

IISS–Middle East Office Activities and the Manama Dialogue

The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) has held annually since 2004 the Manama Dialogue in the Kingdom of Bahrain, bringing together heads of state, prime ministers, foreign and defence ministers, national security advisers and armed forces chiefs, strategists and commentators from some 25 countries to engage in high-level international defence diplomacy on regional security issues.

In 2010, the IISS, headquartered in London and with offices also in Washington DC and Singapore, established its Middle East office in Manama.

The IISS Middle East office is substantially increasing its research staff, drawing on candidates from Bahrain, throughout the region and globally, to strengthen its capacities for independent and influential analysis on strategic and political-economic developments in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region.

Notably, the IISS has recently initiated a research programme that will examine geo-economic trends and the challenges of political and economic modernisation. From October 2011 the Institute will be organising an intense lecture and seminar series in Bahrain on this theme.

Also, following a joint decision taken by the IISS and the authorities of the Kingdom of Bahrain not to convene the Manama Dialogue in 2011, the IISS will hold at its Manama office two high-level regional security seminars in early- and mid-2012, involving senior foreign policy and national security officials from regional and outside powers. These will serve as ‘Sherpa meetings’ on the international security implications of recent events in the Arab world, and will help participating states to prepare for the resumption of the Manama Dialogue summit series in December 2012.

IISS research on Middle East issues growing out of these efforts and activities will appear across the range of IISS publications including the journal *Survival*, *Adelphi* books, *Strategic Comments*, *Strategic Survey*, *The Military Balance* and *Strategic Dossiers*.