

GCC IN REVIEW

A Weekly Publication of the main news surrounding the GCC States

19 - 23 June

Kingdom of Bahrain

Monday, 19 June—Bahrain’s Interior Ministry announced the death of a member of the security forces and the injury of two others following an explosion in Diraz. The explosion, targeting Bahraini security forces, was a terrorist act to obstacle the Kingdom’s efforts aimed at restoring security and the rule of law in the home village of Shia-Muslim spiritual leader Ayatollah Isa Qassim.

Thursday, 22 June— Bahraini Justice Ministry published new audio tapes unveiling Qatar’s role in promoting anti-government demonstrations in Manama in 2011.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Monday, 19 June— Iraq’s Prime Minister, Haydar al-Abadi, starts his first official visit to Saudi Arabia to discuss common efforts to fight against Daesh and to prevent future terrorist threats.

Tuesday, 20 June— Saudi Arabia’s naval forces detained and questioned 3 members of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps after their boat entered Saudi waters. The boat, filled with weapons and explosives was advancing towards Saudi oil extraction platforms.

Wednesday, 21 June— 31 years old Mohammed Bin Salman appointed as new Saudi Arabia Crown Prince in a major government reshuffle in which his predecessor, Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Nayef, was appointed as Interior Minister. By appointing Mohammed Bin Salman, main promoter of the Saudi Vision 2030 plan, as Crown Prince, the Saudi King intends to speed up efforts to modernize and strengthen Saudi Arabia in the face of the increasing Iranian threat. Abdulaziz bin Saud bin Nayef, due to his personal history, he was at the forefront in the fight against Al-Qaeda, was considered as the perfect guide for the Kingdom’s Interior Ministry.

Thursday, 22 June— Turkish President, Tayyip Erdogan, decided to call Saudi Arabia’s King Salman and its new Crown Prince in order to discuss the current Gulf Crisis. The leaders agreed to increase common efforts to end tension related to Qatar.

State of Kuwait

Thursday, 22 June—Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, leader of Kuwait, discussed in a phone call current Gulf tension related to the Qatari issue with British Prime Minister Theresa May. Such discussion is part of the efforts, of the Kuwaiti leader, to bring on board as many countries as possible in order to reduce the escalating tensions opposing Qatar with Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt and the UAE and to mediate a solution to the Gulf diplomatic crisis.

State of Qatar

Monday, 19 June— Qatar's Foreign Minister, Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, declared his country's readiness to rely on Iran and Turkey for supplies for indefinite period of time in case the blockade imposed by Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt and the UAE continues.

Tuesday, 20 June— Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Bahrain and UAE started to work on their list of grievances. Such list will be presented to Qatar's authorities hoping that it will cause the change of Qatari foreign policy, therefore contributing to end the current Gulf diplomatic crisis.

Friday, 23 June— Kuwaiti negotiators handed over a list of demands to Qatar from Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, UAE and Egypt, who all cut diplomatic and economic ties with Doha. The most important demands require Qatar to end its financing of terrorists groups in other countries and withdraw Doha's support for internationally and regionally listed organizations and individuals. Other demands include shutting down Al Jazeera, cutting diplomatic ties with Iran and immediately halting the establishing of a Turkish military base in Qatar. Qatari authorities were given 10 days to comply with the demands to end the blockade.

Sultanate of Oman

Wednesday, 21 June— Oman's Foreign Minister, Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah, declared the Sultanate is looking forward to host a future state visit by Saudi Arabia's King Salman, to reaffirm the common commitments of the two countries within the GCC.

Thursday, 22 June—Oman's Air Force welcomed the arrival of the first batch of Typhoon fighters that will strengthen the ranks of the Sultanate's Air force. Oman is looking to increase its air defense capabilities due to the growing instability affecting the Gulf region and the wider Middle East.

United Arab Emirates

Wednesday, 21 June— Abu Dhabi Crown Prince, Mohammad Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, as part of his state visit to France hold an official meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron. The two

leaders discussed issues of mutual concern and the important strategic relations between the UAE and France, developing in particular in the field of economy and in the military sector. The President and the Crown Prince also focused on the negative implications caused by the current crisis opposing Qatar to other Arab nations.

Friday, 23 June— A Qatari intelligence officer, Second Lieutenant Hamad Ali Mohammad Ali Al Hammadi, confessed attempts of sabotage made by Qatar against the UAE government. He described how the Qatari Intelligence's Digital Department, purchased Emirati SIM cards to create bogus social media accounts in order to defame the UAE.

Friday, 23 June—The official spokesman for the UAE government, Anwar Gargash, made clear, during an interview, that the UAE's boycott and blockade against Qatar could last for several years if needed.