

# Press Releases: Remarks at the Opening Ceremony of the U.S.-Qatar Strategic Dialogue

Remarks  
Michael R. Pompeo

Secretary of State

Salwa Room, Sheraton Doha  
Doha, Qatar  
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**FOREIGN MINISTER AL THANI:** (Via interpreter, in progress) that link our two countries in order to reinforce a deep partnership and cooperation in all aspects economic and also military relations, which are the most important pillars of such a relationship and that effectively contribute to the reinforcement of international and regional stability. We aspire that this dialogue is going to lead to the discussion of joint efforts with regard to the support of the situation in the Middle East and also mediation in Afghanistan and also dealing with the crisis in the region, particularly the crisis in Iraq, Syria, and Libya, and also combating terrorism.

I do reinforce the commitment of the state of Qatar, the strategic relationship with the United States of America, and also the continuation of dialogue in keeping with the interests of our two countries. And at the end, I would like to reiterate my welcome to you here in the state of Qatar. Thank you so much.

**SECRETARY POMPEO:** Thank you. Thank you for welcoming me so kindly, Foreign Minister Al Thani, and thank you for welcoming me on what is my first trip to this country as Secretary of State. I've been here before but not in this current role, and I wanted you to know President Trump sends his best wishes to the – his highness the emir and all of the Qatari people, so thank you.

It's an honor for me to participate in the second U.S.-Qatar Strategic Dialogue, the first one to be hosted here in Doha. Our strategic partnership spans many areas and continues to grow, as demonstrated by the sheer number of topics we will discuss here today amongst our two teams. Defense and security, counterterrorism, labor, trade and investment, energy, education, and culture are all on the agenda and all important parts of our relationship.

The United States and Qatar are working together to address a number of regional security challenges, including in Afghanistan and Iraq. Our defense relationship is extensive, important, and growing. Qatar is host to 13,000 U.S. and coalition service members at Al Udeid Air Base, and has served as the primary staging area for our coalition to defeat ISIS. Thank you for the support you provide us with the airbase. You should know that I speak for the American people when I say we are grateful for your country's willingness to make sure that the airbase can meet the needs of the U.S. military for decades to come.

We look forward to signing these new agreements today greatly because your country has also moved decisively to implement critical enhancements to our bilateral counterterrorism cooperation. Our relationship with Qatari law enforcement has never been better, and we look forward to further engagement as Qatar prepares for the 2022 World Cup.

But military and security cooperation is not the only two – are not the only two ways our countries are growing closer. Our commercial relationship continues to thrive, with robust trade and expanding investments in both of our countries. The sheer number and diversity of U.S. companies that are here today for parallel discussions demonstrates the strength and potential of our commercial relationship. I'm excited to sign new agreements on education and cultural exchanges as well. The people-to-people ties between our two countries have played a key role in America's strong bilateral relationship with your country, and we look forward to growing our academic exchanges, scholarships, language learning, and study abroad opportunities, among many others.

Let's make 2019 a year of advancements on security, commerce, energy, labor, reform, and other topics. Thank you again for hosting me here today and thanks for hosting our entire delegation as well.

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