This chapter focuses on the international politics of the Gulf region, which are defined by the interplay of the local states and outside powers. The domestic framework and its interactions with transnational influences and external actors are crucial to understanding the environment within which local states operate — whether revolutionary Iran, Saddam Hussein's Iraq, or the Gulf monarchies themselves. Given that regime security drives states in their foreign policies, the need to cope with both internal and external threats is compelling. Outside actors are important in as much as they supply or help to combat such threats. The withdrawal of US forces from Iraq and the relative immunity of the Gulf monarchies from the effects of the Arab Spring have afforded these states greater regional influence and autonomy, but events since 2015 also reveal deep divides among them over issues like IS, Iranian foreign policy, and the war in Yemen.