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From the ambassador

Our decision to cut the relations with Qatar is a response to the serious violations committed by the authorities in Doha secretly and openly over the last years with the aim of undermining our national sovereignty and destabilizing the region.

Earlier this month, together with the Ambassadors of Egypt, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates in Brussels, I have expressed our disappointment with the negative response received from the State of Qatar regarding its obligations to stop supporting terrorism.

We continue to believe that there is no place in the international community for any entity or party involved in practicing, supporting or financing extremism and terrorism.

The relationship between the Arab peoples and the deep appreciation to the Qatari people remain of high importance for us and we hope that wisdom would prevail and the State of Qatar will take the right decision.



Abdulrahman S. Alahmed

Ambassador and Head of the Mission to the European Union

Qatar Must Stop Supporting Terrorism



Minister of Foreign Affairs Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir
Photo: Bundesregierung/Bergmann

The negative answer received from the State of Qatar to change its policies and practices and stop supporting extremism and terrorism continues to undermine our security in the Arab countries and beyond.

A compelling change of direction in Qatar's approach is an essential pre-requisite to be recognized as a partner in the efforts of peaceful settlement of political crises in the region and reduce the risk of the negative impact that such crises have on the European countries.

In early June, the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, together with neighboring Arab countries Egypt, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates, has taken the decision to cut diplomatic and consular relations with the State of Qatar. There are a number of factual and evidence-based reasons for this decision which follows our numerous requests made over the last few years to stop the activities of Qatar in support of terrorism and extremism.

More recently we requested the State of Qatar to address a number of very specific issues of major concern for Arab national security and peace with material spillover effect on many other countries. The economic and political boycott jointly reaffirmed on the 5th July in Cairo with Egypt, Bahrain and UAE will continue until Qatar changes its policies for the better.

Since 1995, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its brotherly states have made strenuous and continuous efforts to urge the authorities in Doha to abide by their commitments and adhere to their agreements. The Qatar authorities have persevered in failing to fulfil their international obligations and have continued to violate the international agreements they signed under the umbrella of the Cooperation Council for Arab States of the Gulf, regarding cessation of hostilities against the Kingdom and taking action against terrorist groups and activities.

Qatar has supported the Al-Houthi militias coup against the democratically elected government in Yemen; as well as Iranian-backed terrorist groups in the Governorate of Qatif in Saudi Arabia, and in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

We cannot tolerate that Qatar continues to finance and shelter extremists who seek to undermine the stability and unity of the homeland from the inside and abroad, and use the media to fuel the internal strife of sovereign Arab nations in breach of the 2013 and 2014 Riyadh agreements. As emphasized by the Minister of Foreign Affairs Adel Al-Jubeir: "This idea that you can fund extremist groups, that you can pay ransom to terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda and ISIS, that you can send \$300 million to the Shi'ite militias in Iraq with most of it ending up with the Quds Force in Iran, is not acceptable. I think most countries in the world would agree with the demand to stop this."

The people of Qatar are and remain in the heart of King Salman. This is reflected in the humanitarian initiatives taken by Saudi Arabia in favor of its national and Qatari joint families. Saudi Arabia is also prepared to provide Qatar with food and medical supplies, should they need that.

Solving the crisis with Qatar depends on Doha's authorities refraining from supporting and financing terrorism, interfering in the affairs of other countries and waging hostile campaigns that undermine security and stability in the Gulf, in Europe and beyond.



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New Crown Prince Appointed

The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, appointed Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud as Crown Prince and Deputy Prime Minister at the Al-Safa Palace in Mecca, on the 21st of June, 2017.



Saudi Arabia's Active Contribution to the G-20 Summit 2017 in Hamburg Saudi Arabia Unequivocally Condemns Terrorism in all Forms

As permanent member of the G20, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia participated in the G20 Leader's Summit 2017 in Hamburg. The Kingdom is set to host the G20 Summit itself in 2020.

The Kingdom's Delegation to Hamburg was headed by Minister of State and Member of the Cabinet Dr. Ibrahim bin Abdulaziz Al-Assaf and also included Minister of Finance, Mohammed bin Abdullah Al-Jadaan.

The delegation reaffirmed that terrorism has no religion, for it is a crime that targets the entire world. It does not differentiate between religions and ethnic groups, and The Kingdom condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, in a constant and unequivocal condemnation, wherever and by whomsoever committed, as one of the most serious threats to world peace and security.



State Minister of Saudi Arabia Ibrahim bin Abdulaziz Al-Assaf in a conversation with German Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel before the start of the third working session of the G-20 Summit.

Photo: Bundesregierung/Bergmann

During The Kingdom's intervention, Dr. Ibrahim bin Abdulaziz Al-Assaf stressed that combating terrorism and extremism and the promotion of the values of moderation is an international responsibility that requires effective cooperation and coordination.

"Unfortunately, Saudi Arabia has been the target of terrorist organisations and countries that support terrorism for more than 20 years and have been threatened by direct, indirect and multiple-source terrorism" the minister said.

He also stressed the need to combat and prevent all sources and means of funding terrorism and expressed the Kingdom's willingness to work with all possible partners to combat the use of Internet and social media for terrorist or other criminal purposes, including extremist recruitment and propaganda.

Furthermore he made a point about the need for sufficient controls on financial transactions to ensure that the international financial systems are not exploited by terrorists, corrupt individuals or drug-traffickers.

He further stated that the Kingdom is at the forefront of the fight against extremism, working closely with the international community in order to combat and pursue terrorists and their organizations. This is a fight fought on many levels, including through military measures and the draining of the sources of funding for terrorist activities.

The Kingdom has adopted a comprehensive strategy to eradicate terrorism and extremism and has enacted regulations that criminalise the funding of and the incitement to terrorism, as well as travels to areas of conflict. The Kingdom has further, as part of these efforts, actively participated in the US-led international coalition against ISIS and formed the Islamic Alliance for Combating Terrorism.

"To promote the values of moderation and fight extremist ideology", the Kingdom has launched the Global Center for the Fight against Extremist Thought with the participation of US President Donald Trump and the leaders of the countries that participated in the Arab-American-Islamic Summit, recently held in Riyadh.



Saudi Arabia Calls for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia welcomes the work accomplished within the framework of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 during the German Presidency of the G-20 Leaders' Summit. It calls upon the participating states to assume their responsibilities to ensure an effective implementation and to support developing countries reach the sustainable development goals and help them with the many challenges they face related to this transition.

The Kingdom has committed itself to implementing the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 as part of the Kingdom's Vision 2030 program, that aims to improve the lives of the citizens and promote economic growth. The Kingdom's vision provides the foundations to ensure that the objectives of sustainable development are successfully integrated into the national planning process and are also part of our economic and social development efforts in developing countries.

The Kingdom has currently achieved most of the UN's 17 goals for comprehensive sustainable development.

At the "Partnership with Africa, Migration and Health"-meeting, Minister of State, Dr. Al-Assaf voiced his support for the efforts of the WHO to address health risks and disease outbreaks and for the speedy completion of its health emergency management reforms. He also called on the UN to place global health and the fight against epidemics among its priorities and support the pivotal role of the WHO.



Plenary session of G-20 Summit in Hamburg.
Photo: Saudi Press Agency

He further emphasized the importance of international cooperation for bridging the digital divide, supporting small and medium size enterprises, promoting the digital economy, stimulating investment and encouraging innovation, while enhancing consumer protection, reliability, information security and privacy. He warned against the risks stemming from digitalization on traditional employment models and called for labour market reforms to counter them.

He expressed the Kingdom's aspiration to cooperate in promoting exchanges and successful experiences in various fields and to develop both public and private sectors in order to make the workforce more compatible with the new labour market requirements.

Saudi Arabia Supports the Promotion of Women Entrepreneurship

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Minister of Finance, Mohammed bin Abdullah Al-Jadaan, participated in the meeting for countries contributing to the initiative for the promotion of entrepreneurship for women, held on the side-lines of the G20-Summit in Hamburg.

The new initiative was officially launched together with some of the World's most influential leaders, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel, US President Donald Trump and British Prime Minister Theresa May. It aims at encouraging women in developing countries to start their own businesses and will help promoting the growth of their enterprises. It especially seeks to encourage investments and to tear down barriers for women entrepreneurs' access to financing and services, including actions such as skills enhancement and technical assistance.



The World Bank's Women's Entrepreneurship Facility Meeting
Photo: Bundesregierung/Güngör

The Kingdom considers women's participation in its economic activities as essential in the construction of a strong and balanced economy and considers promoting access to the labour market and improving the quality of women's jobs as an important element.



Women Workforce Increases by 130%

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has seen a substantial increase in the number of women in the workforce over the last four years, according to a recent report by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development.

The report states that the number of women active in the the Kingdom's private sector has increased by 130% during this period. Women now constitute 30% of the private sector workforce.

The Kingdom is currently working towards the goal of increasing the percentage of women in the combined public and private sector workforce to 28% by 2020.

Several projects aimed at boosting employment among women are still ongoing and many try to overcome the challenge of transportation, that many women face in commuting to work. Other projects are looking at providing women the opportunity to work from their homes.



Growth-Inducing SME Hub Launched

The Small and Medium Enterprises General Authority of Saudi Arabia has announced the establishment of HUB1006, an operating entity for a number of growth enhancing entrepreneurial hubs for SMEs.

The launch is a part of the national effort of reaching the economic goals set up in the Vision 2030 and National Transformation Programmes. The hub aims at facilitating growth of the SME and entrepreneurial sector and driving innovation across a wide range of industries. This initiative is expected to boost the growth of the current two million SMEs' and to help



increase their share of the total GDP from 20% to 35% by 2030.

HUB1006 will encourage Saudi and international entrepreneurs & SME owners to locate their establishments in dedicated areas, called hubs, in order to create creative clusters.

They said...

>> "An agreement on ending any kind of support for terrorist or extremist organizations would be the best solution to the crisis."

German Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sigmar Gabriel, speaking about the Qatar crisis in Riyadh, on the 3rd of July, 2017.

In Brief

Public Healthcare Reform

Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz, has recently given his approval to the adoption of public healthcare as a policy and legislative priority.

The reform means hospitals and health centers will be independent from the Health Ministry and be converted into public sector companies, set to compete on the basis of quality, efficiency, productivity, waste reduction and speedy decision-making.

23'000 Qatari Fake Accounts Created to Attack Saudi Arabia

Saud Al-Qahtani, Advisor at the Saudi Royal Court and the General Supervisor of the Center for Studies and Information Affairs recently revealed a study on fake Twitter accounts. The results showed that more than 23,000 fake Twitter accounts have been launched by Qatar for attacking The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on social media platforms.

The evidence consists of an analysis of the accounts and their posts, showing striking statistical similarities in the usage of faked profile pictures, false aliases and identical phrases in posts, that also re-occur at regular intervals.

