make sure that acronyms appear in parentheses after the full name of the person or institution such as Mohammed bin Salman (MBS), People's Liberation Army (PLA) and Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Some universally known acronyms such as the US, the EU and the UN do not need their full forms.

20. Please use inverted commas (double quotation marks) according to the US convention. Follow this example:

Biden appeared shocked by what *The Washington Post* described as a “move by OPEC Plus last week to cut its oil output by two million barrels a day,” a decision that would most certainly “boost oil prices in the United States and worldwide.”

21. Use single inverted commas only for quotations within a quotation, such as in this example. The prime minister complained that “certain members of his party were themselves guilty of taking the same ‘undue liberties’ they accused him of taking.”

22. Use % instead of per cent. Example: Inflation in Europe has crossed 10%.

23. Use commas when writing down large figures. For instance, use \$1,000, not \$1000.

24. State money figures in US dollars first, and then include figures in the local currency, where applicable, in parentheses. “The project cost \$1 million (1.48 Australian dollars).”

25. Spell numbers from one to ten, and use numerals for 11 and higher numbers.

26. Do not abbreviate numbers. Use “million” and “billion,” not “M” or “bn.”

27. Use the US and the EU instead of the U.S. and the E.U.

28. For more detailed guidelines on style, consult the [FO° Style Guidelines](#)

29. Refer to the [University of Oxford Style Guide](#) for further guidance.

Raw Text	Post-Editing Published Text
Change winds blowing in the GCC	The GCC Now Prefers Russia to the West
<p>HEADLINE: The original was unclear and unlikely to catch reader attention. The new version makes it clear what the article is about. It also scores well on headline analyzers.</p>	
<p>The recent decision by OPEC+ to cut production was a jab in the eye to the West but one that has been a long time coming.</p>	<p>The recent decision by OPEC+ to cut production was a jab in the eye to the West but one that has been a long time coming.</p>
<p>SUMMARY EDITS: The above summary captured the essence of the article and, therefore, required no change.</p>	
<p>The Gulf's relationship with the West has faced a decade of uncertainty. US willingness to stand by while popular uprisings overthrew longstanding Middle East allies during the Arab Spring – and in the case of Bahrain show tepid support for the pro-democracy movement – left a significant impact on the GCC states. The unease has since been combined with a messy retreat from Afghanistan and a reluctance to co-operate with the GCC in their war to defeat the Houthis in Yemen. While political change is a regular event in the democratic West, this decade has also witnessed leadership changes in every Gulf monarchy bar Bahrain, with the rise of leaders who do not subscribe to the old formulas that had previously defined relations. Thus, a confluence of events has emerged to reinforce the GCC's growing negative perception of the West and most particularly of America.</p>	<p>The Gulf's relationship with the West has faced a decade of uncertainty. The White House's willingness to stand by long-standing Middle East allies during the popular uprisings of the Arab Spring left the states who form the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) uneasy. The messy American retreat from Afghanistan and the reluctance to cooperate with the GCC against the Houthis in Yemen has added to the unease.</p> <p>In the West, political change is a regular feature. Except for Bahrain, the GCC has had its taste of political change too. New monarchs have taken charge and they do not subscribe to the same views of international relations as their predecessors. Today, the GCC has an increasingly negative perception of the West in general and the US in particular.</p>
<p>REASONS FOR PARAGRAPH EDITS</p> <p>The original paragraph in the left column was a touch too long. Therefore, we broke them down into two.</p> <p>The sentences were convoluted and difficult to understand. Therefore, we made them shorter as well.</p> <p>The author used GCC without first using its full name. So, we used the full form and then put the term in brackets for use in the rest of the article.</p>	

It should therefore come as no surprise that the GCC states are increasingly acting in a manner that is deviating from traditional relationships of alliance with the West. Brexit, disintegration of European unity, the effects of the Trump administration, a rising China and COVID have further stressed international dynamics. For the GCC, this has simply accelerated the perception that their future lies East. UAE Senior Diplomatic Advisor to the President, Anwar Gargash highlighted this point when the US lent on their Gulf ally to halt the construction of a Chinese military facility in Abu Dhabi. Gargash stated that the UAE and the GCC are worried about another cold war saying “that is bad news for all of us because the idea of choosing is problematic in the international system, and I think this is not going to be an easy ride.” While the UAE did indeed stop construction, the decision to have allowed it in the first place signifies a misstep by the Emiratis who should have realised the base would be viewed as a threat to the West. There is little room for negotiation over space for another military competitor within the GCC and in this regard, had the base gone ahead Abu Dhabi would have been forced to a decision: transfer responsibility to China as security guarantor or maintain ties to the West.

The convergence of Brexit, the disintegration of European unity, the effects of the Donald Trump administration, a rising China and COVID-19 has put further stress on the dominant US-led postwar order. The GCC now sees its future pointing to the East. Anwar Gargash, the UAE’s senior diplomatic advisor to the president, highlighted this point when the US pressured its Gulf ally to halt the construction of a Chinese military facility in Abu Dhabi. As per Gargash, the UAE and the GCC are worried about another cold war, claiming that it “is bad news for all of us because the idea of choosing is problematic in the international system, and I think this is not going to be an easy ride.”

While the UAE did indeed stop Chinese construction, the decision to allow it in the first place might have been a misstep by the Emiratis. They should have realized that the West would view the base as a threat. There is little room for another military competitor within the GCC. Therefore, Abu Dhabi faced a simple choice: choose China as a security guarantor or maintain ties to the West.

REASONS FOR PARAGRAPH EDITS

The sentences were far too long and convoluted. The first sentence was unnecessary and began with “should,” which is generally a bad idea. The paragraph was far too long.

Subheading:

Saudi-led GCC Ignores the West’s Requests

Subheadings are critical to give any article structure. Relevant subheadings also catch the eye and retain reader interest.

Through the lens of energy politics, the West has sought to engage its partners to support efforts to isolate Putin. But during the recent OPEC+ meeting in Vienna, a Saudi-led decision was taken to cut production with the clear intent to push prices upward. The White House was enraged by the decision as President Biden is striving to rein

Since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine War, the West has sought support from its partners to isolate President Vladimir Putin. Lower energy prices are critical to the success of the West and Washington has pressured the GCC to increase oil production.

in what Americans are paying at the pumps ahead of the November mid-terms. American anger aside, the production cut and concomitant price rise not only directly assists President Putin to maintain his war on Russia through increased revenue, globally it hurts a wide array of states struggling with high inflation and the looming threat of recession. After the previous failed approaches by [Biden](#) and former [UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson](#) to encourage the GCC states to increase oil production, the fault line is now clear to all. As a result, the White House announced it is [re-evaluating its relationship with Saudi Arabia](#) and many high level political figures have been blunt in their criticism, calling for a freeze on future cooperation including arms sales. Of note: while the Saudis led the OPEC production cut initiative, there was no significant opposition from its regional allies, suggesting a collective political intent.

Therefore, the Saudi-led decision in the recent [OPEC+ meeting](#) in Vienna to cut production has upset Washington greatly. In fact, the White House was enraged by the OPEC+ decision. President Joe Biden has been trying to rein in prices at the pump before the November midterms but prices will now go up thanks to the Saudis and their friends. The decision to cut production hurts Biden domestically and helps Putin in prosecuting his war against Ukraine. As an oil producer, Russian revenues have just received a shot in the arm.

Thanks to the OPEC+ decision, inflation will go up. So will interest rates and the risk of a global recession. It is now clear that both [Biden](#) and [Boris Johnson](#), the former British prime minister, failed in their efforts to convince the GCC to increase oil production. Although cutting oil production was a Saudi-led initiative, no other GCC power expressed any objection. This suggests that the GCC has a collective political intent to raise oil prices.

REASONS FOR PARAGRAPH EDITS

The paragraph was far too long and so were the sentences. The author meandered a bit. Therefore, we tightened the argument.

The political significance of their collective action must be understood within the context of Putin's war. By embarking on this strategy, the GCC has aligned with Russia and is actively opposing Western efforts to back Ukraine. The war in Ukraine, as the GCC sees it, is not within their direct geographic sphere and therefore not a security concern. The GCC is also reflecting that when concerns over its own security from Iran and the Houthis were raised, these were rubbished by the White House, to the point where US support for the war in Yemen was halted. Curtailing oil production could be seen as petulance but is also the culmination of a decade of mistrust.

After this decision, the White House has announced that it is re-evaluating its [relationship](#) with Saudi Arabia. Members of the US Congress have called for a freeze on future cooperation including stopping arms sales. For them, given the context of Putin's war on Ukraine, the GCC's decision to cut oil production effectively aligns it with Russia.

As far as the GCC sees it, Ukraine is not in the same geographical sphere and, therefore, it does not see the war as a security concern. For the GCC, Iran is the big security concern. It is also irked that the White House rubbished concerns over the Houthis and ended support for the Saudis in the war in [Yemen](#). The decision to cut oil production is not a product of petulance but the culmination of a decade of mistrust.

REASONS FOR PARAGRAPH EDITS

The opening sentence did not transition well from the previous paragraph. The writing had the same issue as in previous paragraphs.

Subheading:

Ever Closer Relations with Russia

Subheadings are critical to give any article structure. Relevant subheadings also catch the eye and retain reader interest.

The UAE's rapid growth in international standing has won many plaudits. It has been able to expertly manage strategic narratives to align with foreign partners on issues such as countering violent extremism. Under the leadership of Mohammed bin Zayed (MbZ) the UAE has grown assertive in its foreign policy, engaging in conflicts in Mali, Libya, Sudan, and Yemen. His diplomatic initiatives include building a strong relationship with Putin's Russia. Putin, for his part, sees the UAE as an extremely useful partner in his longstanding goal to build an economic and transportation corridor to markets in Asia.

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REASONS FOR PARAGRAPH EDITS

We edited this paragraph lightly because the author was clear and concise. We changed MbS to MBS because that is the preferred acronym for the Saudi crown prince.

After OPEC's decision to cut production, MbZ travelled to Moscow for a state visit. The UAE has tried to claim the visit was intended to help support peace talks. But the timing and intention are clear. If Abu Dhabi had wanted to signal a cautious approach and claim neutrality, UAE Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed would have made the trip, or a phone call would have taken place. Instead, an in-person meeting illustrated the strength of Emirati-Russian ties.

After the OPEC+ decision to cut production, MBZ traveled to Moscow for a state visit. The UAE has claimed the visit was intended to help support peace talks. But its timing and intention are clear. If Abu Dhabi wanted to signal neutrality in the Russia-Ukraine War, UAE Foreign Minister Abdullah bin Zayed would have made the trip. Alternatively, MBZ could have made a phone call instead. The in-person meeting was to broadcast the strength of Emirati-Russian ties.

REASONS FOR PARAGRAPH EDITS

Again, we edited this paragraph lightly because the author was clear and concise.

Military support and cooperation between the [UAE and Russia is active across Africa](#), defence platforms manufactured in the UAE have been seen in the hands of [Russian and Chechen](#) troops in Ukraine and the UAE has become a [key outlet](#) for Russia to continue its trade in oil and chemicals to Asia. Even so, it is the Saudis who have drawn the ire of Washington while the UAE's close engagements with Moscow have either been ignored or are simply not known about.

Russia is giving the UAE military support and conducting joint operations across [Africa](#). Defense platforms manufactured in the UAE have been seen in the hands of Russian and Chechen [troops](#) in Ukraine. The UAE has also emerged as a [key outlet](#) for Russian trade in oil and chemicals with Asia. Even so, it is the Saudis who have drawn the ire of Washington while the UAE's close engagements with Moscow have flown under the radar.

REASONS FOR PARAGRAPH EDITS

We shortened the sentences and tightened the argument in this paragraph.

Kyiv is more than aware of the strong relationship between the UAE and Russia and does not see MbZ as a neutral actor. President Zelensky can point to the UAE initially refraining from condemning Russia's invasion and throughout the war to the visits [senior Emirati officials](#) have routinely made to Moscow. Dialogue with Kyiv, on the other hand, is sparse.

Ukraine is more than aware of the strong relationship between the UAE and Russia. Kyiv does not see MBZ as a neutral actor. The UAE initially refrained from condemning Russia's invasion. Thereafter, senior Emirati [officials](#) have routinely visited Moscow. On the other hand, dialogue with Kyiv is sparse.

REASONS FOR PARAGRAPH EDITS

We shortened sentences again and made the argument crisper. Note that we used Ukraine and Kyiv instead of Kyiv and President Zelensky to give the paragraph more flow. Note that we cut out conjecture in the form of "President Zelensky can point to..." and made the paragraph more factual.

While attempts will be made to [reshape the narrative](#) of recent events within the GCC, for the West the deterioration of trust and confidence cannot simply be ignored. It will lead to further strains. Neither MbS nor MbZ have travelled to the US in recent years due to the former's involvement in the [murder of Jamal Khashoggi](#) and the latter's in [Russian interference](#) in the election that brought Trump to power. As things stand, it does not look like either will return to Washington in the foreseeable future. The decisions to align so closely with Russia indicates a sea change within GCC policy that could have seismic implications for the long-term.

Many will attempt to reshape the [narrative](#) of recent events within the GCC. However, the deterioration of trust and confidence between the GCC and the West is out in the open now and will lead to further strains. Neither MBS nor MBZ have traveled to the US in recent years. MBS's involvement in the murder of [Jamal Khashoggi](#) and the MBZ's in [Russian interference](#) in the 2016 US election that brought Trump to power have clouded potential visits. By aligning so closely with Russia and raising oil prices, the two rulers have wrought a sea change in GCC policy that will inevitably have seismic consequences.

REASONS FOR PARAGRAPH EDITS

Yet again we shortened the sentences and tightened the argument. Since this was the concluding paragraph, we made sure that the last line was punchy.

Fair Observer^o

Independence, Diversity, Debate