

### *Developing Practical Cooperation through Science*

**Bahrain has been engaged with NATO since the creation of the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI), launched at the Istanbul Summit in 2004.**

The NATO SPS Programme enables close collaboration on issues of common interest to enhance the security of NATO and partner nations by facilitating international efforts to meet emerging security challenges, supporting NATO-led operations and missions, and advancing early warning and forecast for the prevention of disasters and crises.

The current SPS Key Priorities include:

- *Counter-Terrorism;*
- *Energy Security;*
- *Cyber Defence;*
- *Defence against CBRN Agents;*
- *Environmental Security;*
- *Security-related Advanced Technology;*
- *Border and Port Security;*
- *Human and Social Aspects of Security.*

Additionally, the SPS Programme helps to promote *regional security* through scientific cooperation among partners. The programme also helps to *prepare* interested eligible nations for NATO membership. SPS activities often have a high *public diplomacy* value.

## **BAHRAIN**

Bahrain is engaged with the Science for Peace and Security (SPS) Programme and NATO through the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) launched in 2004. At present, there are no SPS activities with Bahrain.

### **THE SPS PROGRAMME IS OPEN TO ACTIVITIES WITH BAHRAIN**

The SPS Programme is open to all projects with Bahrain in line with the political guidance from Allies established via the SPS Key Priorities and the Overarching Guidelines. At present there are no partnership documents (such as an IPAP or IPCP) with Bahrain.



### **THE ISTANBUL COOPERATION INITIATIVE**

The Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) focuses on practical cooperation in areas where NATO can add value, notably in the security field. Six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council were initially invited to participate. To date, four of these – Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates – have joined. Saudi Arabia and Oman have also shown an interest in the Initiative. Based on the principle of inclusiveness, the Initiative is, however, open to all interested countries of the broader Middle East region who subscribe to its aims and content, including the fight against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The ICI is a ‘two-way’ partnership, in which NATO seeks partners’ contribution for its success, through a regular consultation process; special emphasis is placed on practical cooperation. The SPS Programme is an excellent basis for such practical and concrete partnership activities.