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Singapore Business and the Gulf: Un Tour d'Horizon

Caroline YEOH

Singapore Management University, carolineyeoh@smu.edu.sg

Wilfred HOW

Singapore Management University, wilfred.how.2003@business.smu.edu.sg

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**SINGAPORE BUSINESS IN THE GCC:
UN TOUR D'HORIZON**

Caroline YEOH
Singapore Management University
Email: carolineyeoh@smu.edu.sg

Wilfred HOW
Singapore Management University
Email: graybrangwin@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Never more newsworthy in business circles has been the Gulf Region than in recent decades; from the region's vast economic strength and meteoric development, to the events of the financial crisis and the ongoing 'Arab spring'. A rich environment in every way – business, cultural, and socio-political – the countries of the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) provide a fascinating subject for academic study from a wealth of perspectives. Some of these perspectives are well-explored; others, markedly less so, the business dimension of this unique and complicated market regrettably among them. While a favored subject of our own research, the comparative dearth of similar research leaves the business opportunities and pitfalls of this region critically under-explained; especially at the present time, in the light of changes and complications brought by the advent of the Arab spring.

Thus, this paper; one of the latest in our series on the internationalization of Singapore businesses into the Gulf economies, and representing both a culmination of, and a new foundation to, our research into this cryptic and alluring region. In this paper, we cast our gaze across the expanse of Singapore's business horizons in the GCC countries, exploring in turn the experiences of Singapore GLCs, PLEs, and SMEs in the region; their current state of operations and challenges in the light of current events; and the general direction going forward – providing, we aim, as accurate a depiction as we can of the state of Singapore business in the Gulf region in the wake of the Arab spring, and from this, perhaps, a limited road map for all those looking towards the region for their own new horizons.