

The Nuances of Qatar's Interest in NATO

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The announcement by Qatar's Defense Minister that his tiny but strategically positioned country is considering membership in NATO shouldn't be taken at face value but instead analyzed for its symbolism in the tense context of contemporary Gulf geopolitics.

The Qatari Defense Minister surprised many observers by [announcing](#) that his tiny but strategically positioned is considering membership in NATO, as well as hosting “some unit or special NATO center” on its territory, but before prematurely jumping to any conclusions about the Transatlantic bloc formally expanding into the Persian Gulf, one needs to bear in mind the regional context in which this statement was made. Saudi Arabia had just [reportedly threatened Qatar](#) with destruction if it dares to go forward with purchasing Russia's state-of-the-art S-400 anti-air defense system that would basically neutralize the Wahhabi Kingdom's airpower leverage against its wayward neighbor, so Doha's subsequent declaration of interest in NATO membership must be seen as a response to Riyadh's aggressive reaction to its military partnership with Russia.

All of this is rather curious because Russia and Saudi Arabia are in the midst of a [fast-moving and full-spectrum rapprochement](#) with one another that covers [all aspects of their bilateral partnership](#) from OPEC+ energy coordination to collaborative efforts in promoting a “political solution” to the [Hybrid War](#) of Terror on Syria, but the country's reaction to Qatar's potential game-changing purchase of the S-400s is pragmatically separated from its own relationship with Moscow. Furthermore, it's interesting that Qatar would find it to be productive enough of a deterrent to Saudi Arabia by requesting NATO membership considering that the bloc's American leader has been de-facto allied with Riyadh for decades, though this historic statement of fact avoids mentioning the Saudis' multipolar “balancing” act that Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman has recently enacted with both Russia and [China](#).

Contributing to the complicated nature of contemporary Gulf geopolitics is the weaponized infowar perception clandestinely cultivated by the UAE that Qatar is “supporting terrorism” and “allying with Iran”, two catchphrases that were impossible for the Trump Administration to ignore during the early days of the Gulf Cold War that began a year ago. Abu Dhabi, eager to formalize its de-facto status as the Arab Peninsula's hegemon, sought to drag Riyadh into a “blood borders” conflict with Doha per the US' “[Lead From Behind](#)” facilitation in order to [“balkanize” its “big brother”](#) into a collection of UAE-affiliated proxy sultanates/emirates just like [South Yemen](#), [Socotra](#), and [Somaliland](#) have already become further afield. Though this grand strategy was never fully implemented in practice, the guiding concept remains in effect and has thus far successfully served to manipulate Saudi Arabia into becoming the UAE's “bulldog” against Qatar.

To review all of the aforementioned insight that might be new for most readers, the Gulf Cold War is a UAE-instigated infowar provocation designed to doom Saudi Arabia to a future of “balkanized blood borders” in order to formalize Abu Dhabi’s new unofficial role as the most powerful Arab country, with the US going along with this both because of the irresistible fake news narrative about Qatar “supporting terrorism” and “allying with Iran” but also due to its own desire to divide and rule the GCC as punishment against bloc leader Saudi Arabia for its [multipolar outreaches](#) to Russia and China. Qatar is an object, not a subject, in this asymmetrical conflict that’s fast emerged as one of the flashpoints in the [New Cold War](#) between unipolarity and multipolarity, but the fact that it has one foot in each “camp” explains why it’s surprisingly calling on NATO to protect it from Saudi Arabia’s threats against its possible Russian S-400 purchase.

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