



هيئة التقييس

لدول مجلس التعاون لدول الخليج العربية
GCC Standardization Organization

2020

GSO REVIEW INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION



The letter of GSO President

Dear Partners and Stakeholders,

2020 was a challenging year forcing most people to adapt to new realities due to the Covid-19 pandemic. These challenges affect everyone — in every community, and caused significant social, political and economic consequences worldwide. However, this crisis has highlighted the importance of Standardization in such critical situations!

GSO has implemented a number of initiatives that contribute to supporting efforts to curb the spread of the Coronavirus and the reduction of its great repercussions on various sectors. These initiatives have coincided with the initiatives of international standardization organizations, and in line with the precautionary measures taken by the governments of the GCC Member States against Corona virus, and based on the mandate of GSO and the pivotal role that the standards play in supporting the health sector and the protection of the Gulf citizen and residents alike, and facilitating trade exchange and the flow of goods between the member states to ensure the availability of goods in the market.

GSO held many extraordinary meetings of decision-makers and specialists to take the strategic decisions and exceptional measures related to facilitating trade exchange between member states and the continuation of the supply chain. GSO has issued a number of Gulf standards specially for Health & Personal Care Products that represent a priority to confront the Corona pandemic through the fast-track adoption mechanism for a number of relevant international standards and in coordination and cooperation with NSBs in the Member States.

Through the GSO Standards store, GSO provided a number of free standard for products of a strategic nature in the Corona crisis, which serves a number of vital sectors that directly deal with the pandemic, along with the relevant standards packages that have been freely published by ISO and IEC.

GSO has also taken many exceptional measures for conformity services to ensure the smooth flow of goods into the markets of member states, especially those related to Gulf certificates for vehicles, motorcycles, and tiers as well as the Gulf notification system procedures.



GSO took the initiative to issue the Gulf Guide for Safe Work and Business Continuity during (Covid-19) according to the international standards, and most important : ISO 31000, ISO 22301, and a number of preliminary international practices and related preventive protocols, and its been shared with GSO member states and Gulf organizations to contribute to dealing with the risks and consequences that they have imposed.

In term of awareness, GSO has intensified its efforts and contributed to many e-campaigns through its social media platforms and many other webinars regarding the importance of adhering to the specific procedures and measures of the relative authorities for the prevention of infection with the virus, and the importance of implementing the current commercial, service, health and medical regulations, in a way that enhances everyone's efforts to limit the spread of viruses.

This pandemic also demonstrated the excellence of GSO with its technical infrastructure, which contributed to ensuring the continuity of work for its team, and the provision of the GSO's services and activities remotely through its various platforms and forums.

GSO also strengthened its communication with its counterparts in the field of standardization to coordinate standardization and integration work in the efforts made to fight COVID-19 and limit its negative effects, and to ensure the continuity of remote work, in light of the precautionary measures followed by the countries of the world. Despite COVID-19 circumstances, GSO achieved great achievements in 2020 at the regional and international levels and strengthened its position in the international standardization community.

GSO joined many international and regional meetings, sessions, and summits besides enhancing its strategic partnerships . enhancing its strategic partnerships with its counterparts to explore cooperation opportunities and held many bilateral meetings to implement (62) MoUs and technical cooperation agreements through operational programs and annual work plans. It has crowned its achievements by obtaining a full membership in the (ITU-T).

Finally, I do extend my sincere thanks to our partners for their cooperation and continued commitment to work together.

Saud Bin Nasser Al-Khusaibi
GSO President

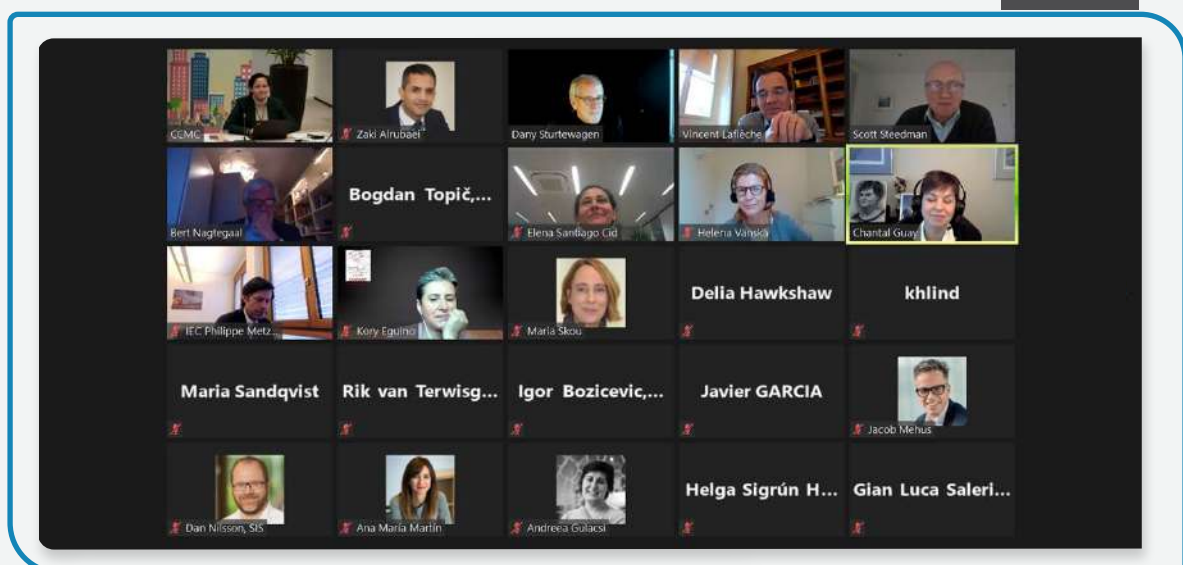
New Cooperation Agreements signed in 2020

Taking into consideration the exceptional circumstances that the world went through in 2020, GSO signed many memorandums of understanding (MoUs) and cooperation agreements in 2020 to further GSO's cooperation with International, regional, and national standardizations organizations.

These MoUs and agreements formalize GSO's partnerships and establish key objectives and strategies, including sharing of knowledge, experience, best practices, and other mutual benefits to drive increased relevance and influence of standards throughout the world.

The following table includes the organizations with which GSO signed MoUs in 2020:

#	Abbriv	Organization
01	ICC	International Code Council
02	CEN	European Committee for Standardization: 1. CEN/TC145 – Plastic and Rubber Machines 2. CEN/TC127- Fire Safety in Building 3. CEN/TC113 – Heat Pumps and Air Conditioning Units



Highlights



International Code Council (ICC):

GSO and the International Code Council ICC signed a MoU (01 June 2020). This memorandum has intended to expand the scope of cooperation to include cooperation in translating the codes and the Gulf Building Code into Arabic language, the scholarship program, and cooperation in the field of capacity building.

The MoU also includes GSO's invitation to the Code Board to cooperate in the future development of technical regulations related to life safety, construction and other related topics.

The two parties will cooperate in the research and development of national and regional laws and regulations related to the work of standards, product evaluation and cooperation in General safety forums.

It is worthy to mention that GSO and ICC signed the Code Publishing Agreement in 2016, and as a result, the Code Board provides a free subscription to GSO in the database in order to access the current versions of the codes and standards of the copyrighted code board.



European Committee for Standardization (CEN):

European Committee for Standardization (CEN) and (GSO) have signed three agreements between a number of Gulf technical committees and corresponding European committees:

1. CEN/TC145 – Plastic and Rubber Machines.
2. CEN/TC127- Fire Safety in Building.
3. CEN/TC113 – Heat Pumps and Air Conditioning Units.

These agreements come as a continuation of the continuous bilateral cooperation between (GSO) and (CEN) in light of the memorandum of understanding signed between the two sides.

Joint meetings

Like many others, this year has reminded us of the importance of our cooperation with regional and global stakeholders and MoUs partners. Despite the many challenges faced throughout the world in 2020, GSO has not stopped! Many projects, initiatives, meetings, and virtual sessions have been organized.



Gulf Radio and Television for the GCC States

A delegation from the Gulf Radio and Television for the GCC States visited GSO headquarters, 01 January 2020.

The meeting included Introducing the activities of the two sides and areas of cooperation for further integration and reinforcement of the joint Gulf action process, especially in the field of awareness and capacity building.

GSO has been invited to many courses organized by the Gulf Radio and Television for the GCC States covering many topics including Media Content Rating and evaluation, Managing social media platforms, etc.



American Petroleum Institute (API)

Bilateral meetings were held between GSO and API, 14 May 2020 and 15 June 2020 to discuss the mutual cooperation in term of capacity building programs related to API's Individual Certification Programs (ICP) on oil and gas professionals comprehensive eLearning and instructor-led training courses on API standards and important industry topics. Both sides started discussion the possibility of signing an agreement between the Gulf Standardization Training Center and the Academy of API.

GSO and API continued their discussions to enhance the technical cooperation specially with GSO TC 07 for Oil and Gas.



International Code Council (ICC)

GSO held a bilateral meeting with specialists in the International Code Council, July 5, 2020, the two parties discussed the translation of the Gulf Building Code from Arabic into English and cooperation in the field of capacity building by providing some training materials from ICC to cooperate in the academic field aiming to create content for universities while benefiting from the experience of ASTM International for Testing and Materials in this field.

In addition, ICC's experts participated in the GSO training course "Comparison of GSO Standards with Corresponding Standards, 13-14 September 2020, addressed to specialists In the NSBs in the GSO Member States.

GSO also participated in the campaign (Building Safety Month) in the Code Council as a global partner (May 2020) and continued working with the Council to promote and publish the initiative in other standardization bodies in the Member States (NSBs).

ICC also worked on obtaining support of United States government to renew the Market Development Cooperator Program (MDCP) grant, which enables the International Code Council to provide great support to GSO to publish the Gulf Building Code in print and electronic copies, in addition to developing training programs and certificates for the code to enable its implementation.

Once it's published and implemented, the Gulf Building Code will support the harmonization of construction practices, enhancing safety and facilitating trade in the region.





CODEX ALIMENTARIUS COMMISSION

GSO participated, as an observer, in the 43rd Session of the FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme Codex Alimentarius Commission held virtually on 24 – 26 September, 12 October and 19 October 2020.



European Committee for Standardization(CEN) & European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (CENELEC)

GSO in cooperation with CEN-CENELEC held several bilateral meetings to follow up the implementation of the annual work plan 2020 within the framework of the MoU and Technical Cooperation Agreements signed between the two sides.

During this period, areas of cooperation between the two sides were identified, especially in smart cities and energy efficiency, and SMEs.

GSO and CEN extended their scope of cooperation by signing three cooperation agreements within the framework of the CEN-CENELEC-ETSI-GSO memorandum of understanding, namely:

1. CEN/TC 145 and GSO/TC 2- Plastic and Rubber Machines.
2. CEN/TC 127 and The Gulf Building Code Technical Committee on Fire Fighting.
3. CEN/TC 113 and GSO/TC 3 – Heat Pumps and Air Conditioning Units.

These Technical Cooperation Agreements aims at ensuring technical cooperation between CEN and GSO and consists of framework arrangements exclusively directed to the abovementioned Technical Partners, with a view to the development and adoption of common standards between the Parties and cooperation and adoption of common positions at international level.



Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organization (AIDMO)

In the context of the MoU signed between GSO and AIDMO, AIDMO was invited to participate virtually in The (47th) meeting, 22-23 November, 2020, The 45th meeting, 14th October, 2020, The 44th meeting of the GSO Technical Council, 14th October, 2020.

GSO participated in the Coordination meeting organized by AIDMO dated on 22 September 2020 which was devoted to coordinating the participation of the Member states to participate in ISO Virtual Sessions on September 24, due to the cancellation of the ISO GA due to the circumstances of Corona, and to support the Arab countries nominated for membership in ISO Council.



Underwriters Laboratories (UL)

A virtually meeting was held between UL and GSO (01 July 2020), possible areas of cooperation between the two sides were discussed, especially in the field of laboratories, standards, and capacity building.

GSO also participated in a number of virtual webinars organized by UL, especially those related to risk management.

Both sides demonstrate their continued commitment and working closely to develop their relationships towards signing an MoU.



Multinational Companies Business Group (MCBG)

GSO organized a remote meeting (06 October 2020) with MCBG in the presence of 38 representatives of the member companies of the group, discussing areas of cooperation in the field of Gulf Technical Regulations and standards. GSO and MCBG have intended to create a framework of cooperation by signing MoU to explore more possible opportunities and synergies for cooperation and promote communication, collaborations, and partnerships between the two organizations.

MCBG also participated in the open day activities organized by GSO for economic operators (14 December 2020) in the presence of more than 270 experts and specialists from around the world.

These initiatives come within the GSO's strategic objective to create and encourage the stakeholders' engagement in standardization activities.



Korea Agency for Technology and Standards (KATS)

GSO and KATS held a virtual bilateral meeting (13-14 October 2020), to discuss areas of cooperation and review the progress level of the MoU implementation within the annual cooperation program 2020 followed by a workshop for the representatives of the industrial sector in South Korea about the Gulf Technical Regulations: Children toys and LV Equipment and Home Appliances, and Gulf Notification System.



EVENTS



The International Organization for Standardization (ISO)

GSO participated in the virtual working session organized by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) for its member states (24 September 2020) in place of the annual general assembly meeting that was scheduled to be held in the United Arab Emirates and canceled due to the circumstances of COVID-19.

GSO also participated in the virtual meeting of the DEVCO Committee (dedicated to the Arab region) (June 8, 2020) and discussed the draft of the ISO operational plan for developing countries for the period (2021-2025).

Moreover, GSO took part in the virtual consultative meeting organized by ISO with the Regional and sub-regional standardization organizations, dated 28/07/2020, in reviewing the policy of ISO and with the aim of strengthening cooperation and exploring more possible opportunities for cooperation between ISO and these organizations.

GSO has also completed its integration with ISO to allow the publication of the standards through XML technology within the framework of the MoU signed between the two sides.



International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)

GSO participated in the 84th IEC General Meeting, which was organized virtually, November 09-13, 2020, in consideration of the worldwide pandemic, Covid-19. GSO organized in cooperation with the IEC an open meeting for the GSO Notified Bodies about the new IEC 60335-1-Ed.6.0:2020 deals with the safety of electrical appliances for household and similar purposes (15 October 2020) with the participation of more than 80 international experts. Another training course for the same topic was organized jointly between GSO and IEC (04-05 November, 2020), in addition to "International practices for developing standards" training course, 15-17 June 2020, for GSO Member States.

Additionally, many virtual bilateral meetings were held to follow up on the implementation of the MoU and the adoption agreement.



International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

Starting from December 22, 2020, GSO has become a Sector Member in Telecommunication Standardization (ITU-T) of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

This membership came after the continuous efforts of the GSO following its cooperation agreement's signature with ITU on September 18, 2019, on the sidelines of the ISO Week 2019 held in Cape Town, South Africa.

This membership provides GSO and its Member States with many privileges, including access to the full range of meetings and activities of the Telecommunication Standardization Sector and participate in conferences, seminars, study groups, workshops, specialized studies and working groups. The most important thing is participating in the development of international standards process. The membership allows GSO to participate in the meetings of ITU General Assembly, the (ITU) Plenipotentiary Conference, the ITU Advisory Group, and working groups related to intellectual property (IP).

Along with this membership, GSO can participate in the process of developing international standards related to communications, contribute to the study work groups, giving its feedback on standard and technical working documents draft.

It also includes participation in the consensus process and final decision-making regarding these standards, chairing the relevant working groups. This membership also gives the GSO access to information, meeting minutes, reports, resource databases, and international codes.

By this membership and cooperation agreement, GSO has completing the framing of its strategic partnership with the three international standardization organizations: ISO, IEC, and ITU.



The Standards and Metrology Institute for Islamic Countries (SMIIC)

GSO has engaged in in the 8th SMIIC Technical Committee Week which took place virtually between (21 September - 15 October 2020) through the technical committees: Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Halal Management Systems, Petroleum and related products, and Textiles and related products.

In the context of GSO and SMIIC MoU, both sides exchanged information related annual reports, standards catalogue, Technical Committees Annual Program 2020, and virtual webinars and Training, 2020.

On the other hand, GSO had liaison status to many SMIIC Technical Committees, including, SMIIC/CCA, C1 Halal Food Issues, TC2 Halal Cosmetic Issues, TC11 Halal Management Systems.



European Committee for Standardization (CEN) & European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (CENELEC)

(GSO) participated in the 10th Common Session between CEN/AG and CENELEC/AG held online on 26 November 2020, as a CEN and CENELEC partner.

In the context of the Memorandum of Understanding between the three European Standardization Organizations (CEN, CENELEC and ETSI) and the Gulf Cooperation Council Standardization Organization (GSO), as well as in the context of the CEN-CENELEC Task Force Gulf created in 2018, CEN and CENELEC organized, with the support of GSO, two back-to-back workshops on the 'Gulf Technical Regulation on Low Voltage Equipment and Appliances' on 17 February 2020, and on the 'Gulf Technical Regulation on Children Toys' on 18 February 2020. This workshop targeted CEN and CENELEC Members and European Partners, relevant Trade Federations, the European Commission and EFTA, and other interested stakeholders.

Many Zoom catch-up meeting were held between the specialist from Both sides during 2020 to follow up the implementation of the action plan 2020. Including capacity building programs, stakeholders' engagement in standardization, technical committees' alignment, and Smart Energy Grids, and potential activities GSO and CEN-CENELEC may organize 2021 in the context of the CEN and CENELEC Task Force Gulf.



African Organisation for Standardisation (ARSO)

In the framework of MoU signed between GSO and ARSO, GSO participated in several webinars organized by ARSO, one of the most important webinars was "Strengthening of the availability of standards and technical barriers to trade information in Africa for the implementation of the (AfCFTA) Agreement: Opportunities and Challenges, November 13, 2020.



Saudi Standards, Metrology and Quality Organization (SASO)

GSO has participated in the International Summit for Standards organized by (SASO), November 04, 2020.

This summit was organized within the program of international conferences held on the sidelines of the Saudi Presidency of the G20 in cooperation with The ISO, IEC and ITU.

The summit comes as the first international summit specialized in standards on the sidelines of its presidency of the G20 this year, to affirm the pioneering roles that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia plays in promoting ways of cooperation between countries of the world in various fields, especially technical fields that enhance economic capabilities and drive the rates of trade and investment exchange for new horizons.

Summit concluded its work by calling for support and adoption of international standards, in a way that contributes to improving the supply chain, facilitating trade exchange, and increasing reliability in the use of digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence, to overcome the repercussions of global crises, such as Covid-19.



American Concrete Institute (ACI)

GSO participated in the ACI Concrete Conference on Sustainability and Durability dated on 16-17 November 2020. This free two-days virtual conference focused on issues of concern to specialists in the Middle East and beyond, and renowned experts who are currently working on research and practical applications to improve concrete sustainability and durability.

Conference sessions also included discussions on the impact of fiber reinforced polymer (FRP) on durability, the role that climate change plays on the sustainability of concrete, the life expectancy of concrete structures, and other topics.

Moreover, ACI's experts delivered the "ACI 318-14 Building Code Requirements for Structural Concrete" training course organized by GSO for Member States, dated on 06-08 April, 2020.

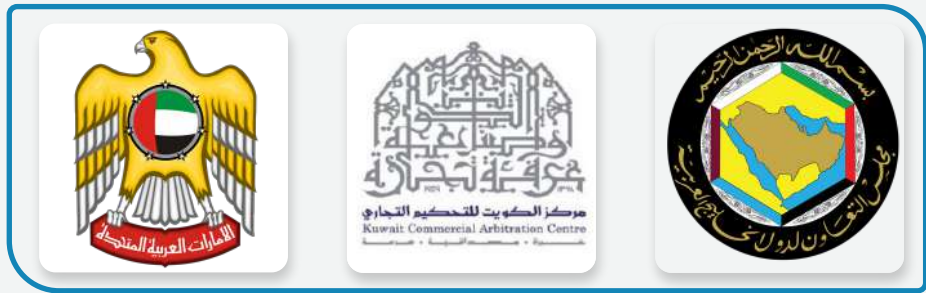


The Artificial Intelligence Virtual Conference

GSO was invited to present a paper in the Artificial Intelligence Conference (AI) and its Legal Controversies" (08 December 2020).

This conference was organized virtually by The GCC Intellectual Property Training Center and the GCC Commercial Arbitration Centre- Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry, with the participation of national, regional, and international organizations, most notably The International Electrotechnical Commission and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

The working paper reviewed the role of GSO in developing the Gulf standards and their keeping pace with technological development and artificial intelligence.





We are GSO, the Regional Organization for Standardization

- Established by the resolution of the GCC Supreme Council (22nd Session, Muscat, Oman, 30-31 December 2001) and operated in May 2004.
- A non-governmental and not for profit organization.
- Working under the umbrella of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC).
- Working with its Member States to unify the standardization activities and follow their implementation by Member States to protect the consumer, environment, public health, enhance the GCC economy and its competitiveness, and meet the requirements of Gulf Custom Union and Gulf Common Market, in accordance with the international practices.
- **Main activities:**
Standards, Metrology, and Conformity Assessment; Providing capacity building programs, technical assistance, and IT infrastructure.
- We are a regional network of national standards bodies with one member per country.
- **GSO members, namely:**
The State of the United Arab Emirates, The Kingdom of Bahrain, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, The Sultanate of Oman, The State of Qatar, and The State of Kuwait.
- All are members of ISO and are signatory to the WTO TBT Annex III.
- GSO provides a platform for developing practical tools through a sustainable partnership and common understanding and cooperation with all stakeholders.





GSO's Top Achievements

