



[Saudi-led Coalition Signs a Gulf Reconciliation Deal Agreeing to Ease Its Political Dispute with Qatar](#)

This week, feuding nations in the Gulf took the first steps toward ending the crisis in the region as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain signed a reconciliation deal agreeing to end their political ostracization of Qatar. The four aforementioned countries have lifted their boycott of Qatar, and in return Doha agreed to pause all legal action against them. Around three and a half years ago, in June of 2017, Saudi Arabia led an effort to isolate Qatar over the country's alleged ties to terrorist organizations and Iran. Qatar strongly denied those accusations and began legal proceedings against the other countries at international institutions such as the World Trade Organization. The coalition of states working against Qatar said that they would ease their embargo if Doha complied with a list of 13 demands. However, this was rejected outright, and Qatar strengthened its relationship with other countries such as Turkey and Pakistan in the absence of their Gulf neighbors. Now, with this week's latest development at the Gulf Cooperation Council in Al-Ula, Saudi Arabia, the embargo of Qatar is set to come to a conclusion as the countries involved agreed to resume normal relations.

In June of 2017, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Bahrain imposed a land, air, and sea blockade of Qatar and cut all economic and diplomatic ties, essentially isolating Doha from the world. The countries accused Qatar of being too close with Iran, and of having relationships with terrorist organizations. Doha strenuously denied it had any ties to extremist organizations and accused its Gulf neighbors of undermining its sovereignty. In order to lift the blockade and resume normal relations, the Saudi and UAE-led coalition made a list of 13 demands to Qatar, which included shuttering media organization Al Jazeera and a Turkish military base, and paying financial compensation to the four other Gulf states for "financial loss" related to Qatar's policies, among others. Doha rejected these demands outright as they amounted to a gross violation of its sovereignty as foreign countries meddled in their internal affairs. In response, Qatar began legal proceedings at the World Trade Organization and other international institutions against the antagonizing countries.

This week, at the Gulf Cooperation Council in Al-Ula, Saudi Arabia, the embargo of Qatar came to a conclusion as the countries involved agreed to resume normal relations. In return, Qatar said that it would immediately halt its legal efforts against the countries. Saudi Arabia was reportedly the catalyst behind ending the blockade, as it was worried about the repercussions from the incoming Biden administration in the United States. Under the Trump administration, former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson had tacitly approved of the blockade, but top foreign policy advisors for President-elect Biden have warned Saudi Arabia to be prepared for more pushback on its policies after the upcoming inauguration in late January.

Despite the resumption of ties, questions remain over the extent to which Qatar needs the economic benefits from trade with its Gulf neighbors. Since the embargo was established in 2017, Qatar has found new economic networks in Turkey, Pakistan, and others, to effectively replace the Gulf states.