Chapter - IV

Iran in the Post-Gulf War I Conflict
Situation in the Persian Gulf
The Iran Iraq War had been regarded as the best conduit for the export of the revolution as the issue of the war were intertwined with the question of export of the revolution. As the war progressed two schools of thought emerged. While, on the one hand, the internationals were of the opinion that the war should be used as a vehicle to export the revolution, the Stalinists' advocated the consolidation of the revolution at home as the best strategy for the republic's future progress, on the other. Mozaffari argues that, like its Russian counterpart, which eventually became "revolution", in one country, the Islamic revolution has also evolved from the Umma revolution to the Iranian Islamic Revolution.¹

Senior Islamic figures like Grand Ayatollah Tabatabi Qomi had condemned the war as un-Islamic and issued a fatwa against continuing the war as early as in 1985. The fatwa reads as follows: "The war between Iran and Iraq is completely haram [forbidden by the Sacred Law].... large sums of money are wasted Towns and villages are destroyed. Women are widowed and children are orphaned."² This fatwa is significant because it came at the time when Ayatollah Khomeini and his supporters were denoting the war as a "blessing for the Islamic Republic".

The end of the war shook the balance of the existing social, political and economic order. The pragmatists saw in

¹. M. Mozaffair, "Changes in the Iranian Political System after Ayatollah Khomeini's Death", Political Studies, XL1, 4 December, 1993, pp. 611-17.
this post war scenario great opportunities to purpose their own reformist agenda. However, they realized that so long as Khomeini remained on the scene they would not be in a position to isolate the Maktabis. Therefore, they began to adapt the system to survive the Ayatollah’s eventual departure, for their own survival was dependent on the survival of the Islamic Republic.

As far as the Republic’s institutions of power were concerned they had so far been resilient enough to survive an external change. The key problem lay in the structure of power, which had been designed and moulded to suit Ayatollah Khomeini personally. It was, therefore, imperative that a process of structural reform, including constitutional reform, should begin before the Ayatollahs death, and that it should enjoy his blessing, if a smooth transfer of power was to take place in the Islamic Republic.

Ayatollah Montazeri’s resignation as Faqih-designate in March 1989 ended a prolonged period of jokeying between Montazeri, Rafsanjani and Khomeini, Montazeri’s departure from the political scene opened up new opportunities for the more junior and pragmatist statesman to dominate the system. Khamenei and Rafsanjani gained a great deal from the resignation of moutazeri so much so that they were able to form the Leader-President alliance. This was recognized as in the interest of providing continuity, as well as being symptomatic of Ayatollah Khomeini’s acknowledgement of the need to structure for succession in place before his death. For this the constitution had to be reformed to reflect both
the changes in the institutional distribution of power and the subtle new realities in the rebric of power.

Ayatollah Khoemini's death on 3 June 1989 opened the way for the election of a new Faqih by the Assembly of experts. On 5 June the Assembly named Khamenei as the new Faqih, bypassing the country's senior Ayatollahs. Khamenei’s appointment put a swift end to the speculation about the succession debate; it also galvanised Hojjatoleslam Rafsanjani into action. He could now pursue his political career unhindered, and with the support of Khamenei. Election to the post of President, which Khamenei vacated, was held on 28 July 1989. Rafsanjani, then the speaker of the Majlis, won it with an overwhelming majority. Rafsanjani also achieved a significant victory when, in the general election to the Majlis in April 1992, the hardliners faced a near total rout. With this reforms came to dominate the national agenda.

Basically, three areas of policy change can be identified in the post-Khomeini Iran: first, domestic politics; second, economic and social policy; third, foreign policy. Not all of them have been pursued with the same vigour by the new administration. Of the three areas, the main focus has bear on economic and foreign policy.

On political reform the Islamic Republic has been much more cautious about advocating change and even slower to implement it. As Nader Entessar notes, "the Islamic Republic has yet to devise a formal and institutionalised system of
political participation."³ Infact, there exists a certain element of continuity with pre-revolution Iran, as for much of the Shahs rule only three political parties were allowed to operate in Iran, none of them freely. The political parties concerned were the Iran Novin (The ruling party), Mardom and Pan Iranist. In 1975 the Shah decreed the end of the old party system, creating in its place a single-party political system (the new party was called Rastakhiz) and disregarding the "loyal opposition". In the Islamic Republic the ruling party, the Islamic Republican Party (IRP) was disbanded even before the death of Khomeini and no new political party had appeared to represemt the post-Khomeini leadership of Iran.

Although the regime initiated some political changes as early as December 1988, mainly by considering the implementation of the Political Parties' and Groups' Activities Act of 1981 (suspended for the previous seven years) little tangible progress has been made in the direction of political freedoms. Rafsanjani even talked of communists being allowed to operate freely in the future.⁴ It should be recalled that the war was given the official reason for the suspension of the Parties Act⁵. The change in the political atmosphere enabled some 24 groups and personalities to apply to the Interior Ministry for formal

⁴. IRNA, 7 December, 1989.
⁵. For details see the Interior Minister’s interview in Kayhan, (Tehran), 14 December, 1988.
recognition.\(^6\) By mid February 1989 over 30 parties had submitted application\(^7\), none of which received a licence to operate. No changes to the constitution were envisaged in regard to political organisational rights and freedoms in Iran, despite the establishment in 1993 of a human rights committee attached to the Majlis.

The changes in the foreign policy realm have been dominated by the need to improve Iran’s regional and international standing through co-operation and dialogue with West, the (Forman) USSR, the Gulf Arab States and other Arab and regional actors. This stemmed partly from Iran’s economic needs in the area of reconstruction, and partly from recognition of the fact that the Republic’s diplomatic isolation had severe repercussions on Tehran’s regional status. The need for economic reform and policy change was the dominant theme of Rafsanjanis presidency. Against the background of a deteriorating domestic economy, the new government’s strategy was based on raising industrial production and accelerating economic growth. To raise foreign finance for reconstruction and economic development was a major priority for Rafsanjani administration.

Throughout, the emphasis was on economic cooperation with the West and others, which in turn depended on correct, if not warm, diplomatic ties. As Hojjatoleslam Rafsanjani stated in one of his Friday sermons on 1 September 1989, "

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7. SWB, ME/0384, 14 February 1989.
I will not now engage in fantasies of an independent and self-sufficient society, plainly endorsing further integration into the international system. 8

I Iran's Foreign Policy Between the Two Gulf Wars

The "pragmatism" in Iran's regional and international policies from the summer of 1988 found substance in the attempts to restore and improve relations with its neighbours and the west. An improvement in such relations was seen as a precondition to the ending of Iran's diplomatic isolation, and the return of stability to the Persian Gulf region. The return to normality, would also remove the need for a high profile Western military presence in the region, which in turn was vital to the strengthening of Iran's regional position and its ambitions to be the regional replacement of the West. Without the Western military presence in the Persian Gulf Iran could again attempt to reassert its authority as the dominant power.

In the face of Western naval build up in the Persian Gulf, Iran's naval defeats at the hand of US forces, the Mecca riots and breakdown in relations with Saudi Arabia, increasing tension with Kuwait, its isolation in multilateral organisations and agencies forced Tehran to reassess its foreign policy objectives.

In the course of flurry of diplomatic activity, including visit to a number of Gulf Arab states by high-

8. SWR, ME/0552, 4 September 1989.
level delegations Iran was able to restore correct and cordial relations with all Persian Gulf States with the exception of Saudi Arabia. Iran also announced that it was working on a plan that would guarantee the security of the regional states. This reflected a first concrete evidence of the change in thinking and attitude at the highest decision-making levels in Tehran\textsuperscript{9}. To reinforce its new position, Iran withdrew all the 20-25 armed speed boats based on the island of Abu Musa which had been used to lay mines and in attacks on shipping in the Persian Gulf.\textsuperscript{10}

Having embarked on resolution of conflicts in the region, Iran also looked towards its big northern neighbours with a spirit of reconciliation and compromise as well as towards Afghanistan. Gorbachev’s New Thinking helped the process immensely. The Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan enabled Iran to exert influence on its Afghani Mojahedin allies to look for a peaceful resolution of the conflicts\textsuperscript{11}. Rafsanjani and Velayati attempted to arrange a peaceful transfer of power from the Soviet installed government to a Mojahedin dominated government of "National Unity" as early as January 1989. The Tehran conference on Afghanistan embodied the change of Iranian policy towards Afghanistan: the Iranian backed Shii groups were presented, not as the vanguard of the Afghani Islamic revolution but as a minority community with specific rights in the proposed Islamic

\textsuperscript{9} Gulf Report December, 1988
\textsuperscript{10} Ibid.
regime. Although Tehran's views were largely limited by its competition with Saudi Arabia for control of the Islamic agenda in Afghanistan, it continued to seek the return of order to its eastern borders by advocating an alliance between competing Mojahedin groups and by endorseing UN support for a peaceful dialogue with the Najibollah government. Iran's continuing support for its Afghani allies (eight Shi'i groups), however, prevented an early resolution of the Afghan entangle. And this fuelled Saudi Iranian rivalry in Afghanistan.

Iran also attached great importance to the three-members state Economic cooperation organisation which was in part a direct response to the emergence of two Arab clubs -- the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab Cooperation Council which encompassed all its Arab neighbours. Since then the ECO has grown into a 10 member organisation and has the potential to become a particularly important regional body, and potentially a powerful diplomatic tool in Iran's hands.

In the past, the Shah had exploited the non Arab Status of Turkey and Pakistan to Iran's advantage, forging close economic and military ties with both states. In the aftermath of his fall it was expected that serious strains

would occur in this relationship, but the war and the associated economic and military needs of Iran militated against a complete break. Indeed, the ECO continued to survive and was increasingly seen as providing Iran with both economic and military support, and potentially as the body able to resist, in geographical terms, the onslaught from Arab based regional groupings in the Persian Gulf.

The Lebanon policy of the Islamic Republic was also under review by the new leadership, President Rafsanjani himself took charge of IRI's Lebanon Policy because Lebanese Mohtashemi Shii Hezbollah movement co-led by Hojjatoleslam had the potential to disrupt and hamper the reforms of the new administration. Rafsanjani, in order to marginalise the influence of the radical factions within the regime, accelerated secret negotiations with Western powers (largely through the UN in 1991) for the release of all hostages. Iran's problems with its Lebanese policy were in effect turned into serving and advancing the domestic needs of the Islamic Republic.

In short, under the astute leadership of Rafsanjani, Iran was well on the way towards reintegrating itself fully into the regional and international order. Tehran had either restored full relations or had managed to reopen channels of communications with most of its former antagonists, including the US, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt.

However, a number of external events, in 1990 heightened Iran's concern with stability in its geopolitical environment. In its peace talks with Iraq no substantial
progress could be made, and the potentially destabilising impact of the "no war, no peace" Stalement proved a bottleneck for Iran to rehabilitate itself in the region. This factor, added to the rapidity with which Iran’s only influential Arab ally, Syria, was being sucked into the pro western Arab camp further heightened Tehran’s anxieties.

Although close contacts between Tehran and Damascus were maintained, the rapprochement in Syrian-Egyptian relations in 1990, and the successes of the Saudi-Syrian endorsed Taif process for the return of peace to the Lebanon raised the prospects of a re-emergence of the same Arab alliance which existed in the mid-1970s. The danger from Tehran’s perspective was that the presence of such an Arab alliance could only lead to the marginalisation of Iran in regional affairs. Without diplomatic relations with either Saudi Arabia or Egypt, and unable to offer new incentives to Syria, Iran was actually aware of its vulnerability in this area.

It was at this juncture that the Iraqi invasion on Kuwait on 2 August 1990 provided an opportunity for Iran in terms of rehabilitation in the comity of nations. Long considered a pariah state, Iran suddenly found itself the centre of attraction, both regionally as well as globally. Tehran became the hub of diplomatic activity as a stream of foreign dignitaries poured into the Iranian capital with a view to finding a solution to the Gulf crisis.
II. Iran and The Kuwaiti Crisis

Iraq invaded Kuwait on 2 August 1990 and by the end of the month it had completely absorbed Kuwait into its administrative structure despite international condemnation of the invasion. Shortly thereafter, US troops backed by force from various countries were quickly dispatched to Saudi Arabia to protect the Kingdom from Iraqi assault and to impress upon President Saddam Husain that he should withdraw from Kuwait. The invasion and the subsequent entry of the US forces into Saudi Arabia had a massive impact on the regional politics, causing alliances to shift and crumble. This chapter will examine the Iranian policy towards the Kuwaiti crisis and an attempt will also be made to analyse the Iranian behaviour in the light the country’s foreign policy perspective.

i) The Border Conflict Between Iraq and Kuwait

Iraqi irredentist claim over Kuwait goes back to the late 1930s when the second Iraqi monarch, King Ghazi, raised the possibility of Iraq intervening in Kuwait and incorporating it.\(^{14}\) However, relations between the two countries remained normal and cordial as the monarhies in both countries were created and sustained by British which kept things under control due to its massive presence in the Gulf.

Relations between the two countries started deteriorating with the overthrow of monarchy in Iraq in July 1958. Three years later, when the British granted independence to Kuwait, Prime Minister Qassem claimed Kuwait to be a part of Basra province. Alarmed by the Iraqi stance, the Kuwaiti Emir appealed for British military help under the Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Consultations signed in June 1961. The British immediately responded by sending 6000 troops to defend the nascent city state. With the overthrow of Qassem in February 1963, a new chapter opened in Iraqi-Kuwait relationship. The new Iraqi ruler, Abdul Salam Arif, recognized Kuwait's independence and both countries exchanged ambassadors shortly thereafter. Simultaneously, an Iraq-Kuwait Joint Committee was set up to look into the problem of border demarcations.

With the emergence of the Ba’ath government in Iraq in 1968, relations between the two countries began to deteriorate gradually. In later 1969, Baghdad asked permission from Kuwait to station Iraqi forces near Bubiyan to safeguard Umm Qasr port from any possible Iranian attack. Kuwait rejected the Iraqi demand whereupon Baghdad resorted to pressure tactics and began massing troops near the Kuwaiti border. Tension mounted and in early 1973 border skirmishes led to casualties on both sides. Meanwhile border demarcation talks were resumed with Iraq reiterating

17. Marion Farouk-Sluglett P. Sluglet, Iran Since 1958 (London : KPI), p. 120.
its demand that Bubiyan and Warba be ceded or leased to it for defence purposes. The Kuwaities turned down the Iraqi demand and the controversy persisted throughout the 1970s. One important reason for the Kuwaiti refusal was their apprehension of Iranian reaction. Were Kuwait to cede the two islands, the Shah of Iran, who wanted to be the policeman of the Gulf, would have been antagonised. Were Iraq to acquire these islands, its ability to confront or challenge Tehran would certainly have been strengthened.

During the nearly decade long Iran Iraq war, pressure mounted on Kuwait to cede the two islands to Baghdad. During the initial stages of the war Kuwait maintained a neutral stance but as the war dragged on Kuwait increasingly sided with Iraq. Its support incensed Tehran and the latter bombed Kuwait several times for its role in channeling supplies to Baghdad. Faced with the Iranian threat, Kuwait signed a secret agreement with Iraq in 1984 whereby Iraqi troops were allowed to use the two islands for security purpose.\(^{18}\)

Convinced that by providing financial and logistic support to Iraq during the Gulf War, it had earned its goodwill, Kuwait sent a high level delegation to Baghdad led by Crown Prince Sheikh Saad Abdullah soon after the 1988 ceasefire in order to resolve the border question once and for all. But to their utter shock, the Kuwaitis found that the Iraqi position with regard to border demarcation, instead of softening had further hardened.

Although Baghdad had the upper hand at the time of ceasefire negotiations, the Iraqi economy was in shambles. Iraq had incurred a huge foreign debt and was spending a large part of its scarce resources on maintaining a huge military machines built up during the war years. The sharp fall in oil prices further aggravated Iraqi economic problems. At a time when Iraq needed all the resources it could garner, the fall in oil prices was a terrible blow to Saddam Hussein. In this regard Kuwait earned the ire of Baghdad because Kuwait had become one of the most frequent violators of the OPEC quotas.

Baghdad accused Kuwait of deliberately harming Iraq’s economy by exceeding the OPEC oil quotas and reducing its oil revenues by $89 million between 1981-90. A reduction of one dollar in the price of a barrel of oil, according to Iraq, resulted in a loss of over a billion dollar for Iraq annually. Apart from this, Iraq also accused Kuwait of stealing Iraqi oil since 1980 from the southern section of Rumaylah oil field and dumping the oil in the international oil market. Following this Iraqi complaint the Gulf oil ministers met in Jedah in July wherein Kuwait, taken aback by the Iraqi accusation, pledged to adhere to the OPEC quotas.

Qutas. Not content with this assurance, Baghdad renewed its verbal attack on Kuwait. In July 1990, Saddam Hussein threatened military action if Kuwait failed to abide by the OPEC quotas.

iii) Invasion and its Immediate Aftermath:

In late July 1990, Iraqi troops began amassing near the border with Kuwait. On 25 July Saddam told the US Ambassador Glaspie that he was in dire need of money and that an invasion on Kuwait cannot be ruled out. Glaspie is recorded as saying that the US had no position on the Kuwaiti border question, and that the Americans understand Iraq's desire to increase oil revenue. On 2 August in a dramatic military operation some 100,000 Iraqi troops with 300 tanks overran Kuwait in matter of hours.

At the time of the Iraqi invasion, the Arab League Foreign Ministers had already assembled in Cairo as part of a meeting of the aIC. On 3 August the Ministers denounced Iraqi invasion, called for immediate and unconditional withdrawal and asserted their commitment to preserve the sovereignty and territorial integrity of member states of the Arab League. The Foreign Ministers opposed foreign intervention in the crisis but they also rejected Kuwaiti demand that they form a joint Arab force to counter Iraq's army. The vote of condemnation at the Foreign Ministers' meet was significant. Fourteen states, including Syria voted affirmatively while five abstained (Jordan, Mauritania, PLO, 22. Saffire, n. 20, p. 30.
Sudan, and Yemen), Iraq was ineligible to vote and the Libyans withdraw on their government's instruction. The failure of the foreign ministers to call up an Arab force led the foreign ministers from the GCC countries to issue a separate statement wherein it was claimed that the clause which rejected foreign intervention did not apply to adherence to collective international measures endorsed by the UN, since the Arab League Charter commits members to UN resolutions. This GCC addendum opened the doors to Kuwaiti and Saudi Arabian request for US military support.

By the time the emergency Arab Summit was convinced in Cairo on 10 August, inter Arab differences has escalated. Saddam Hussein had formally annexed Kuwait to Iraq two days earlier just after President Bush had sent ground forces to Saudi Arabia. Iraq wanted the Summit to focus on the inadmissibility of foreign forces operating on Arab land. Jordan, Libya, PLO and Yemen urged the Arab leaders to form a mediation team that would attempt to reconcile the parties without condemning Iraq and that might facilitate the establishment of an Arab peacekeeping force to separate them during negotiations. The GCC members states rejected Iraq's stand as an effort to divert attention from the cause of the crisis. They also derided the proposal for mediation as a move that would delay action and help Iraq consolidate its position. Due to stiff opposition the proposal was never put to vote. The Summit finally passed a resolution which supported GCC to implement the right to legitimate defence and agreed to dispatch Arab forces to support the GCC in the defence of their territories against any foreign
While the Arab world was split down the middle over Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the GCC was working overtime to put into place an anti Iraqi coalition, in mid-August Saddam Hussein abruptly sought an immediate formal peace with Iran by unconditionally accepting all Iranian claims since the declaration of ceasefire including the reinstatement of Algiers Treaty of 1975. It was obvious that these concessions were dictated by expediency since Iraq wanted to move troops from its borders with Iran to Kuwait. Nonetheless, Iran accepted the Iraqi offer though it insisted that the issue of peace with Iraq was separate and had nothing to do with the Iraqi annexation of Kuwait. On 18 August Iraq began to withdraw troops from the central border areas of Ilam, Meymak and Mehran and nearly 80,000 prisoners of war were exchanged. On 11 September Iran and Iraq reestablished diplomatic relations.

iii) The Iranian Stand

While Tehran welcomed Saddam Hussein's offer of formal settlement of the Iran-Iraq war, it unequivocally condemned Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and offered to defend the other Gulf states from Iraqi aggression. Iran declared that it would adhere to the economic sanctions imposed on Iraq by the UN for the entire duration of the conflict. It was

23. The Times of India (Delhi), 11 August, 1990.
24. Ibid., 12 September 1990.
reported that Iraq tried to persuade Tehran to trade oil for food but the latter refused and agreed to provide only humanitarian assistance in the form of medicines and baby food. In fact, Iran's UN envoy, Kamal Kharazi, went out of his way to underscore Iranian compliance with the UN resolutions. He said that no Iraqi oil had been exported via Iran and that his government had arrested 430 persons involved in smuggling food to Iraq. 25.

As the deployment of multinational forces in Saudi Arabia gathered momentum a perceptible shift in Iran's Islamic revolutionary ideology could be discerned. In stark contrast to its earlier insistence on keeping the Gulf out of bounds for foreign powers, the Iranian President Rafsanjani almost came round to accepting it as a necessary evil in this particular case. Delivering a Friday sermon he said: "We have no objections to them (the multinational forces) obstructing aggression; any body may help in anyway. However, it would have been better if the regional countries would have done so". 26 Another departure from its position of one indivisible Ummah and artificiality of nation state was its concern at the alteration of the political map of the Gulf due to Iraqi annexation of Kuwait. Rafsanjani opposed any alteration in the territorial map of the region. He said: "If Kuwait were to go ahead and cede Bubiyan to Saddam all the same we would act within our means to stop it". 27

26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
The wooing of Iran by Saddam Hussein produced extreme concern in the GCC. The latter too began to make overtures towards Tehran in a bid to win Iran's sympathy if not outright support. On 22 August 1990, the Kuwaiti foreign minister, Sheikh Sabah, arrived in Tehran and held talks with Velayati. He expressed his regret over past mistakes of his Emirate which Tehran accepted. Shortly thereafter on 4 September UAE's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs arrived in Tehran with a message from Sheikh Zayed to Rafsanjani. The latter reiterated the need for greater cooperation between Iran and the GCC and said Iran was ready to help in resolving the crisis. This came as a relief to the GCC because at that time there were constant rumours of Iran violating UN sanctions against Iraq. Close on the heels of UAE's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs visit to Tehran, the Omani foreign minister arrived in Iran. Practical cooperation between the GCC and Iran was discussed between him and velayati. The next visitor was Kuwaiti Deputy Foreign Minister who held extensive talks with Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister. Iran made it clear that without its presence no regional security arrangement was either feasible or complete. In line with its stated stand Iran emphasized the need to form a politico-military structure by the GCC countries themselves which would guarantee regional stability and security of the oil fields. The Kuwaiti minister told Iran that the GCC states were keen to have

28. Ibid.
29. The Times of India (Delhi), 5 September 1990.
30. Ibid., 19 September 1990.
Iran's participation in regional security setup which would include Western powers also. They wanted Iran to actively aid the multinational coalition against Iraq. On 29 September the GCC foreign ministers met Velayati in New York and discussed the new relationship that had developed between them and emphasized the need for greater cooperation. The following day the Saudi foreign minister met Velayati separately and discussed the possibility of normalizing relations between their two countries.

In early December 1990 Iran launched a large air, sea and military exercised codenamed "Piroozi" in the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman which lasted for ten days. Velayati then set off on a tour of the GCC states. The timing of the military exercise and the tour were significant. It took place just prior to the convening of the GCC Summit in Doha. At this Summit the Iranian Ambassador to Doha was invited to attend one of its sessions which was indeed an unusual move on the part of the GCC. In the Doha Declaration a separate section was included on relations with Iran wherein the GCC expressed its desire to establish good neighbourly relations with Iran on the basis of non-interference in domestic affairs and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Iranian foreign minister welcomed "the outcome of the Doha Summit

31. Ibid., 28 September, 1990.
32. It may be recalled that this was the first high level face-to-face contact between the two sides since the snapping of diplomatic ties between the two in 1987.
33. Dietl, n. 25, p. 264.
and hoped that this would mark the beginning for the Gulf states to begin basic cooperation towards protection of the security of the Gulf region..... and that it would end the presence of the alien forces as soon as possible.\(^{34}\)

From the foregoing analysis it is clear that the GCC was going all out to normalise relations with Iran and keep it out of the conflict even if it did not support the anti Iraqi Coalition. The GCC was partly successful in this endeavour because Iran not only condemned the Iraqi aggression but also reiterated its decision to honour all UN resolutions on the crisis. The Iranian government's decision to condemn Iraq and stay neutral as far as possible was not an easy one for there was tremendous pressure within Iran for supporting Iraq from the hardliners. The radical voices within Iran of Ahmad Khomeini, Ali Akbar Mohtashami and Mehdi Karroubi called for jehad and terrorist activity against the US and its allies in order to throw the foreign forces out of the Gulf. In September 1990, Ayatollah Khamenei was on the verge of endorsing the call of the handliners to Iranians to come to the aid of Iraq in its fight against Western imperialism. However, as the Iranian oil production and revenue soared and the economic benefits started accruing rapidly, these voices gradually receded into the background.\(^{35}\)

iv) Iran and the War:

Following the outbreak of war between Iraq and the

\(^{34}\) SWB/ME/0965/i(a & b), 28 December, 1990.

\(^{35}\) Dietl., n. 25, p. 263.
multinational forces in January 1991, Iran made it clear that it will not join either of the combatants at any cost and would remain neutral. Although Tehran's support of all the UN Security Council resolutions against Iraq and its declared policy of neutrality was in fact tilted towards the West and the GCC, many doubted the ability of Iran to remain neutral for long given the tremendous internal pressure in Iran for supporting Iraq. However, the Tehran government withstood all internal pressures and faithfully adhered to its policy of neutrality throughout the period of the conflict. In late January 1991, after having consulted Algeria, Yemen, France, the USSR and the Non-Aligned Movement, Iran called for an Islamic solution to the conflict. On 4 February President Rafsanjani announced that the terms of an Iranian peace initiative had been conveyed to Saddam Hussein through his deputy who had come to Tehran. The main points of the Iranian initiative, were as follows: a) a ceasefire in the war followed by, b) withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait followed by, c) withdrawal of all foreign forces from the Gulf --- the US, British and French etc. d) replacement of Iraqi and foreign troops in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia by an Islamic peace-keeping force, e) an end to the embargo against Iraq and f) in deference to the Iraqi insistence on the linkage of the conflict in Kuwait with other conflicts in West Asia, particularly the continuing Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, Iran called for an immediate halt to the Jewish influx into the Occupied Territories.36

While the Iranian peace initiative was welcomed by the Soviet Union, it was rejected by the US. The American President's immediate response was that "There is nothing to mediate". However, the US Secretary of State, James Baker, later outlined an ambitious plan for economic reconstruction in West Asia and a new Gulf security set up in which Iran was expected to play a role. Welcoming the Iranian initiative, the French Foreign minister described Iran as an essential piece in West Asia security and the French President Mitterrand took a personal initiative and spoke to Rafsanjani on the phone.37 Shortly after the US rejected the Iranian proposals, Saddam Hussein himself dismissed it, stating that Iraq had no intentions of withdrawing from Kuwait and accusing the US of trying to dominate the oil-rich Gulf by destroying Iraq. The Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister observed that "Kuwait was a cover up. The question is one of US and the Zionist aggression to destroy Iraq and subjugate the entire region."38 Despite the set-back Tehran continued to call for restraint on the part of the US-led coalition. It urged the multinational forces not to initiate hostilities on the ground until the limits of Iraq's flexibility had been determined. However, the countries contributing to the multinational forces were unwilling, by that time, to allow Iraq to drag on the conflict still further.

As the war in Kuwait intensified, at one point it summed

that Israel too might be dragged into the conflict due to Iraqi provocations. It was at this stage that the possibility of Iran joining the war seemed imminent. In an apparent reference to possible Israeli retaliation against Iraqi missile attacks President Khamenei told a delegations of Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood members that "Iran will go to the aid of other Muslim states if they are attacked by illegal Zionist entity". He however, added that "the cause of the Iraqi people and the Muslim nation of Iraq is very different from the cause of Saddam Hussein and his associates". 39

As the air bombardment of Iraq and Kuwait continued, Tehran accused the US-led coalition of exceeding the mandate of the UN resolution by seeking to totally destroy Iraq's military and industrial infrastructure. It issued an unusually terse warning to the allied nations fighting the war against Iraq that they should not harbour any ambition which centred around the dismemberment of Iraq after the war. It also specifically warned Turkey, which borders Iraq and was part of the anti Iraqi coalition, not to attempt to occupy northern Iraq where the oil fields of Mosul and Kirkuk are located. 40 In late January 1991, in a surprise development more than one hundred Iraqi aircrafts landed in Iran without having sought permission to do so. This was an embarrassing development for Iran and Foreign Minister Velayati, voicing protest over the Iraqi act, assured the 

West that it would hold the Iraqi pilots and the aircraft till the end of the war.41

The conclusion of hostilities towards the end of February triggered off a widespread uprising in Iraq against Saddam Hussein. A Shi‘ite led rebellion in Central and Southern Iraq posed a serious challenge to the Ba‘ath rule and troops loyal to Saddam Hussein were instructed to suppress it brutally. The intensification of repressive measures against the leaders of the revolt, particularly the arrest of Ayatollah Khoei, the main religious leader of Iraqi Shiites, earned the ire of Iran. President Rafsanjani condemned the Brutal suppression of the Shiite revolt in Iraq and, in a move aimed at administering a sharp rebuff to Saddam Hussein, declared that it would confiscate the Iraqi planes which had entered the Iranian territory during the war. Iran also allowed Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Baqir Alhakim, leader of the Iraqi Shiite movement opposed to the Iraqi President, to broadcast statements from Tehran proclaiming that the Shiites were battling to establish an Islamic state in Southern Iraq.42 The damage inflicted by the Iraqi armed forces on the Shiite shrines at Najaf, Karbala and Samarra was condemned by Tehran and Rafsanjani, in one of his Friday sermons, asked Saddam Hussein ot submit to the will of the Iraqi people. He said: "If the people are ready to take control of Iraq, you welcome it since it is impossible for the ruling Baath party to rebuild the country because neither the people of the country, nor regional people or

42. International Herald Tribune (Hong Kong), 8 March 1991.
even the world recognize it."  

Iraq accused Iran of providing material and human support for the southern and central rebellion citing the involvement of Teran-based Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI). In a clear indication of deteriorating relations, Iraq later resumed support for the insurgency activities of the largest Iranian dissident group, the Mujahidin-e-Khalq and the Kurdish Democratic Party. Eventual suppression of the internal rebellion led to mass exodus of Kurds and Shiites across the Iranian border. By April over half a million refugees had fled to Iran while another million were turned away by Iran as it did not have enough resources to cope with the exodus. Iran had earlier stated that it would not close its borders to Iraqis seeking sanctuary following the crushing of the rebellion by the Iraqi government but in view of the extremely large numbers it had to turn then away since it was inconceivable that Iran would be able to help them because the supplies were just not adequate.

Thus, Iran supported the Western move to establish safe havens for Iraqi Kurds in northern Iraq. In April, a proposal by the UK Prime Minister, John Major, that a UN supervised enclave be created in northern Iraq for the protection of the Kurdish population, was approved by the European Community. They warned Iraq that any interference

43. Indian Express (Delhi), 10 March 1991.
44. International Herald Tribune (Hong Kong), 8 April 1991.
in relief operation in the no-fly zone north of 36th and South of 32nd parallel would prompt military retaliations. Throughout the following month Iran accused Iraq for persecuting Shiite Muslims who had fled into the marshes in southern Iraq after the crushing of the southern rebellion.

v) Outcome of Iran's Policy

Iran's policy of neutrality during the second Gulf war paid rich dividends, in terms of rehabilitations in the comity of nations. Long considered a pariah state, Iran suddenly found itself the centre of attraction, both regionally as well as globally. Tehran became the hub of diplomatic activity as a stream of foreign dignitaries poured into the Iranian capital with a view to finding a solution to the Gulf crisis.

The Kuwaiti crisis saw a dramatic improvement in relations between Iran and the West and Iran and the Arab World. Towards the end of September 1990 Iran and UK reestablished diplomatic relations after Tehran assured the UK of its respect for International Law and its sincere desire to achieve the release of Western hostages held in Lebanon by pro-Iranian radical Shiite groups. The UK, on its part, assumed Iran that it respected Islam and understood the offence that Rushdi's novel had caused to Islam and Muslims the world over. Britain neither insisted on the withdrawal of the fatwa against Rushdi nor the release of Roger cooper, a British businessman, held in Iran since 1985 without trial. Shortly after the normalization of Iran UK

45. Ibid., 28 September 1990.
relations, the EC revoked its ban on senior level diplomatic contacts with Iran.

Iran's relations with the US also improved significantly during and after the Kuwaiti crisis. Indicating the American recognition of Iraqi regions, importance, the US President told journalists in Washington that a big country like Iran should not be forever treated as an enemy by all countries of the region. Reported US efforts to seek direct talks and a rapprochement with Iran were highlighted by Bush's comment that his country wanted better relations and no animosity. Following the Gulf war the World Bank extended to Iran its first loan since 1978—a loan made possible by the US decision to remain neutral on the matter. Simultaneously, Iranian oil sales to the US, which had ceased in 1987, were officially resummed in June 1991 following the approval of the US Treasury for American companies to purchase 250,000 barrels of Iranian crude. In October the Iranian government released Jon Patties, an American engineer who had been sentenced to ten years on spying charges, as a sign of the improving bilateral ties between the two countries.

Nearer home, the Kuwaiti crisis led to an all round improvement in Iran's relations with the Arab World. In March 1971 Saudi-Iranian relations were restored and the Saudi foreign minister visited Tehran in early June. Riyadh also agreed to receive 115,000 Iranian pilgrims during the Haj instead of a fixed quota of 45,000 decided after the 1987 clashes. Relations between Iran and Egypt also improved

46. Indian Express (New Delhi), 19 March 1991.
with both deciding to set up an 'interest office' in each other's capital as a first step towards the restoration of full diplomatic relations. Following a ten-year break the Iranian embassy in Amman was also reopened in March 1991. In late 1990, Iran along with Syria mediated between the rival Shites Lebanese militia Hizbollah and Amal and brought about peace settlement between them. Tehran and Damascus were also instrumental in achieving progress towards the release of all hostages being held in Lebanon.

The euphoria generated in the immediate aftermath of the second Gulf War gradually began to cool down as the coalition partners got down to the brass-tacks of establishing a viable security structure for the region. Desirous of playing a greater role in any future security set up for the region, Iran lobbied actively for its inclusion in any security arrangements of the region. It launched a diplomatic campaign aimed at building up goodwill in the GCC states. Iranian President Rafsanjani sent his envoy to the GCC states with a proposal for forming a common market as a prelude to some sort of security understanding. Some of the GCC states were warm towards the Iranian proposal but most were skeptical of the ability of Tehran to function within the evolving pro-Western security setup. The GCC states, in their quest for security, reposed more faith in the Western countries, particularly the US, rather than on a home grown security arrangement for

the region. As regards the Iranian contention that the security of the Gulf should be the responsibility of the littoral states and external powers should be kept out, there were simply no takers.

It was in this climate of mutual suspicion and frantic arms build up that an age old border dispute between Iran and the UAE was reopened in April 1992 by Iran. Iran used this to indicate to the GCC that there cannot be any security in the region without Iran.

III) Iran And the Abu Musa Crisis

The Iranian action in Abu Musa, belonging to Sharjah, in April 1992, received little attention in the regional media and was made public only four months later.

The 35 sq. mile island of Abu Musa is situated in the waters of the Persian Gulf, some 35 miles off the Sharjah coast and some 45 miles off the Iranian coast. Opposite, that is within the waters of the UAE side of the UAE Iran median line, some 24 miles north west of Abnu Musa lies the islands of Lesser Tunb and, further in the same direction, Greater Tunb. Abu Musa is characterised by deep waters providing good anchorage and extensive deposits of red iron oxide. The population of Abu Musa is around 2000, most of whom are branches of the Arab tribes inhabiting Sharjah. During the Iran-Iraq war, Iran used Abu Musa as a take-off point for speed boats used by revolutionary guards to attack merchant shipping and oil tankers.

In October 1971, Iranian forces occupied the three
islands immediately after Britain ended its direct rule in the lower Gulf. Legally, there is a basic difference between the status of Abu Musa and that of the uninhabited two Tunb islands under Iranian occupation. The ruler of Sharjah, under dures, did sign an agreement on 29 November, 1971, allowing Iran to occupy part of the island of Abu Musa, while salvaging Sharjah's sovereignty over the rest. The terms of the agreement are as follows:

1) Iranian troops would be stationed in part of the island, and in this area the Iranian flag would be flown and Iran would exercise full jurisdiction, 2) Sharjah would retain jurisdiction over the rest of the island, including the existing Sharjah police post there; 3) both Iran and Sharjah recognized a 12 mile limit of territorial waters around the island, and both agreed that the present concessionaire, the Buttes Gas and Oil company, a US concern, would continue oil exploration both on the island and offshore; 4) revenues accruing from oil exploration would be shared equally between Iran and Sharjah; 5) Iran would also give 1,500,000 a year to Sharjah in aid until Sharjah's annual revenue from oil deposits reached 3,000,000 a yer; 6) Iranian and Sharjah nationals would have equal fishing rights in the island's territorial waters. 48

In April 1992, the President of the United Arab

Emirates, Sheikh Zayid Ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, notified his allies in the GCC that Iran had evicted a large number of UAE nationals from the island of Abu Musa administered jointly by Iran and Sharjah. The Iranians had shut down the only school, a desalination plant and a police station located on the UAE administered part of the island. Tehran also turned back expatriate nationals mainly Indian School teachers returning to the UAE side of the island after vacations. The Iranians demanded that these expatriate workers must obtain an Iranian visa before being allowed to work on the island. A GCC official told the press on 15 April, 1992 that "the UAE has told other Gulf states that it is a very serious situation but no one will take action unless it is requested by the UAE." 

The Iranian Foreign Minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, denied the whole story and told a press conference in Tehran not to listen to rumours. He is reported to have confirmed that Abu Musa Arabs were still staying there and there were no plans to deport them. But on 22 April 1992, Tehran Times, in a commentary revealed that the "Sharjah Sheikhdom was recently told that non-UAE citizens wishing to travel to Abu Musa should obtain a special card which cannot be considered as equivalent to a visa permit".

In fact, the paper went on to add a mild threat to the

51. MEES (Cyprus), vol. 35, no. 15, 19 April 1992.
UAE, terming the Emirates' Sultan Bin Mohammad al-Qasim's response to the whole incident as "hasty" and "vociferous". These reports also indicate that Iran expelled non UAE nationals who were working there after they refused to exchange their UAE residence papers. Following this incident, the UAE Foreign Minister went to Tehran in May 1992 and met President Rafsanjani. However, the Iranian President rebuffed the UAE Foreign Minister, accusing the UAE of supporting Iraq during the Iran Iraq war and demanding that the UAE should either compensate Iran for losses incurred during the war or that both Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia should reduce their oil production in order to raise prices.

The UAE reacted rather belatedly to the development, but when it did, it chose to reopen the issue of the islands of the two Tumbs as well. Though the Shah had occupied all the three islands in one full swoop, there remained or basic difference in the status of Abu Musa over which Sharjah had come to an agreement with Iran and the Tumbs over which Ras al-Khaimah did not. 52

i) The Arab Reaction :

The GCC Ministerial Council, after a working meeting on 9 September 1992 in Jeddah, issued a press statement supporting the UAE in its dispute with Iran over the Gulf islands. The press statement interalia observed:

"The Council follows with extreme concern the measure taken by Iran on the island of Abu

52. Dietl, n. 49, p. 756.
Musa and the way events are developing there, expressed its strongest condemnation of these measures which violate the sovereignty and unity of one of the GCC member states and which shake the security and stability of the region. It (the GCC) calls upon the Islamic Republic of Iran to respect the memorandum of understanding which was reached by the Emirates of Sharjah and Iran and stresses that the island of Abu Musa had been the responsibility of the UAE since the Union (the UAE) was set up. It also expresses its categorical rejection of the continued occupation by the Islamic Republic of Iran of the island of Tunb al Kubra and Tunb al-Sughra (Greater and Lesser Tunb) which belongs to the UAE."

"While expressing the hope that the Islamic Republic of Iran would retreat from its position regarding these issues, the Council stresses its full backing for the UAE in holding on to its full sovereignty over the island of Abu Musa and its absolute support for all measures that may be taken by the UAE to affirm its sovereignty over the island".53

On 10 September 1992 Egypt, Syria and the GCC member states, expressing grave concern at Iran’s action in Abu

53. Sreedhar, n. 48, p. 798.
Musa and the continued occupation of the two Tunbs, called upon the Islamic Republic of Iran "to honour the memorandum of understanding reached between the Emirates of Sharjah and Iran. The ministers also expressed their categorical rejection of the Islamic Republic of Iran's occupation of the two Tunbs which also belonged to the UAE and reiterated their full support for the UAE in its adherence to complete sovereignty over Abu Musa island as well as for all measures it may undertake to reiterate its sovereignty over the island".  

The significance of the statement lies in the fact that Syria, a close ally of Iran in this group, threw its lot behind the fellow Arabs rather than support Tehran. One explanation for this Syrian attitude could be its fear that it will be isolated in the Arab world in this Arab versus Persian confrontation and the liberal financial help that was coming from the Arab world would stop if it does not endorse the Arab stand.

The Arab League, in its 78th session in Cairo on 14 September 1992, "condemned Iran's aggression against the islands of Abu Musa, Lesser Tunb and Greater Tunb. It also asserted UAE sovereignty over the islands and decided to forward the case of Iran's violation, which gravely endangers the region's security and stability, to the United Nations."  

54. Ibid., 799.
55. Abidi, n. 47, p. 714.
Other member countries of the GCC like Kuwait and Saudi Arabia strongly supported the UAE on the ownership of Abu Musa and condemned the "Iranian aggression."

ii) The Iranian Reaction:

In a sharp response to the GCC statement the Iranian leadership accused the Gulf Arab states of violating good neighbourly relations and affirmed that the three islands belonged to Iran. Morteza Sarmadi, the Foreign Ministry Spokesman, told IRNA on 10 September 1992 that the GCC statement -- "was a blatant violation of good neighbourly relations and the spirit of understanding and cooperation. We once again reiterate that according to the existing valid legal and historical documents and evidence, the islands of Abu Musa, Greater and Lesser Tunb belong to the Islamic Republic of Iran and that the residents of Abu Musa holding Sharjah citizenship can continue their life along with their Iranian sisters and brothers". But at the same time he added that his country "would not allow any country to interfere in its sovereignty and territorial integrity."

The Iranian Foreign Ministry press release came down heavily upon the Damascus Delaration countries. It described their stand as a "flagrant contradiction of the policy of good neighbourliness among the countries of the region". However, the main target was Syrian stand on the whole issue. The Jamhouriie Islami said in an editorial: "It is crystal clear that Washington was behind all the dirty propaganda over the artificial events in Abu Musa. Damascus has no justification for its cooperation with the American
plans. The GCC is the brain-child of the US, through which Washington intends to make the regional Shiekhdoms its satellite, as part of its wider plans for a so called security belt."

The Arab League Council’s statement was dismissed as "irresponsible stance" taken under "implied foreign provocation". President Rafsanjani justified the Iranian action in the following words: "..... we have only beefed up security to prevent seditious incidents of which there were many signs".56

But the sharp Arab reaction seemed to have some effects on Iran. Having realised that a confrontational attitudes will force the Arabs to seek help from the extra regional powers, the Iranian President announced on 18 September 1992 that he would send an envoy to the UAE to resolve the Abu Musa entangle and avoid the internationalisation of the crisis. Speaking during Friday prayers in Tehran, Rafsanjani said the continuation of the dispute would only benefit "World devouring oil devouring enemies".57

In his effort to garner possible support to resolve the dispute with Iran regarding the three islands the UAE President, Sheikh Zayid undertook extensive tour of Syria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia and achieved a percetible breakthrough when the Syrian mediation succeeded in bringing the two sides together in Abu Dhabi on 27 and 28 September.

The UAE presented the following demands:

56. Ibid., p. 714.
i) Ending the military occupation of Greater and Lesser Tunb;

ii) Emphasising Iran's commitment to the 1971 memorandum of understanding on the island of Abu Musa;

iii) Refraining from interfering in any way and under any circumstances on pretext in the UAE's exercise of its full sovereignty over its portion of the island of Abu Musa in accordance with the memorandum of understanding;

iv) Cancelling all arrangements and measures imposed by Iran on the state organs on the island of Abu Musa, the state citizens and non-UAE residents;

v) Finding an appropriate framework of resolve the issue of sovereignty over the island of Abu Musa within a definite period of time. 58

The talks could not produce any results as the two sides held contradictory views especially related to the ownership of the two Tunbs. While Iran was ready to discuss Abu Musa, it refused to discuss the status of the two Tunbs which it considers as part of its own territory. The head of the Iranian delegation to the talks, Mustafa Fumani Ha'eri, said "The two islands of Lesser and Greater Tunbs belong to Iran and no Iranian would allow himself to negotiate with others on the sovereignty of his own land." He added that "the case of Abu Musa is different. There exists an agreement

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58. Sreedhar, n. 48, pp. 801-802.
between Iran and Sharjah on the island. Iran has no problem with Sharjah in this regard."59

Fumani Ha’eri, justifying Iranian action in Abu Musa, disclosed that a boat carrying weapons and ammunitions and including a Dutch passenger, was stopped by Iranian authorities near Abu Musa island. Hence, in view of this the Islamic Republic, to maintain security, adopted certain security measures for foreigners and not for the people of Sharjah living on the island.60

The Abu Musa incident, which had reached a stalemate and had been relegated to the back seat with the erruption of Saudi-Yemeni dispute and Saudi-Qatari territorial conflict, was eventually referred to the UN General Assembly on 10 October 1992, where the UAE Ambassador launched a sharp attack on Iran and urged the international community to help settle the dispute over the three islands. Iranian mission at the UN, reiterating its government’s position sought to defuse the issue by stating that Tehran was prepared to resume bilateral negotiations broken at Abu Dhabi on 28 September 1992.

The solution to the dispute largely depended on the nature of equation between Iran and the United States because the recurrence of the dispute is the manifestation of fresh ideas among the Gulf littoral states in the wake of the greate US involvement in the region and their fresh arms race and defence build up.

60. Ibid.
The Iranian action in Abu Musa, was fuelled by its desire to probe the GCC state's "Capabilities and intentions after their recent security arrangements with the US and its Western allies." However, it may be assumed that Iran may have been wary about indulging in such a risky military adventure which could prove disastrous in the long run. As such Iran's motive could be to limited to convey to the UAE the extent of its capabilities along with offering an olive branch. The political and economic nature of the UAE is different from the other lower Gulf countries, thereby making its relation with Iran distinct. It should also be remembered in this context that the bazar and traders have had a traditional influence on the course of policy in Iran. Thus it was economic interest which determined the political stance of the states. Eventually, the economic and trade compulsions might prevail over the political will for confrontation.

The United States was careful in handling the crisis because of the increasing volume of indirect trade exchanges between Iran and the US via Dubai. It adopted a low profile during the crisis. While describing the Iranian action in Abu Musa as "high handed assertion of authority" and welcoming the firm stand taken by the GCC, it urged them to do more for their own collective security. It opposed any resort to military force by either side and called for a conciliatory posture to find a solution to the dispute.

62. Ibid., p. 716.
63. Ibid.
As a result Iran and the UAE agreed to resume the third round of their bilateral talks in September 1992 in Abu Dhabi.

Although the talks were described "friendly" and "successful" with emphasis on "cementing bilateral relations between the two Muslim and neighbouring countries", no progress could be achieved as UAE insisted on the inclusion of the two Tunb islands in the agenda and Iran treated it as a closed issue. Iran left the door open for negotiations without any preconditions and within the framework of respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity and good neighbourly relations.64

The reason for the US' mellow stand was that along with the dispute between the UAE and Iran there were three other recurrent border disputes erupting almost at the same time. They were between the GCC states which were allies of the US. The apparent US position on all identical issues had to be uniform, else it could be accused of adopting double standards. Moreover, this low intensity strife with Iran helped the US arrest the trend of rapprochement between the GCC states and Iran. Thus the US was in a position to carve out a new security relationship. Taking advantage of the fluid situation, the US developed a "three-tier" approach to the question of security in the Persian Gulf. The three stages were "blostering the individual states' defence capabilities, collective security arrangement among the GCC states, and bilateral security arrangements with these

states much to the chagrin of Iran which has been lobbying for a place in any security arrangement in the Persian Gulf region.

65. Abidi, no. 47, p. 716.