



## The Dispute Over the Three Islands (Lesser Tunb, Greater Tunb and Abu Musa) Has Affected Uae-Iran Relations

Ali Ghafil Hasan

Directorate of Di Qar Education, Ministry of Education of Iraq, IRAQ

ali.ghafil73@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

Apart from its several facets of significance, the Persian Gulf outperforms all other international locations in terms of territory and border disputes, national tensions, and border conflicts and struggles. Almost every Persian Gulf state, particularly the UAE, is embroiled in some type of territorial and boundary conflict with Iran. Iran-UAE dispute One of the most contentious topics is the impediment between them, in which the Gulf littoral countries of Iran and the United Arab Emirates accuse Malachite of islands, based on historical evidence. British colonialism was one of the elements that contributed to the outbreak of this conflict. International and Arab views on this conflict differed, this disagreement has been the subject of numerous conferences, symposiums, dialogues, and talks, but no resolutions have been reached. It fluctuates between aggravation and calm, and regional and international variables have a role in this. The international and Arab viewpoints advocate for a peaceful resolution to the conflict, pacifism, and the use of dialogue as a means of conflict resolution.

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### Introduction

The dispute over the three islands, Tanab al-Kabir, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United Arab Emirates, is not recent but has its roots in the 18th century AD, and has always been between tide and drag according to the circumstances that governed the region at the time, and according to the international and regional variables affecting it (Al-Mazrouei, 2015). Under Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Iran attacked the islands, and its military forces occupied part of Abu Musa Island, taking over its sisters, The Great Tunb and Lesser Tunb, on November 29, 30, 1971, the official day for the end of British protection of the reconciled UAE, which was declared national independence on behalf of the United Arab Emirates from December 2, 1971 (Mehr, 1997). Then, after the cessation of fighting between the two countries after a long and bitter war, another phase of armed conflicts in the region began with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990, to begin the Second Gulf War. With the fall of Saddam Hussein and the Arab Spring, the Islamic Republic of Iran escalated the events of the issue of the three Arab islands, starting in August 1992 (Writer, DeFraités & Keep, 2000). The issue of disagreement over the three islands is one of the issues that Arab and Iranian political leaders should seek a solution, and if all issues deserve all publicity and attention for the stability of peoples and the search for broader prospects for cooperation and development, this issue in particular priority should be taken first.

### Search problem

The study's research problem is the origins of the dispute between the UAE Arab State and the Islamic State of Iran over the three islands (Tunb al-Kabir, Tunb Minor, and Abu Musa) and the conflict's continuation today without resolution, affecting regional security and, as a result of the conflict, economic, tourism, social, and religious aspects. Each country has its own rights, and the researcher hopes to gain an understanding of the dimensions of the geopolitical and strategic conflict between the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the circumstances and course of the conflict's development, as well as its dimensions and future horizons.

### **The importance of study**

There is no doubt that the ongoing dispute between the UAE and Iran over the three islands is the primary source of tension in the region on occasion, which is precisely why we decided to conduct a documented objective study of this sensitive issue between Arabs in general and between the UAE and the Islamic Republic of Iran in particular. We chose this specific study on the three islands, which were the subject of a conflict between Iran and the UAE in November 1971, for four critical reasons:

1. Following the Gulf War and the occupation of Iraq in 2003, the United States' military presence in the region imposed an unavoidable role for the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries in easing tensions between Iran and the United States and reopening their channels of communication. The islands issue is at the forefront of the challenges impeding this détente in Iranian-Arab relations.
2. Iran is by all accounts a superpower in the Gulf and cannot be ignored in any policy aimed at ensuring regional security and stability.
3. Cooperation between the Gulf Arab states and Iran is unavoidable due to geopolitics. Politics made a contribution in this direction when Iran's presidential election on May 23, 1997, resulted in the victory of President Hassan Rouhani, who was widely seen as the start of a new phase of Iran's growth from revolution to state. His brief rule term confirmed the reality of his earlier assertions that Iran's foreign policy will be centered on détente and de-escalation of ties with countries, particularly Arab neighbors and countries throughout the world. What direction have these trends taken? This is the point made by the research in its assessment of the new government's handling of the three-island issue.

### **Search objectives**

Any scientific study seeks to uncover the truth, and the dispute between the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic State of Iran over the three islands (Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb, and Abu Musa) is shrouded in mystery and requires clarification and explanation, and the controversy between the supporters of the two parties (UAE and Iran) has created more ambiguity than clarity about the conflict's dimensions. As a result, the study sought to:

The following points outline the study's objectives:

- 1- Addressing one of the Arab world's concerns, specifically the phenomena of border disputes, as it occurs and is a reality not only in our Arab world, but also in international affairs.
- 2- Investigating and tracing the origins of the dispute through the use of relevant and supportive documents.
- 3- Understanding the legal, geopolitical and geostrategic components of the conflict is essential to understanding its character.
- 4- To give light on the apparent and underlying causes that have interacted to produce this dilemma and its consequences, from its inception to the present.

### **The Importance and Status of The Three Arab Islands**

During this chapter, the researcher highlights the importance enjoyed by the three Arab islands, and to highlight this importance will be addressed the geostrategic importance of the region, which has gained the attention of regional and international powers, especially since the region is located on the lines of communication and a meeting point between East and West. These three islands control one of the most important waterways in the world, the Strait of Hormuz, and therefore control them give control over this corridor, and threaten the national security of the states of the region, which is part of Arab national security. The importance of the region also requires that the economic importance of the region be presented from ancient times, making it the focus of attention of all the powerful, both in terms of its energy sources and other natural resources.

### **First: The Geographical Location of The Three Disputed Islands:**

#### **1. Abu Musa Island**

Greater Tunb is 20 kilometers away, positioned 43 kilometers from UAE beach and 67 kilometers from Iranian shore, and was inhabited by around 1,000 Emiratis who worked in fishing boats. It is located in a corridor of oil tankers that exports crude oil from Arabian Gulf. Iron oxide was extracted and sold to Germany in 1906 by the German company Funkhouse, which disturbed Britain, which considered the German presence in the region as a threat to her interests, and intervened with the Ruler of Sharjah, who shut down the facility in 1907 (Mojtahed-Zadeh, Ahmadypour & Heidari Mosello, 2012).

#### **2. Greater Tnab**

As part of Ras Al Khaimah, it lies inside the Strait of Hormuz just to the north of Abu Musa Island, about (50) kilometers away, and it is roughly (30) kilometers from the east coast (18) kilometers and the west coast mesaqa (75) kilometers away, and it is characterized by the abundance of fresh water and its accessibility. In 1914, a lighthouse was built to help ships navigate the Arabian Gulf (Iranica, 1985).

#### **3. Lesser Tunb**

"Nabio Tanab" is an island of ras al-Khaimah, located at the entrance to the Strait of Hormuz, 10 kilometers west of the island of Greater Tunb, an area of approximately 20 kilometers from the east coast about (43) kilometers and about (81) kilometers from the west coast, which is a rocky hill and is not suitable for population, but excavations indicated the presence of oil in it. A single family lived there when the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah took it over from Iran alongside Greater Tunb, which at the time belonged to the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah (Khoobdel, Tavassoli, Salari & Firozi, 2014).

### **Second: The economic importance of the three islands**

The Arabian Gulf's significance was initially limited to serving as a vital strategic waterway connecting Europe and the Middle East, and the economic activity of the countries bordering it was limited to agriculture, trade, and pearling, but with the discovery of oil in the Middle East, particularly in the Arabian Gulf region, the region's economic value increased and conflict between the major countries intensified (Alhosani & Yagoub, 2015).

The economic importance of the three Arab islands is determined by a number of reasons, most notably:

- 1- They had value in relation to the pearl trade because of the abundance of pastureland and fresh water, as well as the availability of shale coal, chemical salts, and other resources.
- 2- Mountains with red hills that were used by the British to manufacture dyes and granite crystals are found on the island of Abu Musa.
- 3- An American oil exploration business, Bit-Diesel Etdwell, has been granted permission by Sharjah's governor to explore for oil, and the projected volumes range from 13 to 20,000 barrels per day.
- 4- Iran's claim to the Arabian Gulf's continental shelf begins with the economic islands' annexation to Iranian territory, making Iran's coastlines in the UAE's face more secure from the perspective of the islands' scope as an anchor.

### **Fourth: The Military-Security Importance of The Three Islands**

Because of its advantageous geographic location, the Levant and Mesopotamia provide a secondary route between Europe and the East via the Arabian Gulf, increasing the region's security and military importance. The arrival of the Portuguese at the beginning of the 16th century marked the beginning of a conflict in the Arabian Gulf between the Portuguese and other Arab powers, the most prominent of which were the Dutch, French, and British, until it was eventually dominated by Britain at the beginning of the nineteenth century" (Jalinoosi & Moradifar, 2017).

### **Iran-UAE Conflict and The Roots of The Dispute**

#### **First: A Brief History of the Roots of the Iran-UAE Dispute Over the Islands**

The conflict dates back to the 18th century, when the region was ruled by a different set of international and regional factors than it is today. As soon as the conflict began, the Iranian government refused to hand over the islands to their original owners. Oman's decline in power led to the rise of the State of Qawasem and

its naval fleet on the southern Arabian Gulf coast, where prominent areas were Ras Al Khaimah and Sharjah (Morris, 2019). This influence was extended to the north coast in the 18th century, where some commoners had settled and took over islands and coastal areas adjacent to the Gulf. Then, in 1835, the Gulf Islands were divided between the commoners' ownership of the port, which is backed by an official letter from the Governor of the Sahel in 1864, certifying the dependency of the islands of Abu Musa, Greater and Lesser Tunb, and Sir Bou Nair since his early ancestors (Eslami & Sotoudehfar, 2021). Foreign companies were denied access to Abu Musa's lands in 1898 because Sharjah's ruler would not award a concession to one. That enraged Iran at the time, and the Qawasam kings were driven from this province in 1887. In the nineteenth century, these islands remained uninhabited and were used for seasonal grazing, and when Iran claimed them in 1887, the British authorities were preparing to declare ownership, at which time the British delegate in Sharjah displayed copies of five letters, including one from Sheikh Khalifa bin Saeed of The Naja," confirming unequivocally that the Tunb Islands were the property of Sheikh Hamid bin Abdullah of Ras al-Khaimah (Buderi & Ricart, 2018). As these letters appeared to be critical in convincing the British that, prior to 1887, the island was owned by the larger branch of the Qawasem family and not by the smaller branch in Naja, and as the British prepared to support Sharjah in its claim to Sir Island, they learned that Iran was claiming the same island but did not oppose it, and thus became willing to accept Iran's claim to the island, and then th Between 1884 and 1908, it demonstrates unequivocally that Abu Musa Island is a Sharjah property (Ulrichsen, 2017). On the other side, the Iranians submitted documentation establishing the existence of the Abu Musa and Tunb Islands. Comparable to Sir Island. They referred to maps prepared by the British between 1886 and the beginning of 1900 during the administration of Sheikh Al-Naja, which indicate that the British believe these islands are Persian, and then a dispute arose about the status of these islands between the Iranian government in Tehran on the one hand and the commons and the British on the other (Kamrava, 2010). Iranian forces established a base on Abu Musa Island in 1904, while the then-Commander of Iranian Forces confirmed in 1887 that al-Qawasem would establish a base on the island. The objective was to award a concession to a foreign business for the purpose of exploring the island's wealth and bounty. To legitimize this, Iran flew the Iranian flag on the island, prompting a protest from Sharjah's king, who was backed by Britain's representative in the region at the time, who urged Tehran to deliver benefits in exchange for its authority over the island (Mawla, 2020). The British decided in 1912 to build a lighthouse on the huge island of Tanab, and in February 1913, the Iranian Foreign Ministry and the British raised the subject of the lighthouse" and the island's sovereignty. When World War I broke out, attention was focused away from the region, and relations between the qawasam and the Iranians were merged until 1923, when the Pahlavi dynasty assumed power in Iran. In 1923, the British delegate in Tehran was surprised by a letter from the Iranian Foreign Ministry demanding the Islands of Tanab and Abu Musa. The British delegate responded by noting that in 1904, the Iranian Government refused to raise its flag on the islands, and the parties reached an oral agreement that the Island of (C) belonged to the Iranians and the Abu Musa and Tunb Islands to the Arabs (Abbassi & Khosravy, 2019). The British-Iranian treaty was signed in 1929 and 1930, but negotiations stalled when Iran asked Ras Al Khaimah for a 50-year lease on the islands of Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb. Britain refused, and the Iranians protested when the Ruler of Sharjah refused to lease the islands to them. This strained relations between Britain and Iran even further in 1935 when the Ruler of Sharjah refused to lease the islands to Iran. Though tensions were high, some Arab and Persian families moved to the islands. After World War II, there were various small events and British and Iranian delegates made numerous suggestions to resolve the issue over the islands, but these proposals were not taken into consideration (El-Dessouki & Mansour, 2020).

### **Second: The Dimensions of Britain's Announcement of Its Intention To Withdraw From The Gulf**

As a result of the British announcement in 1968 that they intended to withdraw from the Gulf by the end of 1971, the issue of the islands rose to the top of the list of regional concerns. However, on the issue of Bahrain, and the demand of the Iranians for it, it was resolved by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, with the support and support of the Shah of Iran, who demonstrated political prowess, the Shah called for his return to power over Abu Musa Island and the islands of Aden and Bahrain. Mr. William Lucy, a Special Representative of the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office in the Persian Gulf, supported a union of Arab states from which British troops would withdraw, and worked to resolve the dispute over the islands of Al-Tanab and Abu Musa, both of which are claimed by the United Arab Emirates. As a result, unbalanced

British-brokered negotiations began, which continued until an agreement on what became known as the Memorandum of Understanding was achieved later in November 1971 (Hurewitz, 1972).

### **Third: Iran's Control of The Three Islands**

On November 29, 1971, significant Iranian army military forces were dispatched to the islands of Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb, backed by some naval forces, and assumed complete control. The situation on Abu Musa Island was quite different, with the Shah of Iran's representative to the island accompanying Iranian forces the next day (November 30, 1971), and was greeted on the island by Sharjah's Deputy Governor Sheikh Saqr bin Mohammed bin Saqr al-Qasimi, a British government representative, and the island's population of about 800 people (Jalinusi & Arayee, 2007). In accordance with the memorandum of understanding, Iranian forces were deployed in their allotted area of the island. Thus, on November 29, 1971, 48 hours before the declaration of the new UAE's formation. On November 30, 1971, Iranian forces were also stationed on Abu Musa Island. Iran has gained full possession of the three islands with little loss, thanks to an agreement between Iran and Sharjah (Ahmadi, 2010).

### **Fourth: British-Iranian Mediation Negotiations with Sharjah Governor**

The British position was related to common British-Iranian interests, and it was from this perspective that Britain had to dispatch one of its seasoned diplomats (William Lucy) to act as a mediator and apply pressure to obtain a settlement commensurate with Iran's ambitions and policies. To deal with these challenges, Sharjah was forced to come up with its own solution, and the Special Representative in the Gulf Leam Lucie put out a draft agreement on Sharjah that includes two critical provisions (Al-Mazrouei, 2015).

1. Sharing the island between Iran and Sharjah in exchange for a sum of money to be agreed upon later, Sharjah should not claim sovereignty over the island, nor should Iran claim sovereignty over it for two years, after which its fate will be decided.
2. Iran's 99-year lease on the island can be extended for an agreed-upon fee, with the Sharjah flag flying above the island's sole outpost, and the Tehran government has the authority to establish bases in places of its choosing.

The British administration kept its pressure on Iran, surrendering to Iranian requests while keeping a good relationship with Sharjah and the island's quality, or granting Iran complete authority over Abu Musa Island (Katzman, 2013).

### **Fifth: Legal Adaptation of The Memorandum of Understanding Between Iran and Sharjah**

This agreement is merely a set of temporary administrative measures that preclude both parties from managing the island and investing a portion of its resources until the issue of sovereignty is settled (Pradhan, 2011).

Thus, the following points outline the contents of the memorandum of understanding.

1. The Emirate of Sharjah has not ceded control over all or part of Abu Musa Island.
2. Iran was not granted sovereignty over Abu Musa Island or any portion of it under the terms of the memorandum of agreement.
3. Iranian soldiers are authorized to operate in the Al-Jazeera sector designated on the Memorandum of Understanding's accompanying map.
4. Iran is granted complete sovereignty solely within the boundaries of the area agreed upon by Iranian forces and detailed in the memorandum of understanding's accompanying map.

### **Sixth: The Contents of The Memorandum of Understanding**

The agreement confirms that both Iran and Sharjah will not relinquish their claims to Abu Musa and neither party recognizes or accepts other parties' claims or demands (Al-Mazrouei, 2015).

**Article 1:** Describes the arrival of Iranian forces on Abu Musa Island and the control of territories inside the agreement's agreed-upon boundaries, as depicted on a map.

**Article 2:** Iran shall have complete control over the agreed-upon territories, and Sharjah must have complete control over the rest of the island.

**Article 3:** The territorial seas of the island are defined as 12 nautical miles by Iran and Sharjah.

**Article 4:** The agreement authorizes two oil corporations (named in the deal) to utilize the island's oil wealth, with the proceeds split evenly between Iran and Sharjah.

**Article 5:** Citizens of Iran and Sharjah have equal rights when it comes to hand in the island's territorial seas.

**Article 6:** Iran and Sharjah sign a memorandum of understanding on economic cooperation.

### **Seventh: The establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the evolution of the conflict over the islands.**

With the Islamic Revolution's success in toppling the Shah's regime, taking office, and declaring the Islamic Republic of Iran on February 11, 1979, all international and regional forums expected the new Iranian Islamic leaders to change, find a solution to the UAE-Iran conflict for the three islands, and begin a new chapter in relations (Cronin & Masalha, 2011). In this climate, all statements made by Iranian officials in the new Islamic government agreed that the new Islamic government in Tehran's direction is to abandon the previous regime's expansion policy, and that the new Islamic regime will conduct a comprehensive review of all procedures and agreements concluded during the previous era at the earliest opportunity. Confirming this trend, Ayatollah Khalkhali, the President of the Revolutionary Courts in Tehran, visited the United Arab Emirates on May 28, 29, 1979, and held several meetings and consultations with UAE officials on the issue of the three Arab islands, in an attempt to start a new chapter in the two countries' relations (Salehi, 2011). Thus, the Islamic Revolution in Iran defined the nature of its foreign policy and settled the islands in its favor in continuation of the Shah's policy, and things did not stop there; in 1987, Iran took control of the southern part of Abu Musa Island, which is under the jurisdiction of the Emirate of Sharjah, followed by the construction of a warplane runway extending its limbs (Guéraiche, 2016).

### **Eighth: Renewed Conflict and Reopening of The Crisis File**

Iran has taken a number of steps since the early 1980s, including the following:

1. Building an airport, roads, and military and civilian facilities.
2. preventing islanders from erecting new structures or renovating existing structures, halting shops and not allowing them to reopen until Iranian officials have granted them a license.
3. In the UAE's territorial waters, Iranian military vessels intercept fishing boats belonging to UAE nationals, inspect them, and seize their vessels.
4. Creating a municipality on Abu Musa Island in Iran's Bandar Abbas province, and attempting to connect municipal services for the island's Iranian residents with municipal services for the island's Iranian section.
5. When new staff arrives on the island or is replaced, pre-authorization is required by an Iranian center.

Iran began to take harsher measures against the people of Abu Musa Island in 1991, asking fishermen to renew their fishing licenses every five days and conducting identity checks on the island's citizens and residents (Khorrami, 2012). Iran expanded its control over Abu Musa Island in April 1992, stationing Iranian military forces throughout the island, prohibiting the raising of the UAE flag, prohibiting all sorts of cars with Emirati license plates from entering the island, and requiring visitors to get an Iranian visa (Ulrichsen, 2017).

### **9th: Results of UAE Talks with Iranian Side**

During his talks with the UAE Foreign Minister in Tehran on April 22, 23, 1992, Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani voiced fresh viewpoints, demands, and attitudes that could significantly damage relations between the two nations, including (Al-Mazrouei, 2015):

1. Iran resents the presence of foreign employees on the island, and some Gulf sources believe Iran is attempting to disturb Iranian oil workers rather than the workers who were recently removed from Abu Musa.
2. Iran says the UAE should compensate it financially for the massive damages it sustained during its protracted war with Iraq, which Iran believes it is entitled to.
3. Iran believes it is not legally obligated to debate al-status Jazeera's with the UAE, and Iranian authorities have said unequivocally that the Abu Musa Island pact was originally signed between Iran and Sharjah.
4. Iran says the UAE should compensate it financially for the massive losses it incurred during its protracted war with Iraq, which Iran believes it is entitled to.

### **Position of The Major Powers**

#### **First: The Position of the United States of America**

Since the beginning of the crisis, the United States has emphasized the need for a peaceful resolution of the dispute over Abu Musa Island, and Secretary of State Warren Christopher described Iran as an increasingly contentious neighbor, referring to Iran's intransigent position of unjustly asserting its control over Abu Musa Island (Ahmadi, 2008). They urged Iran to engage in serious talks with the UAE to address the conflict. In the dispute with the UAE over the islands, economic pressure was applied to Iran, and on May 8, 1994, US Assistant Secretary of State Robert Pelletreau announced that the US would continue to impose sanctions on Iran and to make it a good neighbor in the region, in order to stabilize security in the Gulf (Rugh, 2006).

### **Second :The position of the British government**

In response to a remark by the Speaker of the Iranian Shura Council that the three islands were held by Iran under a British-Iranian agreement. The British government has agreed with Tehran to extend Iran's sovereignty over Abu Musa Island, according to a representative for the British Foreign Office (Jalinusi, A., & Arayee, 2007). The Britain spokesman said "We have opposed the use of force in the conflict over this strategically important island near the Strait of Hormuz, as well as the nearby islands of Greater and Lesser Tunb". He added "Iran and Sharjah concluded an agreement on Abu Musa Island in 1971, after the UAE gained independence from the British crown, and the agreement provides for the sharing of sovereignty over the island, and that there was no agreement on the islands of Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb when the British withdrew from the Gulf in 1971" (Al-Mazrouei, 2015). During the October 31, 1994, meeting between the UAE's Acting Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Assistant Undersecretary of State for Middle East Affairs, who confirmed the British government's support for the UAE's approach of referring the matter to the International Court of Justice as the international body authorized to resolve international disputes (Ahmadi, 2010).

### **Third: The position of the Republic of France**

Daniel Bernard, spokesman for the French Foreign Ministry, expressed his government's concern about the dispute between the United Arab Emirates and Iran over the right to sovereignty over Abu Musa Island and the islands of Greater and Lesser Tunb, and emphasized the importance of working toward a peaceful resolution (Foley, 1999). Based on dialogue and international law, and in accordance with the principles of respect for state sovereignty and sovereignty over their territory, as well as peaceful cohabitation between states. Any unilateral action would deteriorate relations amongst the region's States and, as such, should be avoided (Rugh, 2006).

### **Fourth :The position of the Russian Federation**

Moscow supports the need to stabilize relations between Iran and its Arab neighbors, urges that the dispute over Abu Musa Island be resolved through discussion, and responds to reckless measures that threaten the region's interests, according to a Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman (Caldwell, 1996).

### **Fifth: The Position of The People's Republic of China**

The Vice-President of the National Council of China met with a delegation of members of the Federal National Council in Abu Dhabi on November 5, 1994, led by Haj bin Abdullah al-Muhairi, President of the Council, and the Chinese guest expressed his country's appreciation and support for the UAE's position on the islands, saying: We greatly appreciate the UAE's position not to resort to force to resolve these differences, as well as its efforts to maintain the status quo (Caldwell, 1996).

### **Sixth: The Position of The Foreign Ministers of The European Union**

The Joint Ministerial Council, which includes EU and GCC foreign ministers, called on Iran to reply to Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al-announcement Nahyan's that the islands issue would be resolved through dialogue in compliance with international law and peaceful coexistence between countries (Al-Mazrouei, 2015)..

## **Arab and Gulf position**

### **First: The Arab position**

Iranian violations and abuses on Abu Musa Island have sparked significant outrage in Arab and international circles, and the events have been debated by many media outlets as well as political and strategic

studies centers (Mobley, 2003). The UAE's legitimate position in upholding sovereignty over the three islands held by Iran, as well as its prudent measures to peacefully restore these islands, were backed by the majority of Arab states:

### **1. Position of the Gulf Cooperation Council**

The GCC Ministerial Council of Foreign Ministers condemned Iran's actions on Abu Musa Island and the developments there at its 44th session in Jeddah on September 8, 1992, which lasted two days, for violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a GCC country and destabilizing security and stability in the region (Legrenzi, 2010). The Council of Ministers urged Iran to adhere to the memorandum of understanding reached between Sharjah and Iran at the time, and the Council emphasized that the United Arab Emirates has been responsible for the section specified on Sharjah's Abu Musa Island since its establishment on December 2, 1971 (Rugh, 2006). Moreover, the Council expressed its deep regret over Iran's unjustified actions, which are in violation of the stated desire to develop and develop relations between the two sides, and are contrary to the principles underlying relations between the GCC states and Iran, as well as the agreement between the two sides on establishing deep and honest relations on the basis of adherence to international law, respect for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of States, and non-interference in internal affairs of other countries (Caldwell, 1996). The Council also reaffirmed its unequivocal support for the UAE in maintaining full sovereignty over Abu Musa Island, the islands of Greater and Lesser Tunb, and all actions taken by the UAE to assert its sovereignty over the three islands. On November 15, 1992, a meeting of gcc defense ministers was held in Kuwait, and defense ministers condemned Iran's actions on Abu Musa Island, in line with Iranian statements expressing a desire to improve relations with gcc countries, and called on Iran to abide by the agreements reached between it and the United Arab Emirates on Abu Musa Island, and affirmed their support for the UAE in affirming the dependency of the UAE's islands of Greater and Lesser Tunb ((Al-Mazrouei, 2015). On December 27-29, 1992, the GCC leaders met in Abu Dhabi for the 13th Gulf Summit, during which they voiced deep concern for Iran's actions on Abu Musa Island and its prolonged control of the greater and lesser Tunb islands, and demanded that Iran cease such measures. He urged it to abandon and remove all measures taken on Abu Musa Island, as well as its occupation of the islands of Greater and Lesser Tunb, and affirmed its full solidarity and unwavering support for the UAE's position, as well as all peaceful measures and means it deems necessary to reclaim sovereignty over its three islands, based on international legitimacy and the principle of collective security (Al-Musfir, 2008).

### **Position of the Arab League**

On September 14, 1992, the Arab League Council concluded its 98th session in Cairo, affirming that Arab countries stand with the United Arab Emirates in the face of Iran's occupation of the islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb, and condemning the illegal occupation of these islands, which jeopardizes security and stability in the world's most dangerous region (Mobley, 2003). The Council requested that the Islamic Republic of Iran respect the international conventions and covenants signed between the UAE and Iran, as well as the UAE's right and sovereignty over the three islands, and mandated the Arab League's Secretary-General to follow up on the issue, as well as the formation of a committee of the League's General Secretariat to follow up on the issue's developments (Al-Mazrouei, 2015). The Arab League Secretary-General believes that the Arab reaction to the issue of The Island of Abu Musa Ass rear is a clear demonstration of Arab solidarity with the United Arab Emirates, and that Iran's position is regrettable, despite the fact that Arab countries regard Iran as a sister and friend state (Eslami & Sotoudehfar, 2021). The Arab League Council confirmed on April 19, 1993, at the conclusion of its regular meetings that it supported the United Arab Emirates in maintaining full sovereignty over the islands of Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb, and Abu Musa, and that it supported the council's action to present this issue to the United Nations, considering it a permanent item on the University Council's agenda (Markella et al., 2019)

After a thorough and in-depth investigation of the subject of the islands, the Arab League Council adopted a resolution in September 1993 at the end of its 100th session, which stated:



1. Support the UAE in maintaining complete sovereignty over the islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb, and condemn Iran's illegal occupation of these islands.
2. The Council fully supports all steps taken by the UAE to assert its sovereignty over these islands and condemns Iranian acts that jeopardize regional security and stability.
3. Demanding that Iran adhere to the United Arab Emirates' covenants and charters, as well as the UAE's right and sovereignty over the Abu Musa, Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb Islands.

### Conclusion

Furthermore, as a result of our research into the UAE-Iran relationship in relation to the three Arab islands, we've come to the following conclusions:

1. The current conflicts and tensions in the Arabian Gulf region are a direct result of the British policies that have been in place in the region for more than three centuries.
2. Britain's policies were the worst of all colonial powers, and it used "divide and rule" to maintain its hold on power and protect its interests even after it left. As a result, countries that were once under British rule or occupation are still dealing with problems caused by Britain's actions.
3. Iraq's withdrawal from the scene, which played a crucial role in the region's safety balance, has had a significant impact on the country's security and stability.
4. Military action will make in chaos for in the region.
5. According to the available data and indicators, a peaceful solution is the most likely option in the short and long term, but this could change if Arab countries can unite and put their differences aside to focus on strengthening their global presence and dealing with their issues using the same mechanisms and standards as other regional blocs such as the European Union.

### Recommendations

This research led to numerous theories concerning the three Arab islands, which the Arabian Gulf region as a whole has attempted to crystallize by formulating as follows:

1. Activating the country's efforts by enhancing the role of the media in highlighting the issue of the islands by providing historical information on the islands' history in particular, and the issue can be highlighted through workshops and cultural seminars hosted by civil society and academic institutions.
2. The formation of a crisis committee or cell comprised of political and security elements to research the situation and develop hypotheses for probable scenarios so that the political leadership is prepared for all scenarios and can deal with any circumstance in a timely and orderly manner.
3. Recommendation that all natural resources on these islands' land not be used, drained, or accounted for.
4. A proposal for the Gulf Cooperation Council and the Arab League to organize a Gulf political committee and an Arab League to play an ongoing and permanent diplomatic role at the international level.
5. The importance of international efforts continuing, including maintaining the island problem on the UN Security Council's agenda, updating the General Assembly on an annual basis, and working to explain the issue for countries with which the state has diplomatic relations.
6. Urged Western countries with a presence in the Arabian Gulf region, particularly the United Kingdom, the United States, France, and Portugal, to reveal any unannounced documents or maps they may have.
7. The use of international research centers, particularly legal research centers, in a variety of studies and researches on the region, as well as the appraisal of documents and maps, and archaeological finds in the territory, always prove the historical right and so must be invested in it.

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