

The State of Qatar and the United States signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on combating terrorism financing on 11 July 2017 in Doha, Qatar.

At a joint press conference with U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson, HE Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani said that the State of Qatar has become the first country to sign with the U.S. an agreement aiming to combat terrorism financing.

The MoU comes within the framework of the continuous bilateral cooperation between the State of Qatar and the U.S., and as a result of the joint collaboration between the two sides.



U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and HE Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani sign the historical MoU.

## How Qatar Fights Terrorism

Qatar is a founding member of the Global Coalition to Counter ISIS and works closely with its international allies to fight terrorism. This includes hosting the Coalition's air operations at Al Udeid air base, from which attacks on ISIS are launched every day. Qatar is also a member of the Global Counter Terrorism Forum, through which it coordinates counter-terrorism initiatives with 29 other member countries, including the US, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia.

Qatar also works closely with its allies to combat the financing of terrorism, including cracking down on individuals accused of financing terrorism by freezing assets and imposing travel bans and significantly strengthening its legal framework to prevent illicit terrorism financing.

Concrete steps Qatar has made to combat terrorism:

- On 20 July 2017, His Highness the Emir further amended anti-terror legislation in Qatar. The decree set rules for defining terrorism, acts of terrorism and the financing of terrorism. It also created two national terrorism lists and established rules for including individuals and groups on each list.
- On 11 July 2017, Qatar signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the US outlining future efforts it can take to fortify its fight against terrorism and actively address terrorism funding issues. In line with the MoU, the US will be deploying officials to the Qatari state prosecutor's office.
- Qatar enacted new laws in September 2014 to increase government oversight of charities, including preventing them from sending money abroad to charities that are suspected of financing terrorists, and more heavily regulating fundraising by individuals, including via social media.

Qatar's countering violent extremism strategy In addition to these measures, Qatar counters violent extremism by addressing the root causes of terrorism. This development-based approach includes reconstruction, education, economic empowerment and prevention. These efforts have benefited the millions of people vulnerable to violent extremism and terrorism, which has reduced the risk of global terrorism.

They are structured around four pillars:

#### Reconstruction:

- Qatar funds reconstruction efforts around the world to address the poor conditions, including lack of education, housing, electricity, and health services that are conducive to terrorism.
- In Gaza, for example, 1 million sq feet of destroyed homes and buildings have been rebuilt. Similar projects have been undertaken in the West Bank, Darfur, and other areas globally.

#### Education:

- The State of Qatar has allocated the majority of its foreign aid to educational initiatives. Its programs – including Education Above All and Educate A Child - provide education for 5m out of school children with commitments to rise to 7 million out-of-school children in 42 countries over the next few years.
- In Syria, for example, Qatar supports the “Qatar Upholding Education for Syrians’ Trust “, whose total funds exceed USD 100 million. The five-year initiative seeks to provide education and training to nearly 400,000 Syrian refugees in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Turkey.

#### Economic opportunity:

- Qatar seeks to empower people economically and build community resilience by reducing unemployment, especially among youth. Overall our ambition is to reach 2.7m Arab Youth by 2021.
- Qatar-based Silatech, for example, has raised US\$ 237 million, creating a network of more than 150 partners and connecting more than 300,000 young Arabs to real job opportunities. The Qatar Friendship Fund in Tunisia promotes a culture of business leadership, helping youth strengthen their ability to lead development efforts and realize their ambitions.

#### Prevention:

- Through innovative schemes such as the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF). Qatar is the only Arab country contributing to this fund which is the first global effort to support local, community-level initiatives aimed at strengthening resilience against violent extremist agendas. The scheme, whose funders include the United States, the European Union and Switzerland, operates in countries such as Mali, Nigeria, Kenya, Kosovo, Nigeria and Bangladesh.



*“Today, Qatar is the first country to sign a memorandum of agreement with the US, and we call on the countries imposing the siege against Qatar to join us as signatories to this MoU.”*

– Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani

*Together the United States and Qatar will do more to track down funding sources, will do more to collaborate and share information and will do more to keep the region safe.”*

– Secretary of State Rex Tillerson

*The memorandum lays out a series of steps that each country will take in coming months and years to interrupt and disable terror financing flows and intensify counter terrorism activities globally.”*

– Secretary of State Rex Tillerson