



Integrated Country Strategy

Qatar

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1. Chief of Mission Priorities

Since Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani's 2013 accession as head of state, Qatar has pursued a policy of developing a closer strategic relationship with the United States based on key political, economic, military, and security objectives. Due in part to the onset of the Gulf rift in mid-2017, this process has accelerated. Qatar finds itself in a transitional period, reassessing its traditional dependence on Arab Gulf neighbors and building ties with partners farther afield, while examining its own strategic interests in the region and beyond. Mission Qatar aims to sustain robust engagement with Qatar and further synchronize our joint, shared priorities in efforts to address ongoing regional diplomatic and military challenges, boost trade with and investment in the United States, and improve Qatar's counterterrorism and labor policies. The bilateral U.S.-Qatar Strategic Dialogue was launched in January 2018 to effectively coordinate across all bilateral priorities.

In the past two decades, Qatar's foreign policy and deployment of development assistance has increased its political influence across the Middle East and North Africa, and into parts of Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. While facets of its foreign policy have ruffled the feathers of its GCC neighbors, Qatar has recently signaled a desire to align its policies with U.S. regional interests, which presents opportunities for the United States to work with Qatar to advance counter extremism, development, and stability agendas in the Middle East and beyond.

Qatar is a dependable strategic ally and has proved an active partner in support of the U.S.-led anti-ISIS Coalition. Qatar hosts the largest U.S. Air Force Base outside of the United States, Al-Udeid Air Base, which is pivotal for staging Coalition military operations in Syria, Afghanistan, and other conflict zones. Qatar also hosts the United States Central Command (CENTCOM) Forward Headquarters, the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing at Al-Udeid Air Base, and a prepositioning facility maintained by a U.S. Army garrison at Camp As-Saliyah. Furthermore, following discussions at the U.S.-Qatar Dialogue, the GoQ has committed to invest in Al-Udeid's expansion, with an eye toward making it an enduring U.S. military presence in Qatar. Additionally, the Qatar Armed Forces (QAF) have grown to become the United States' second largest foreign military sales (FMS) purchaser with nearly \$25 billion in programs since 2014 and have shown a desire to enhance its strategic relationship with the U.S. military. Top purchases include F-15 fighter aircraft, PATRIOT air defense system, Apache Helicopters, Early Warning Radar, and Javelin anti-tank missiles.

The United States has been the top source of Qatari imports for seven of the last eight years, driven by aircraft purchases from Boeing. Total U.S. imports in 2017 amounted to \$4.5 billion. Since 2015, Qatar Airways has signed agreements worth \$19 billion with Boeing for dozens of passenger and cargo aircraft. Given annual budgeting based on approximately \$45/barrel of oil and Qatar's ample sovereign wealth reserves, analysts anticipate Qatar will be able to continue weathering the Gulf rift and funding the country's aggressive investment program in the run-up to the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

U.S. energy firms have contributed to the establishment of Qatar as the number one liquefied natural gas (LNG) exporter, making Qatar a critically important partner in global energy security. Qatar Petroleum announced in 2017 a plan to boost LNG output by 30% by 2023. At the same time, the government is making a concerted effort to reduce its reliance on hydrocarbons and expand non-hydrocarbon sectors, including services and tourism. Qatar has looked to U.S. firms as preferred partners in establishing the mega-infrastructure projects needed for the World Cup, including in building the Hamad International Airport, road and rail development, and eight stadiums.

Qatar and the United States signed a bilateral CT Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in July 2017 to deepen counterterrorism (CT) cooperation. Our newfound cooperation enshrined in the MOU led to engagement to enhance information sharing, improve legislative and prosecutorial coordination, and participate in joint training opportunities. Embassy Doha will continue to advance this coordination in the coming years.

In May 2017, Qatar became a member of the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center (TFTC), a collaborative effort among Gulf countries to formalize cooperation on terrorist financing. In October 2017, Qatar designated 11 individuals and two entities associated with ISIS-Y or AQAP under the TFTC umbrella.

Foreigners make up roughly 90% of Qatar's 2.7 million inhabitants. Qatar has made significant strides in its labor record in recent years, improving labor protections, combating trafficking in persons (TIP), and addressing the needs of the most vulnerable in Qatar, domestic workers and laborers. It has established a minimum wage, labor dispute resolution committees, public forums to raise awareness, new legislation rolling back an onerous exit permit system, and other reforms. The International Labor Organization (ILO) and labor NGOs have acknowledged Qatar's progress, and the ILO even opened an office in Doha in 2018 to further assist in reform efforts. Embassy Doha will continue to urge Qatar to prosecute violators of labor law and reform inefficient bureaucracy.

Qatar has influenced and shaped opinions across the Arabic-speaking world via the Qatari government-owned Al-Jazeera media network, the first and still most widely watched Pan-Arab network in the world. Al-Jazeera became officially independent from the GOQ in 2011; however, Qatar's neighbors complain that the network's coverage of their domestic and regional affairs as interventionist and in some cases inflammatory. Embassy Doha will work with the government and Al-Jazeera to encourage responsible, objective reporting as measured against generally accepted international standards, meanwhile leveraging the Embassy's long-term relationship with the network to positively influence messaging on U.S. security and trade priorities.

Qatar hosts "Education City", home to eight world-class institutions of higher education, including six U.S. universities, along with several research and technology centers. These

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schools provide quality higher educational opportunities for Qataris and students from around the region, and boast some of the highest percentages of female students worldwide. Embassy Doha engages frequently with these universities in cultural outreach programs for Qatar, the Gulf, and the wider Islamic World. Such educational exchanges, here and in the United States continue to develop our mutual understanding, promote U.S. values and Western-style education, and improve our bilateral relationship. Embassy Doha will continue to advocate for greater institutional linkages between Education City and U.S. institutions and promote study abroad in the U.S. in order to increase the flow of Qatar's higher education dollars into the U.S. economy and develop networks between U.S., Qatari and regional researchers, opinion shapers, and future leaders.

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2. Mission Strategic Framework

Mission Goal 1: U.S.-Qatar Strategic Partnership Creates Sustainable Regional and Civilian Security

Mission Objective 1.1: Sustained diplomatic engagement to more closely align U.S. and Qatari foreign policy to address regional political, economic, developmental, and security challenges

Mission Objective 1.2: Increased military cooperation to enhance Qatar's defense capability, address manpower needs, and increase interoperability with the United States

Mission Goal 2: Sustained Counterterrorism, Security, Law Enforcement, and Judicial Cooperation

Mission Objective 2.1: Increase information sharing and proactive political, law enforcement, security, and judicial cooperation to detect, investigate, and disrupt threats to U.S. interests, regional terrorism, and transnational criminal activities.

Mission Objective 2.2: Sustain proactive political and public diplomacy engagements to promote labor and human rights reform, combat trafficking in persons, and counter extremist ideology.

Mission Goal 3: Deepen Economic, Financial, Investment and Commercial Ties

Mission Objective 3.1: Expanded economic and commercial partnership with Qatar through increased foreign direct investment in both countries, and encouraging meaningful reforms in Qatar to allow U.S. firms greater access and competitiveness.

Management Objective 1: The mission will achieve a rightsized management platform to effectively support Mission requirements and objectives.

3. Mission Goals and Objectives

Mission Goal 1 U.S.-Qatar Strategic Partnership Creates Sustainable Regional and Civilian Security

Description and Linkages: Qatar hosts United States Central Command (CENTCOM) Forward Headquarters, Al Udeid Air Base (AUAB) and Camp As-Saliyah (CAS). Qatar is a contributor to U.S. and Coalition operations with niche capabilities, such as C-17 strategic airlift in support of regional Coalition operations, including to Afghanistan, and maritime patrol support in the Arabian Gulf. U.S. forces based in Qatar are actively engaged in regional military operations out of AUAB. The Qatar Armed Forces have shown interest in expanding the military-to-military relationship with the U.S. to address regional security challenges, improve their ability to deter aggression, and defend their national interests.

Mission Objective 1.1 Sustained diplomatic engagement to more closely align U.S. and Qatari foreign policy to address regional political, economic, developmental, and security challenges

Justification: Qatar provides support for the U.S.-led anti-ISIS Coalition efforts, is a significant buyer for U.S. foreign military sales (FMS), and invests significantly in the U.S. economy. Continued U.S. engagement with Qatar and regional partners to develop integrated approaches to political and security challenges is critical, though Qatar's friction with some of its GCC neighbors risks hindering cooperative efforts to counter violent extremism or foreign aggression, and harms economic objectives. To achieve our objectives in the region, we need sustained diplomatic engagement between the U.S. and Qatar on a wide range of political, economic, and military issues.

Mission Objective 1.2 Increased military cooperation to enhance Qatar's defense capability, address manpower needs, and increase interoperability with the United States

Justification: Qatar is a strategic partner for the U.S., as it hosts the largest American airbase outside the U.S., the United States Central Command (CENTCOM) Forward Headquarters at Al-Udeid Air Base, in addition to the Area Support Group-Qatar at Camp As-Sayliyah. Increased military cooperation will help assure U.S. access to Qatari bases, integration of Qatari military capabilities into Coalition operations, and improvement in the relationships with GCC neighbors. The Qatari Armed Forces are experiencing a period of rapid development with a significant increase in military weapons purchases, training, personnel, and financial resource management. There are significant challenges with regard to the implementation of a new national service program for adult males, human capital requirements to integrate pending weapons systems, training requirements, and the development of resource management capabilities at the Ministerial and Qatari Armed Forces Headquarters level. Activities are divided into separate efforts to enhance institutional capacity and to develop operational capabilities.

Mission Goal 2 Sustained Counterterrorism, Security, Law Enforcement, and Judicial Cooperation

Description and Linkages: The Middle East continues to suffer from violent extremism, some of which derives its funding from the Arabian Peninsula. Qatar and the United States entered into a bilateral counterterrorism Memorandum of Understanding in July 2017 that set the course for sustained cooperation and information sharing on counterterrorism and counterterrorism finance concerns. This MOU opened avenues for coordination in terms of improving aviation security, legislation, and prosecutions, and prompted Qatar to develop a stronger legal framework for designating and sanctioning individuals for terrorism-related charges. Qatar seeks ongoing training and technical cooperation to improve law enforcement and judicial capacity. Qatar is also reviewing security requirements relevant to hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup, an event which anticipates upward of 300,000 visitors, severely straining the limited capacity of the country's security apparatus.

Mission Objective 2.1 Increase information sharing and proactive political, law enforcement, security, and judicial cooperation to detect, investigate, and disrupt threats to U.S. interests, regional terrorism, and transnational criminal activities.

Justification: Having Qatar be a hostile environment for the financing of terrorism and related activities is a long-standing U.S. priority. With recent improvements in U.S-Qatar strategic coordination on counterterrorism and other security-related objectives, USG engagement in Qatar seeks to cement this partnership by expanding cooperation in several related fields. In addition to diplomatic engagement with the Qatari interagency, Post will work with U.S. agencies to develop and advance capacity building programs for law enforcement, prosecutors, and financial crimes investigators. The U.S. and Qatar signed a counterterrorism MOU in 2017 which identified a number of areas for enhanced cooperation and capacity building; the MOU will help guide USG engagement in the coming years. Security-related cooperation is vital for the bilateral partnership and will advance U.S. regional goals.

Mission Objective 2.2 Sustain proactive political and public diplomacy engagements to promote labor and human rights reform, combat trafficking in persons, and counter extremist ideology.

Justification: Human rights violations, including labor abuse and trafficking in persons, have the potential to threaten domestic stability and security in a country in which expatriate workers comprise roughly 90% of the population. Such violations also undermine rule of law and run counter to our values and interests in supporting free and tolerant societies throughout the world. By assisting local partners in strengthening their legal and enforcement regimes the Embassy enhances stability, security, and the overall value of our strategic partnership with Qatar. Moreover, improving the local labor environment and legal mechanisms to address abuses helps safeguard U.S. companies and contractors operating in Qatar from reputational

damage and legal exposure. Countering extremist ideology remains critical to U.S. national security and financial interests globally. Thus, partnering with Qatar's educational and cultural institutions to promote the shared ideals of tolerance, coexistence, and an appreciation for diversity benefits the bilateral security and trade partnership.

Mission Goal 3 Deepen Economic, Financial, Investment and Commercial Ties

Description and Linkages: Qatar's GDP in 2017 was approximately \$166 billion, and is expected to grow at a steady rate over the next several years. Based on World Bank and IMF rankings, Qatar has the highest per capita GDP in the world. The United States has been one of Qatar's top suppliers for the past five years, averaging annual exports between \$4 and \$5 billion. Two thirds of American exports to the country consist of major transportation equipment (aircraft, vehicles, and heavy equipment). The U.S. trade surplus with Qatar has expanded from \$2.6 billion in 2012 to \$3.1 billion in 2017. On June 5, 2017, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Egypt severed diplomatic ties with Qatar and imposed an economic blockade closing land, sea and air borders. Consequently, Qatar has sought to strengthen its bilateral relationship with the United States. This presents an opportunity for U.S. companies to create a stronger and more effective presence in Qatar supported by USG. Commerce has identified key sectors with fast-growing public and private demand in order to position U.S. companies for success and defend the U.S. share of Qatar's market from aggressive Asian and European competitors. Qatar ranks 83 out of 190 economies on the Ease of Doing Business rankings by the World Bank, with low rankings on protecting minority investors, obtaining credit, enforcing contracts, and general trade across borders. USG efforts will focus on addressing a number of endemic trade issues such as government procurement irregularities, non-payment issues, and others.

Mission Objective 3.1 Expanded economic and commercial partnership with Qatar through increased foreign direct investment in both countries, and encouraging meaningful reforms in Qatar to allow U.S. firms greater access and competitiveness.

Justification: The U.S.-Qatar commercial and economic relationship continues to grow stronger and Qatar remains a resilient and diverse market despite regional unrest and some uncertainty in the global market. With U.S. exports to Qatar growing to nearly \$5 billion in 2016, U.S. companies performed well in the market with major awards in aviation, defense and infrastructure. Following the onset of the Saudi-led embargo, Qatar sought to expand its relationship with the United States even further, which has created additional opportunities for U.S. firms in such areas as food, healthcare and technology. There are also opportunities for growth in FDI into the United States given the Qatar Investment Authority's (QIA) commitment to invest over \$45 billion into the U.S. economy, as well as significant private sector Qatari investment in the United States and Qatar's focus on diversifying its economy away from oil and gas through its National Vision 2030. The Embassy will continue to urge the Qatari government to implement domestic economic reforms that are favorable to U.S. investors and

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exporters. The annual U.S.-Qatar Strategic dialogue presents a valuable forum for key decision makers to identify concrete steps to bolster U.S. and Qatari commercial and economic ties.

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4. Management Objectives

Management Objective 1 The mission will achieve a rightsized management platform to effectively support Mission requirements and objectives.

Justification: Qatar is pivoting toward the United States on all fronts, to include a robust security partnership. Qatar plays a central role, militarily and diplomatically, in countering ISIS and other global threats. In the last 10 years, the Embassy expanded its staffing footprint threefold to meet this growth in engagement. By 2020, incoming personnel are projected to raise USDH numbers by over 50 percent. The Mission will require an expanded management platform – human, fiscal, and physical – in order to deliver consistent support and