

The Qatar Leaks: The Secret Business of Foreign Affairs

Leaked minutes from Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Conversations with Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu and Egyptian President Mohamed Mursi, from Russia's involvement in Syria to Gaddafi's fall

By [al-Akhbar](#)

Global Research, January 25, 2013

[Al-Akhbar](#)

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#)

By Radwan Mortada

Al-Akhbar publishes leaked minutes from the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs that have Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu and Egyptian President Mohamed Mursi discussing regional affairs – from Russia's involvement in Syria to Gaddafi's fall – with Qatari officials.

An important dimension of the Syrian crisis is the electronic war being waged by both sides. One of the groups active in this area calls itself the Syrian Electronic Army and it has recently succeeded in hacking into several official Qatari, Saudi, and Turkish websites and downloading thousands of secret documents from them.

Al-Akhbar gained access to some of these through an intermediary and, after confirming their authenticity, agreed to publish them in coordination with the Syrian *Ajel* [website](#).

Today, *Al-Akhbar* begins publishing these documents, starting with three correspondences from the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The first one is the minutes of a meeting between Qatari Prime Minister Hamad bin Jassim al-Thani and Egyptian President Mohamed Mursi that took place in September 2012, in which they discussed the situation in Syria.

In it, the Qatari prime minister talks of contacting Russia to convince it of abandoning Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, offering guarantees from the Free Syrian Army (FSA) that Moscow's naval base can remain in Syria.

The document also reveals that what Qatar offered Egypt in terms of financial assistance after the revolution is little more than loans with interest in return for giving the Qataris incentives such as investing in Egypt's steel industry.

The second document is the minutes of a meeting between Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim and Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu. The meeting took place in mid-March 2011 during the early stages of battle in Libya and the discussion revolves mainly about the situation on the ground there.

As for the third document, it also contains minutes of a meeting, this time between the Qatari Crown Prince Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and foreign minister Davutoğlu.

In it, the foreign minister stresses the importance of not allowing Assad to complete his term in office, which ends in 2014, because he will use it to defeat the opposition.

Document 1: Hamad bin Jassim and Mohamed Mursi

(Confidential)

Minutes of Meeting Between His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jaber al-Thani, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, with His Excellency President Mohamed Mursi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt

Thursday, 6/11/2012

Sheikh Hamad: [...]

Hamad: His Highness the Prince [Hamad Bin Khalifa al-Thani] appreciates your role. Today we discussed with Mr. Hicham Qandil the [Egyptian] Prime Minister and agreed on some issues. One of them is the remainder of the agreed upon one and a half billion US Dollars. We reduced the rate of interest to 1.5 [percent] and increased the [loan] period. This is in addition to the additional amount that we will work. Together, we are “family” and each day one of us has a demand. As well as the electricity, where we suggested a study and the agreement will be done in a month’s time.

Egyptian Prime Minister: I am sure that your hearts are with us.

Hamad: We also agreed on the steel. We have partnerships with several countries in this area.

Mursi: I have a suggestion to reinvigorate and reactivate the Iron and Steel Company in Helwan, which is the largest steel factory in the Middle East, built by the Russians with Russian technology [...] It consists of four furnaces. The first is old, but it can be rehabilitated and rebuilt. The fourth is advanced and a port was constructed for it in Dakahlia to provide coal, in addition to the rail from the port to Helwan and the raw materials rail from the oases region. We have large quantities of raw materials. But [the furnace] is built based on the end product. The complex is beginning to lose money, because it used to produce 2 million tons, which is the break-even for the project. It used to be an industrial fortress with 25,000 workers, but the Ahmed Ezz company [Ezz Steel] appeared and started seducing away the engineers.

Hamad: We are with you and we can announce the project from now. We will include it to be studied by the team that will come to study the projects.

Finance Minister Yusuf Kamal: We have all the studies and it fits with a similar idea we have in Algeria, which is a partnership with the Extra Trade company. They can organize with us.

Hamad: Your Excellency, we assure you that we are under orders from His Highness the Prince. You know his feelings towards you. We are ready and we have amounts [of money]

that were not included in the minutes. We will look into steel and electricity, there's a deal, also the outstanding issues related to Barwa and Diar, which is a positive indicator. We also agreed on the issue of aviation and invited the Minister of Civil Aviation. But your Excellency, we have a problem in terms of the surplus. It is that we don't want it to be deposited anywhere, while you lend 14 percent. If agreed, we are ready to deposit between 10 and 20 billion Egyptian Pounds [\$1.5 to 3 billion]. We hope you consider this and we can keep it for one year and then renew. We are ready to do this.

Mursi: Why should it be in Egyptian Pounds, because the Chinese are saying the same thing.

Hamad: Because interest on Egyptian Pounds is high and we are ready for it to be for one year and then it can be renewed. We agreed on the minutes of an agreement between the two sides and on the specific times and dates of each operation, so we can begin. This will include the deposit of \$1.5 billion, according to the agreement between His Highness the Prince and Your Excellency. We are sincere to begin work and our trust increased following your speech in Tehran. Everyone praised it and, yesterday, in the Arab League meeting, positions changed.

Mursi: There is no room for the word reform. He must leave.

Hamad: We suggested to him that he leaves. Really, it was a powerful speech.

Mursi: How could the Saudi King surprise us with the initiative of dialogue between confessions, while we had agreed about the Syrian issue.

Hamad: Us too. We had met him a day earlier and nobody mentioned it.

Mursi: We want to take a serious position.

Hamad: I think everything will change after the US and German elections. If Obama returns, and it does not matter if he waits till January for his new term. He can do it automatically and he has made commitments.

Mursi: If the Iranians get involved in solving the issue in Syria, they will win and become closer to Turkey and the Gulf.

But on the Syrian issue, unfortunately it's the Russians. If they say the word, the Syrian regime will be finished.

Hamad: They are starting to think of names. In the past, they had good relations with us and we have common [oil] wells. But on the Syrian issue, unfortunately it's the Russians. If they say the word, the Syrian regime will be finished. But Russia is still insisting on the issue. I spoke to [Russian President Vladimir] Putin on the phone for 40 minutes. It was a bad conversation, although my relationship with him used to be excellent, but the call was a failure. Now, they are starting to lose balance and want a solution.

Mursi: Why do they want it?

Hamad: They have a marine base in Syria. We told them we will work on an agreement between you and the Free Syrian Army (FSA), but they did not accept.

Mursi: They are part of the problem and he will leave.

Hamad: As for the visas, we agreed, and the Egyptian side can begin taking visas.

Egyptian Prime Minister: There is also a positive indication in the issue of partnership with Sudan.

Hamad: Yes. We will send our delegation for this matter and create a partnership in Africa. It will strengthen relations and we are ready. There is a project for the Diyar company for \$120 million. Things will move. We are honest and we want to inform the public of the issue.

Mursi: We do not have any conflicts. You are our brothers and your hands are clean.

Hamad: We thought it would be better to do it through Egypt. You are in Africa and you have the people and experience. Rest assured, Your Excellency, we will be with you.

Document 2: Hamad bin Jassim and Davutoğlu

(Confidential)

Minutes of Official Negotiations Between His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Jassim bin Jaber al-Thani, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, and
His Eminence Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Foreign Minister of Turkey

Doha – Sunday 13/3/2011

(Following greetings)

Sheikh Hamad: Your meeting with His Excellency the Prince was good.

Davutoğlu: The situation in the region is moving fast. We should be coordinating.

Hamad: We are trying to push the [UN] Security Council to do something.

Davutoğlu: Gaddafi must leave and he will leave. Now he is winning the battle and we are worried. We tried to pressure him to leave Syria, but he began recruiting mercenaries from Sudan and Egypt. The West has different positions. France is of one opinion, but Europe has another, also the Americans.

Hamad: The US secretary of state called me three times and might call back today. We asked the Arab League to issue a decision for a no-fly zone over Libya. Syria is against and Yemen is not decided.

Davutoğlu: Why does Syria oppose?

Hamad: I don't know.

Davutoğlu: I was surprised when the Syrians said they did not receive a message from you [concerning Lebanon].

Hamad: This is not true. We sent three copies.

Davutoğlu: I told the Syrians, why do you ask us to travel to Lebanon, while you had already made up your minds.

Hamad: I think they will lose if they continue to lie to their friends. What is happening now in Libya cannot be accepted. The Security Council must be pressured to impose a no-fly zone.

Davutoğlu: We are not members in the Security Council, but we are a member of NATO and we can do something. They told us that the decision has to come from the Security Council and the Arab countries. If NATO attacks Libya, Gaddafi will claim he is defending the Arabs.

Hamad: Some Arab countries can participate and Turkey has to play a role.

Davutoğlu: We say that Gaddafi must go. [Turkish] Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan spoke to Saif al-Islam Gaddafi, but the security council decision concerning the international tribunal shut the door on Gaddafi. He is now either regaining control of Libya or dying a hero.

Hamad: Even if he controls Libya, he is finished. I think it is important to push for a decision on a no-fly zone over Libya. He is gaining in his war, but he is finished because he killed his own people and said terrible things about Arabs.

Davutoğlu: What's important is how to save the Libyans.

Hamad: No-fly zone and attacking the radars.

Davutoğlu: As far as NATO is concerned, it was Germany that blocked the no-fly zone decision.

Hamad: Don't oppose the decision. You are not required to send forces.

Davutoğlu: We are now charged with Portuguese interests. Are you in contact with the tribes?

Hamad: Some of them.

Davutoğlu: Gaddafi might take control of Benghazi and this affects the situation in Tunisia, Egypt, and Yemen. He could bring back the two former leaders into power. We are trying to find an exit for him, but I think it's too late.

Hamad: [Former Libyan security chief] Abdullah Senoussi called me and started making threats. I don't care. This is our policy and we will keep it up. I told [Saudi Foreign Minister] Saud al-Faisal and [UAE Foreign Minister] Abdullah Bin Zayed that we need to be clear. And actually Saud al-Faisal's statement was clear and direct and I am happy with that.

Davutoğlu: I spoke to His Highness the Prince today about the economic situation in Tunisia and Egypt. We must support them.

Hamad: We can make announcements about investments in Egypt, but the situation in Tunisia is still not clear.

Davutoğlu: We used to have Turkish companies working in Egypt, but they left after the revolution. It is important to invest in garment manufacturing and tourism, because they can employ many people.

Hamad: We have an industrial zone in Port Said. We can do that.

Davutoğlu: We can form a joint Qatari-Turkish committee to work on this.

Hamad: Send us the proposal and we will study it. I am thinking of visiting Turkey, but this time Istanbul not Ankara. And I am still waiting for an answer about Qatar Airlines.

Davutoğlu: The transportation minister resigned and we will have elections on 12 June 2011. The military cooperation agreement has not been activated. What is happening?

Hamad: We will follow it up.

(Fin)

Minutes prepared by:
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Document 3: Tamim bin Hamad and Davutoğlu

(Confidential)

Minutes of the meeting between His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, the Crown Prince (God Keep Him) with His Excellency Mr. Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey

Beach Palace – Tuesday, 25/10/2011

(Following greetings)

His Highness the Crown Prince: We're happy to see you. We were hoping to offer aid to Turkey to deal with the earthquake. We have a specialized rescue team. How is the situation in Turkey now?

We want to offer support in light of the warm relations between us, for we are brothers and Muslims. We respect your policies and the step you are taking. What is happening in Syria?

The Guest: Sound policies have kept the region in a positive situation for the past one hundred years. At first, we worked separately, but now we are intertwined and we must work together in order to achieve prosperity.

Qatar and the Emirates are able to think in a positive manner and that is because they are healthy countries. When we look around us to speak to others, who can we talk to in the region? In Iraq, there is Talabani, Alawi, Barzani, and Maliki, and Syria is that way too. Egypt is the biggest Arab and Muslim country, but it has its internal problems. I met with the general secretary of the Arab League and I spoke with him about Arab matters.

His Highness the Crown Prince: You will find us everywhere. We headed the Arab League delegation because no one wanted it.

There was a dispute between the Kuwaiti and Iraqi delegations during the Islamic Summit which was held in Doha. Izzat al-Douri was there; this was the Baath's problem – they have problems with minorities.

In Syria, there are problems between the Alawis and Sunnis. You cannot blame the minority

for thinking about what might happen to them in the future. This problem has to be resolved in the future.

The Guest: I met Nabil al-Arabi, I think he is here.

His Highness the Crown Prince: He will be at the meeting tomorrow.

The Guest: We thank you for the condolences. We want to coordinate with you. We have a general debate in parliament, but I decided to go to Qatar because it is important to us. What is your message tomorrow?

His Highness the Crown Prince: We will be sending a message to Bashar. He had said that he was going to talk to opposition. I believe that we have to send him a message that if he doesn't continue down that road, the matter will take its course all the way to the Security Council.

His Excellency the Minister of Foreign Affairs: The killing must stop and the army must be pulled out of the cities, in addition to amending Article 8 and conducting elections after negotiating with the opposition.

His Highness the Crown Prince: He is not taking the matter seriously; he wants to destroy the whole region. Iran has changed its tone. I spoke to Burhan Ghalioun and he values Turkey's role. I told him that our relations with Turkey are good and whatever Turkey decides, we are with them. We will let you know what happens.

The Guest: Coordination between us is important. Bashar is relying on two things and he has a lot of problems. He thinks that Russia and China are with him, and he thinks he can play the Russian and Chinese card with the West.

We are a member of NATO and we do not want foreign intervention. As Muslims, Arabs and Turks, we do not want Western intervention in Syria.

We helped him break his isolation in 2006, when he was isolated by the West. We offered him a 14-point plan and we discussed everything with him. We know him and his regime very well. Our ambassador in Syria was with me, and Bouthaina Shaaban was present. He agreed to pull the army out of Hama, Homs, Daraa, and the rest of the cities, issue a new media law, allow the foreign press to enter the country, amend Article 8 of the constitution, hold elections, [...] and sit down with the opposition – he agreed to all this. And after two days he attacked the mosques, launched an offensive on Latakia, killing people [...] Our plan was to back him if he implemented the plan. He pulled out of Hama as our ambassador watched on, only to return and attack it. Our ambassador notified us in a secret letter that they are in the process of destroying Hama. He was deceiving us.

When he attacked Latakia, I called him and asked him how is it that you are destroying the mosques, we will not remain quiet over it. I told him that the president must make his speech according to the agreement. But Muallem asked us to wait. I told him that his integrity was at risk. Muallem called me and told me that the president will give a speech in a week. And I said no and we clarified our position. We have not had contact with them since last August 14.

In Libya the situation was different. There, the Arab League gave Western intervention legitimacy. We in Turkey do not want Western or NATO intervention, despite the fact that

we are a member of NATO. Foreign intervention in Syria will cause problems in Lebanon and Iran, and Hamas is able to act individually against him – we support the opposition and he is afraid of it. In 2006, we held joint military exercises and we supported him economically, but now he has to be isolated economically and he is bankrupt. We spoke to Iran and they told us to give him a few months time. We told them: try if you can. Salehi is a good man.

His Highness the Crown Prince: We should use that.

The Guest: We want to send a message to the Russians and the Chinese, and the Arabs must talk to the two countries to confirm to them that we do not want another Libya situation and we must convince them not to support Bashar – he cannot be given the opportunity to rule until 2014, so that he can get rid of the opposition.

His Highness the Crown Prince: He must stop the violence today before tomorrow. You have done all you can but there has to be Arab support and this has to be the Arab message to him.

The Guest: Yes, this is the right message and he cannot be given any more time. We must act now. What is the position of Algeria, are they against the revolution?

His Highness the Crown Prince: It will change its position and they will back the revolution.

The Guest: We are a member of NATO and we do not want foreign intervention. As Muslims, Arabs and Turks, we do not want Western intervention in Syria. What is the decision that will be taken if the Syrian president does not abide by the Arab initiative?

His Highness the Crown Prince: I cannot say now.

The Guest: It is easy to win the war on the ground, but the rebuilding will be difficult, so will the situation in Syria.

His Highness the Crown Prince: The Turkish vice defense minister is here.

The Guest: I will be visiting Jordan and will meet with the King tomorrow. Is Khaled Meshal in Damascus? Can he come to Doha? If such a step is sensitive for him, there is no need. There is a matter I wanted to speak to your highness about. Al-Jazeera is directing criticism against our position and this is not good.

His Highness the Crown Prince: Our relation with you is bigger than al-Jazeera and you can speak to Hamad bin Jassem, and we will talk to him about the issue.

The Guest: Thank you your highness.

His Highness the Crown Prince: You are welcome and we hope you have a pleasant stay in Doha.

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