

“China-GCC FTA Negotiations and Prospects for Broader Economic Collaboration”, Panel Discussion, AGSIW webinar, 5 Apr 2023

Dr. Nasser Saidi participated in the panel discussion hosted by the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington (AGSIW) titled **“China-GCC FTA Negotiations and Prospects for Broader Economic Collaboration”** held as a webinar on Apr 5th, 2023.

The China-Gulf Cooperation Council summit in December 2022 renewed interest in concluding negotiations for a China-GCC free trade agreement. These trade negotiations began in 2004, but progress toward establishing an FTA has proceeded slowly. A finalized FTA with the GCC would be a prestigious accomplishment for Beijing, strengthening China’s economic linkages to the region and potentially boosting trade and investment flows. For their part, GCC governments hope to expand economic cooperation with Asian partners, such as China, to advance ambitious economic diversification agendas.

What are the key Chinese and GCC interests behind completing an FTA, and what obstacles have posed the biggest challenges to finalizing negotiations? What do FTAs reveal about the nature of Chinese economic diplomacy in the Middle East? How would the establishment of a China-GCC FTA impact trade and investment ties over the short, medium, and long term? Looking beyond the potential FTA, what are the other trends and mechanisms facilitating deeper economic cooperation between China and GCC countries?

Watch the discussion below: