

### ISSUES

- Although the al-Ula Agreement papered over intra-GCC disputes, fundamental differences haven't been resolved and will continue to weaken cooperation with the U.S. on issues of shared concern.
- Recovery from the global pandemic, uncertainty in global energy markets, and demographic and climate change within the GCC will challenge regional economies and threaten internal stability.
- GCC governments will increasingly look to Russia and China for political, economic, and security partnership amid doubts about U.S. commitment.

### US INTERESTS

- Success in achieving administration goals in the region is contingent on cooperation from the GCC states, including reducing tension and the threat of conflict with Iran, ending conflict in Yemen, and supporting a transition from a defense and security emphasis to one that highlights commitments to diplomatic problem-solving.
- The GCC states anchor the broader Sunni Arab world and assist the U.S. in achieving the shared objectives of political and economic stability and the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts, including the Israel-Palestinian conflict.
- Cooperation with the GCC is essential for defending freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf and ensuring the security of global energy markets.

### POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Launch a serious dialogue with GCC states to coordinate policies on regional issues, including Iranian malign behavior, and conflicts in Yemen, Syria, and Libya. Agree on a strategy to ensure GCC buy-in for re-engaging Iran.
- Emphasize the U.S. commitment to a strong political, economic, and security relationship with GCC states, addressing concerns about declining U.S. interest in the region, while re-defining the nature of regional threats and the shared U.S.-GCC responsibility for addressing them.
- Expand the agenda with GCC states to develop shared strategies to address critical regional issues, i.e., climate change, demographic growth, diversification, demands for greater citizen participation in decision-making, and adjusting for global changes in energy demand and the economy.