

Foreword

The International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) takes pleasure in presenting a summary report of the proceedings of the Fifth IISS Regional Security Summit: The Manama Dialogue, held from 12–14 December 2008.

The Dialogue, which took place during the 50th anniversary year of the IISS, brought together the highest concentration to date of policymakers involved in regional security. Delegations once again comprised a blend of ministers, senior officials and military and intelligence chiefs. The Manama Dialogue process is maturing into the most important regional security meeting in the Middle East, and an anchor for regional security diplomacy.

Organised annually since 2004, the IISS Manama Dialogue is designed to provide a forum for the national-security establishments of the participating states to exchange views on regional security challenges. It is a unique forum, in that it is made up of delegations from over 20 countries, including not just the states of the region and the immediate neighbourhood, but also outside powers with security interests in the Gulf.

The Manama Dialogue provides opportunities for leaders to deliver important public statements about the evolving

policy approaches to regional security. Crucially, it also facilitates private bilateral and multilateral meetings between participating states in order to advance immediate policy goals.

In publishing this report the IISS hopes to draw attention to the main lines of public debate at the Dialogue. The Institute is intent that its own research programme should be informed by the deliberations at the Manama Dialogue and should offer opportunities for our subsequent analysis later to be absorbed by regional policymakers.

Throughout 2009, the IISS will be consulting closely with the participating states in the Manama Dialogue to ensure that the agenda for the next summit, scheduled for 11–13 December 2009, will effectively meet their needs.

The IISS would like to thank the Kingdom of Bahrain for its gracious and generous support to this Manama Dialogue process.

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