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GCC IN REVIEW

*A Weekly Publication of the main news surrounding the GCC States*

**3 - 7 July**

**Kingdom of Bahrain**

Wednesday, 5 July—Bahrain’s Prime Minister Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa held official talks in Manama with senior defense advisers for the Middle East from the UK. Bahrain is keen to increase its military cooperation with the UK and other European partners to limit Iranian and Qatari interference in its internal affairs.

Thursday, 6 July—The Cairo based Arab League parliament has recognized and condemned Iranian interference in the Kingdom of Bahrain during the 2011 violence. The parliament also warned about current Iranian interference in other Gulf countries.

**Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

Monday, 3 July—Saudi Arabia’s Defense Ministry announced that the Kingdom is to provide training and air support for the new commandos of the Yemeni army which have been deployed to recapture the city of Taiz from Iran-backed Houthi militias.

Wednesday, 5 July—King Salman bin Abdulaziz of Saudi Arabia called for holding a Saudi-African Summit by the end of this year or early 2018. This move is part of the project of the Saudi leadership, of taking a leading role in promoting anti-terrorism and prevention in countries across the Muslim world.

Thursday, 6 July—Saudi Foreign Minister Adel al-Jubeir declared that the boycott of Qatar will remain in place after the latter rejected conditions to end a diplomatic crisis. The minister stressed that the measures taken against Qatar are necessary as Saudi Arabia strongly opposes Qatar’s regional destabilising efforts and its close ties with Iran.

**State of Kuwait**

Monday, 3 July—Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, Emir of Kuwait received at his official residence, the Bayan Palace, Qatar's Foreign Minister Shaikh Mohammad bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani. The message, handed over by Qatar's Foreign Minister, includes Qatar's negative response to a list of demands from Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt, sent to Doha via Kuwait late last month.

Thursday, 6 July— Kuwait and the United Kingdom have decided to activate all bilateral agreements, including a memorandum of understanding in electronic security cooperation. The deal, signed in London by Kuwait's Deputy Foreign Minister, Khaled Al-Jarallah, and British Minister of State for the Middle East and North Africa, Alistair Burt, included the increase in the volume of trade exchanges between the two countries.

**State of Qatar**

Wednesday, 5 July— Qatar’s Foreign Minister, Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani, accused the Gulf states that have imposed a blockade on Doha of trying to undermine his nation's sovereignty. He added that the blockade will not be successful and that the current situation is increasing the patriotism and economic productivity of Qatari citizens.

Thursday, 6 July—The foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt yesterday expressed regret over Qatar’s negative response to the principles of the demands. The ministers reunited in Cairo stated that the blockade will continue. According to the ministers Qatar’s defiance reflects Doha’s incomprehension of the gravity of the situation. The ministers added in a joint statement that Qatar must commit to fighting all forms of extremism and terrorism, and cease its discourse of hate and violence. Qatar is also required to abide by the 2014 Riyadh Summit Accord as well as by the Arab-Islamic-American Summit held in Riyadh in May that called for rooting-out terrorism and drying its sources of financing.

**Sultanate of Oman**

Thursday, 6 July—Omani authorities have decided to further expand the 6th edition of the Sultan Qaboos Award for Culture, Arts and Literature, inviting other Arab countries to join and participate. The decision marks the important aspiration of the Sultanate of Oman of becoming the most important cultural center in the MENA region and to develop and encourage cultural ties in its foreign relations.

**United Arab Emirates**

Thursday, 6 July— UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Anwar al-Gargash, declared that the official Qatari response deserved the neglect it received from the boycotting countries, stressing that the next steps would increase the isolation of Doha. The Minister considered that the Cairo meeting is the beginning of a difficult and necessary road, a path that saves Qatar from its delusions represented in the Qatari policy of supporting extremism and terrorism, which cannot continue.