

[UAE minister says Gulf cohesion will be restored at 'historic' GCC summit](#)

Mon, 2021-01-04 23:39

DUBAI: Gulf cohesion will be restored at the "historic" GCC summit being held Tuesday in Saudi Arabia's AlUla, according to the UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs.

"We are before a historic summit in AlUla, through which we restore Gulf cohesion and we are keen to ensure that the security, stability and prosperity of our countries and peoples are the first priority," Anwar Gargash said on Twitter.

"We have more work to do and we are moving in the right direction," he added.

Gargash's comments come after it was announced on Monday that Saudi Arabia would reopen its airspace and land and sea borders to Qatar.



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Qatar emir announces attendance at GCC summit in Saudi Arabia 'Inclusive' GCC summit to lead members to 'reunification': Saudi crown prince

Reuters: Jared Kushner to attend GCC Summit after Qatar dispute breakthrough

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WASHINGTON/RIYADH: A breakthrough has been reached in Qatar's three-year-old dispute with Saudi Arabia and three other Arab countries and an agreement aimed at ending their rift is to be signed in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday, a senior Trump administration official said.

The development is the latest in a series of Middle East deals sought by Washington – the others involving Israel and Arab states – aimed at building a united front against Iran.

As part of the deal, Saudi Arabia will reopen its airspace and land and sea border to Qatar as of Monday, Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Ahmad Nasser Al-Sabah said on Kuwait TV ahead of a Gulf Arab summit in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said the annual gathering of Gulf leaders would unite Gulf ranks "in the face of challenges facing the region."

Qatar's ruler, Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, will attend, the royal court said. The US official said the Saudi crown prince and Qatari emir would sign the deal.

Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt have imposed a diplomatic, trade and travel embargo on Qatar since mid-2017 accusing it of supporting terrorism. Qatar denies it and says the embargo aims to undermine its sovereignty.

While Saudi Arabia made clear it intended to lift the blockade, the other three countries did not, but the Trump official said "it's our expectation" they would also join in lifting the blockade. Under the emerging agreement, Qatar will suspend lawsuits related to the blockade, the official said.

All of the countries involved in the deals are US allies. Qatar hosts the region's largest US military base, Bahrain is home to the US Navy's Fifth Fleet, and Saudi Arabia and the UAE host US troops.

White House senior adviser Jared Kushner, assigned to work on the dispute by US President Donald Trump, helped negotiate the deal and was working the phones on it until the wee hours of Monday morning, the official said.

When in December Saudi Arabia's foreign minister said a resolution to the dispute seemed within reach, Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif in

a Twitter post said he hoped Gulf reconciliation “contributes to stability and political and economic development for all peoples of our region.” Kushner, joined by Middle East envoy Avi Berkowitz and Brian Hook, a special State Department adviser, were flying to the Saudi Arabian city of Al-Ula to attend the ceremony, the US official said. If the deal holds, the Gulf dispute will be added to a string of diplomatic achievements of the Kushner team, a list that includes normalization deals last year between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco. Kushner, who is also Trump’s son-in-law, has been working on more normalization deals between Israel and Arab countries but may run out of time with President-elect Joe Biden due to take over the presidency on Jan. 20. “It’s just a massive breakthrough,” the official said. “The blockade will be lifted. It will allow for travel among the countries as well as goods. It will lead to more stability in the region.” Diplomats in the region have said that Saudi Arabia was keen by pushing a deal to resolve the dispute to demonstrate to Biden that they are peacemakers and open to dialogue. The United States has about 10,000 troops in Qatar, which is home to Al Udeid Air Base. There are thousands more troops in the UAE, Kuwait, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.



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[Woman close to being blind after botched Turkey treatment](#)

Author:

Mon, 2021-01-04 22:55

LONDON: A woman who sought simple treatment in a Turkish hospital has been left blind in one eye and struggling to see through the other after suffering a devastating allergic reaction to antibiotics, despite informing doctors of her allergies.

Cilem Kelleci, 31, visited doctors in Gazi State Hospital in the city of Samsun to treat a minor infection, Britain's Daily Mail newspaper reported on Monday.

She made it clear to doctors that she is allergic to antibiotics, but says they gave them to her anyway.

A short while later, she started to suffer from a near-fatal allergic reaction. She was unable to see, and said she could feel lumps of her skin falling off.

"At one point, they told me that they were going to have to remove my right eye," the Daily Mail reported Kelleci as saying.

She was transferred to a private hospital that demanded \$12,300 to save her right eye, and said if she left it too long it would be too late.

Kelleci is now blind in her right eye and has just 20 percent usage of her left one. She said she is "terrified that I will become a prisoner of the darkness."

She plans to sue the hospital for malpractice, but said she cannot wait until the outcome because even if she gets the money it may be too late to save her vision.



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[Qatar emir announces attendance at GCC summit in Saudi Arabia](#)

Mon, 2021-01-04 22:38

DOHA: Qatar said Monday its ruler Sheikh Tamim would attend the GCC summit being held in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday.

The announcement came after Kuwait said there had been a [breakthrough in the boycott of Qatar by Saudi Arabia](#) and other Gulf and Arab countries since 2017.

"The Emir of the country is heading the delegation of the State of Qatar to participate in the meeting of the... Gulf Cooperation Council," Sheikh Tamim's office said.

His attendance at the summit, being held in AlUla and chaired by Saudi

Arabia's King Salman, was confirmed after Kuwait announced the Kingdom would reopen its borders and airspace to Qatar.

Saudi crown prince Mohammed bin Salman [said on Monday](#) the summit would create a united front, would bolster peace and prosperity and lead to a closing of ranks to promote solidarity in the face of regional challenges.

The Kingdom, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt had boycotted Qatar since June 2017 over its support for extremist groups and ties with the Iranian regime.



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Saudi Arabia and Qatar to open airspace, land and sea borders 'Inclusive' GCC summit to lead members to 'reunification': Saudi crown prince

[Saudi Arabia and Qatar to open](#)

airspace, land and sea borders

Mon, 2021-01-04 21:24

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia reopened its airspace and land and sea borders with Qatar on Monday, in a breakthrough agreement aimed at ending the three-year diplomatic dispute with Doha.

The full deal is expected to be signed on Tuesday at the annual summit of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) leaders in the northwestern Saudi city of AlUla, [attended by Qatari emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani](#).

The Anti-Terror Quartet – Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt and Bahrain – imposed a diplomatic, trade and travel embargo on Qatar in June 2017.

Recent mediation efforts have been led by Sheikh Nawaf Al-Sabah, the emir of Kuwait. “Based on Sheikh Nawaf’s proposal, it was agreed to open the airspace and land and sea borders between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the state of Qatar, starting from this evening,” Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al-Sabah said on Monday.

White House special adviser Jared Kushner, US President Donald Trump’s son-in-law, is expected to fly to the Kingdom to witness the signing on Tuesday, along with US Middle East envoy Avi Berkowitz and Brian Hook, a special State Department adviser, Reuters reported.

“We’ve had a breakthrough in the Gulf Cooperation Council rift,” a senior Trump administration official said.

Under the emerging agreement, the four countries will end the blockade of Qatar, and in exchange, Qatar will not pursue lawsuits related to the blockade.

“At the signing on the 5th, leadership from the Gulf Cooperation Council plus Egypt will be coming together to sign an agreement that will end the blockade and put an end to the Qatari lawsuits,” the official said.

“It’s just a massive breakthrough. The blockade will be lifted. It will allow for travel among the countries as well as goods. It will lead to more stability in the region.”

[Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said on Monday](#) that the Kingdom’s policy was based on a firm approach that achieved the national interests of the GCC and Arab countries, in order to achieve security and stability.

“The GCC summit will be an inclusive summit, unified in ranks and focused on prosperity ... in terms of reunification and solidarity in facing the challenges in our region,” the crown prince said.

UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Anwar Gargash said: “More work lies ahead and we are moving in the right direction.”



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