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**NEW PERSPECTIVES ON THE RUSSIA’S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS GULF OIL MONARCHIES**

Russia and Gulf oil monarchies (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain) have different positions on the fundamentals of global energy relations and counterterrorism.However,new developments on the global geopolitical arena are reshaping these positions, potentially offering both sides to establish deeper relations and mutual cooperation,beneficial for each party, at least in some common fields of interest.

Gulf oil monarchies are resource economies. Oil sector is dominating the economy and oil rent occurs as a main source of government income. This income is crucial fundament for ensuring political stability and keeping the social rest. Undermining this fundament can easily cause domino effect leading to potential collapse of the whole system.

Fourbig events that recently happened are already ringing the alarm for major changes in the monarchies. Chronologically, everything started with the Arab Spring- riot that begun in Tunisia in 2010. Message was everywhere the same– make political systems more representative and transparent or change in the political behavior of the elites.

Second major blow was delivered from the oil priceplunge.It is getting harder to support the expensive and robust public administrationunder low oil prices, dominated by the nationals, whilst they are not found competitive enough to migrate into the private sector.

Third pillar that has big impact on monarchies is unstable political and security situation. Middle East is place where differences clash each other since the history of time, making it breeding ground for constant conflicts.

US is the biggest western ally to the Gulf oil monarchies, but after the presidential elections in USA, it seems like there is going to be a major shift in the political and military support from US, judging by the statements of the newly President-elect Trump. Although relations have been already strained during Obama’s tenure, Trump’s aggressive rhetoric has widened this gap even more. He has stated that US should block all oil imports from Saudi Arabia. He also stated that all US allies has to pay for the American military protection. New US President is the last major event that can drive potential changes in monarchies’ foreign policy.

Given the recent developments, Gulf oil monarchies are in unenviable and defensive position, which could be a solid ground for rethinking the Russia’s foreign policy towards these countries. Russia and Saudi Arabia combine control over a quarter of the global oil production, hence deepening the cooperation or just coordinating its stancescould help stabilizing the oil market. The same applies when it comes to fighting the terrorism and stabilizing the region, where Russia re-emerge as an important player.Therefore, finding common ground for more constructive and talkative approach is increasing the chances for finding sustainable and effective solution, rather than aggressive and hostile rhetoric.