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## The Horn of Africa and the Gulf States: Strategic Engagements and Red Sea Geopolitics

Monday 16 December 2019

### Roundtable Agenda

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Over the last five years the prevailing order in the Horn of Africa has been influenced by increasing engagement from the Gulf states across the Red Sea. Their growing presence has presented governments in the region with significant policy challenges, as they seek to leverage interest and competition to further their own objectives with Gulf players and their allies, while simultaneously navigating the multiple overlapping tensions and disputes that have long marked the Horn region.

Balancing regional and global dynamics will continue to be a considerable challenge for states in the Horn that already have to deal with complex internal development, political and conflict challenges. Interventions by the Gulf states have heightened tensions around internal and cross-border relationships, but they have also contributed to reconciliation and have the potential to fuel long-term regional economic integration. Developing a collective action plan and coordinated strategies for engagement on common issues with the Gulf states and along the shared Red Sea arena will enable countries in the Horn of Africa to better meet the challenges and benefits from external interest.

This invitation-only roundtable will bring together the Special Envoys and Representatives for the Horn of Africa and Red Sea along with expert participants, to analyse regional dynamics and explore options to boost collaboration and burden-sharing towards greater integration, development and more durable peace and security on both sides of the Red Sea.

**This meeting will be held under the [Chatham House Rule](#).  
Please come ready for structured discussion, brainstorming and exchange.**

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**Arrivals and registration** (Tea and coffee served)  
09:00– 09:30

**Welcome and introductions**  
09:30 – 09:40

**Presentations**  
09:40 – 10:00

*The role of IGAD and the Red Sea Task Force: shaping common interests and setting the agenda for trans-regional cooperation*

**Ambassador Mohamed Ali Guyo**, IGAD Special Envoy for the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden and Somalia

*The Gulf states and their allies: regional priorities and the role of external actors*  
**Julian Reilly**, UK Special Envoy for the Red Sea and Horn of Africa

**Structured Discussion** (Facilitated by the Chair)  
10:00 – 10:45

## **Coffee Break**

10:45 – 11:00

## **Presentations**

11:00 – 11:20

*Evolving regional dynamics: aligning policies for mutual benefit and enhancing capacities*

**Parfait Onanga-Anyanga**, United Nations Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa

*Supporting stability in the Horn of Africa: transitions, economic integration and demographic change*

**Alexander Rondos**, EU Special Representative for the Horn of Africa

## **Structured Discussion** (Facilitated by the Chair)

11:20 – 12:05

## **Concluding remarks**

12:05 – 12:15

**Ahmed Soliman**, Research Fellow, Africa Programme, Chatham House

## **End of Roundtable**