

Kuwait Defence and Security Report Q4 2014

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Abstracts

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BMI View: Kuwait continues to have a close defence relationship with the US and has reportedly increased the number of service personnel receiving training in foreign academies. June 2013 witnessed Kuwait conduct parliamentary by-elections to replace five members of parliament who recently resigned over corruption allegations surrounding the country's prime minister. In BMI's view the resignations are likely to give the government an opportunity to bolster its position in the already pro-government parliament. As such, and despite ongoing sectarian tensions linked to the conflicts in Syria and Iraq, we expect that overall stability in the country is such that continued defence links with the US and Westerns arms contractors will be maintained.

The most serious threat is posed by the instability in Iraq and Syria, in particular the potential for a fallout from any further widening or intensification of Syria's civil war. In the domestic sphere, internal pressures connected to the government's resignation in July 2013 - leading to Kuwait's 13th new cabinet in seven years - could pose a challenge to the ruling monarchy. Despite an anticipated escalation of regional violence, we expect that overall stability in the country is such that continued defence links with the US and Westerns arms contractors will be maintained. Moreover, BMI expects Kuwait to increase its military spending and defence priorities to reflect its drive towards a more prominent role in regional and international affairs. As such, BMI's nominal defence expenditure growth forecast is 2.0% in 2014 in KWD terms, and 2.5% in 2015.

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