

THE MILITARY DIMENSION OF TURKEY-QATAR
RELATIONS AND ITS SECURITY IMPACTS

BADEREDDIN ADNAN BADER SEYAM

FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR

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BADEREDDIN ADNAN BADER SEYAM

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ABSTRACT

The Turkish-Qatari relationship has witnessed progress in many areas gradually and progressively leading to strategic and military cooperation. This cooperation reached advanced stages after the launching of the Supreme Strategic Committee between the two countries in 2014 and the establishment of the Turkish military base in Qatar. This study examines the motives and factors that led the relationship between the two countries to strategic and military levels. The impact of this cooperation is examined in the regional security and on the relationship between Turkey and Qatar and other Arabian Gulf countries. The study also investigates the challenges to the sustainability of such cooperation. It applies a qualitative research approach to find answers to the above queries through triangulation data and by reviewing secondary literature including books, book chapters, journal articles, reports, press articles and government statements. Semi-structured interviews are also used directly through e-mail and other web applications with politicians and heads of political research centres, researchers, specialists and scientists who have knowledge of the region. The findings show that the similarity in the political positions towards the various regional issues and the increasing economic exchange are considered the motives that led the relationship to strategic-military cooperation. In addition, the state of mystery and strategic vacuum experienced by the region plays a significant role in this cooperation. Moreover, the outbreak of the Arabian Gulf crisis between Qatar on one hand and Saudi Arabia and the UAE on the other strengthened the Turkish-Qatari cooperation. The current study also found that the implementation of the military agreement between the two countries prevented disastrous consequences in the Arabian Gulf crisis and gave the opportunity to Turkey to market itself as a friend that the allied countries could trust. This cooperation has allowed Turkey to deploy its forces in the world's resource-rich and energy-rich region, overlooking vital

trade corridors. In addition, Turkey has been denied the role as a mediator in some of the issues of the Arabian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). This rejection increases tensions in the relationship between Turkey and Qatar on the one hand, and Saudi Arabia and the UAE on the other. This study also found that this cooperation will face some challenges at the internal level, such as the stability of the governmental system of the two countries and transfer the relationship between them from senior leadership levels to the media and public opinion in both countries. Adding to that, the regional challenges of continuing the Arabian Gulf crisis lead to more violent options due to the Iranian influence in the region. At the international level, Western countries with military presence in the Arabian Gulf are pleased with the growing Turkish military presence. Their position will depend on their political positions in the region's issues, and all challenges will become realistic in accordance with volatile political and security changes in the area of conflict.

Keywords: Turkey-Qatar Relationship, Military Cooperation, Military Base, Strategic Defence Agreement, National Security, Security Impacts, Gulf Crises, International System.

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ABSTRAK

Hubungan Turki-Qatar telah menyaksikan pelbagai kemajuan dan pembangunan secara progresif menuju ke arah kerjasama strategik dan ketenteraan. Hasil kerjasama ini telah mencapai fasa yang matang dengan perancangan “Supreme Strategic Committee” di antara kedua buah negara pada tahun 2014 dan perancangan pangkalan ketenteraan Turki di Qatar. Kajian ini akan menilai faktor yang menyebabkan kerjasama strategik dan ketenteraan kedua negara. Impak dari hasil kerjasama ini akan dinilai melalui keselamatan strategik di Teluk Arab dan juga impaknya terhadap Turki, Qatar dan negara Arab yang lain. Kajian ini juga akan melihat kemampuan hubungan strategik tersebut. Dengan mengaplikasikan kajian kualitatif, kajian ini akan menggunakan kaedah triangulasi dan kaedah data sekunder melalui buku, jurnal makalh, laporan, kenyataan media dan kenyataan kerajaan. Struktur semi-temuduga bagi jempunan terhadap peserta temuduga adalah melalui email dan aplikasi laman sesawang. Peserta bagi kajian adalah terdiri daripada ahli politik, ketua kajian ahli politik di pusat kajian tertentu, penyelidik, ahli pakar dan saintis yang merupakan pakar mengenai topik kajian di rantau tersebut. Kajian mendapati terdapat pendapat yang sama mengenai kepelbagaian isu di rantau tersebut. Kajian turut mendapati aktiviti ekonomi di rantau tersebut turut meningkat yang dapat menjelaskan hasil kerjasama strategik dan ketenteraan di rantau tersebut. Selain itu, krisis Teluk Arab yang menyaksikan Qatar dan antara lain, Arab Saudi dan UAE turut mengukuhkan lagi hubungan kerjasama Turki-Qatar. Kajian turut mendapati pelaksanaan kerjasama ketenteraan telah menghalang krisis Arab Teluk dan memberi peluang kepada Turki untuk membawa imejnya sebagai rakan pakatan yang boleh dipercayai. Hasil kerjasama ini turut meningkatkan jumlah pangkalan ketenteraan Turki di negara yang kaya dengan hasil minyak dan hasil sumber lain. Selain itu, Turki telah

dihalang daripada menjadi sebagai mediator terhadap sesentengah isu yang melibatkan “Arabian Gulf Cooperation (GCC). Ini menyebabkan ketegangan hubungan antara Turki dan Qatar, dan Saudi dan UAE. Kajian turut mendapati hasil kerjasama Turki-Qatar akan menghadapi cabaran dari dalam seperti kestabilan kerajaan dan politik kedua-buah negara tersebut dan juga faktor lain, seperti faktor media dan pendapat umum. Selain itu, kehadiran faktor Iran turut mempengaruhi konflik di Teluk Timur. Di peringkat antarabangsa, negara Barat di Teluk Arab agak mengalu-alukan kehadiran pangkalan ketenteraan Turki di rantau tersebut. Posisi mereka bergantung kepada kedudukan dan strategik politik di rantau tersebut dan hanya akan menjadi realiti bergantung kepada perubahan konflik dan keselamatan di negara tersebut.

Katakunci: Hubungan Turki-Qatar, Kerjasama Pertahanan, Pengkalan Pertahanan, Perjanjian Pertahanan Strategik, Keselamatan Negara, Implikasi Keselamatan, Krisis Gulf, Sistem Antarabangsa.

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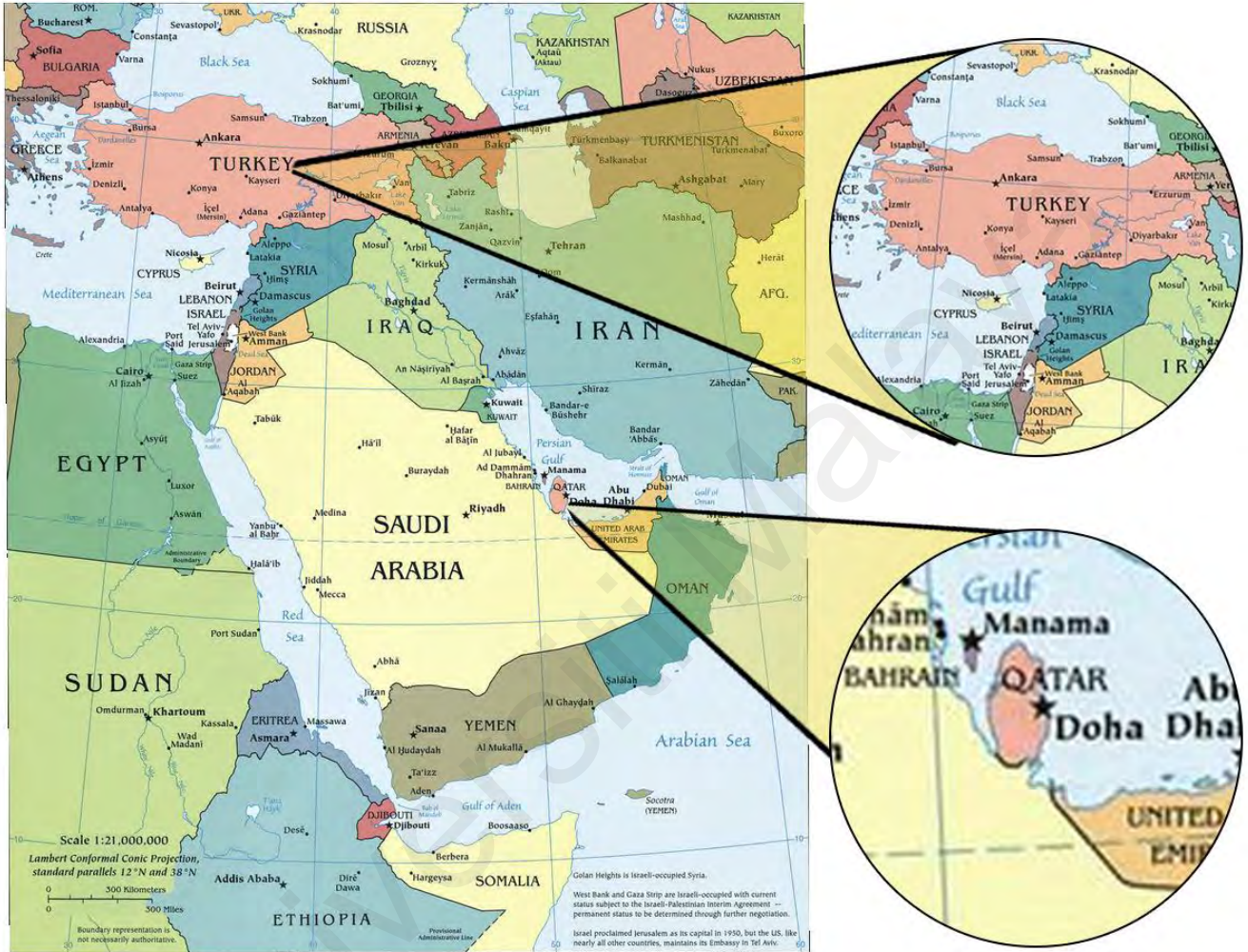
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AKP	:	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi “Justice and Development Party”
DAB	:	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi “Republican People's Party”
KSA	:	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
UAE	:	United Arab Emirates
US	:	United State of America
GCC	:	Gulf Cooperation Council
EU	:	The European Union
NATO	:	The North Atlantic Treaty Organization
OIC	:	Organization of Islamic Cooperation

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MAP OF TURKEY AND THE GULF

Figure 1.1 Map of Turkey and the Gulf



Sources: CIA World Factbook, along with self-edit

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Problem Statement

Turkey has formulated an open policy towards the world, especially the Arab and the Islamic world, after Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi or the “Justice and Development Party” (AKP) won the presidential election in 2002 (Kilic Bugra Kanat, 2010). Following this, Turkey has improved its diplomacy, trade, and investment with the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and Turkey has participated in the Turkey-Gulf strategic dialogue in 2008¹, to discuss security, political, and economic issues, which resulted from the US war against Afghanistan and Iraq (Martin, 2009). The Turkey-Gulf dialogue is a response to the security vacuum and strategic ambiguity in the Middle East which resulted in the establishing of terrorist groups that threatened national security of Turkey and the Gulf states and increased the Iranian influence on them (Bulent Aras, 2005; O. Pala, 2014). Consequently, economic, cultural, and political relations were developed between Turkey and the Gulf states. However, the security disturbances, conflicts, and the political events in the region showed up the big differences in the political position between Turkey and Qatar on one hand, and Saudi Arabia and UAE on the other. As such, Turkey and Qatar strongly supported the Arab Spring, and both states supported the protestors' requests which were based on the cry for “Freedom, Social Justice, and the overthrow of autocratic regimes” (Pala & Aras, 2015). This political position was rejected by Saudi Arabia and UAE that tried to foil the Arab Spring (Pala & Aras, 2015). This divide between the countries had a great impact on the development relations between Turkey and Qatar and in 2014, it drove the two countries to establish the Supreme Strategic

¹ The strategic dialogue between Turkey and GCC is a security dialogue in nature, and the two parties had signed a memorandum of understanding between them during the GCC foreign ministers' meeting of September 2, 2008. Pursuant to the memorandum, Turkey and the GCC states agreed to meet periodically in what they called “the Turkey–GCC strategic dialogue. To more information see: Martin, L. G. J. T. S. (2009). Turkey and Gulf cooperation council security. 10(1), 75-93.

Committee to cooperate in strategic affairs. This committee has approved the establishment of a new Turkish military base in Qatar that contributed to strengthen Qatar's position in the face of a Gulf crises (Gurcan, 2017b). All the above put a clear definition of the problem statement to investigate the motives that drove Turkey and Qatar to strengthen its relationship to the military level, investigate the extent of stability of this relationship and, subsequently, the impact of this relationship on the security of the Arab Gulf region.

1.2 Research Objectives

1. To explore the underlying factors that developed the strategic-military relationship between Turkey and Qatar.
2. To identify the security impacts of the increasing military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar.
3. To investigate challenges that confronted the Turkey-Qatar military cooperation.

1.3 Research Questions

1. How does the Turkey-Qatar relations develop into a strategic military cooperation?
2. What is the security impact of the Turkey-Qatar military cooperation?
3. What are the challenges to the sustainability of the Turkey-Qatar military cooperation?

1.4 Theoretical Framework

Selecting a research theory is challenging in the development of relationship between two countries, especially when these relations reach military cooperation, and it may be difficult to relate it the theory of realism and its approach and concept (G. Rose, 1998).

This study is in line with a branch of realism called Neo-Classical Realism which is a contemporary theory in the study of phenomenon in international relations. This branch of realism started back in 1998 to combine two previous schools of thought: Classical

Realism that focused on the individual nature of political actors and Neo-Realism that focused on the structural factors of the international system. In Neo-Classical Realism scholars add domestic intervening variables to explain particular state behaviour within the social structure at large and it is an important approach which focuses on the interaction of the international system and the internal dynamics of states. Neoclassical realism seeks to explain the grand strategies of individual states as opposed to recurrent patterns of international outcomes (G. Rose, 1998).

Neoclassical realism is a theory that was elaborated from the classical realist school of thought in international relations. The realist theories emphasize the role of the nation-state and make a broad assumption that all nation-states are motivated by national interests or at best national interests disguised as moral concerns which are the common view in international politics (G. Rose, 1998).

Accordingly, the realist approach also discusses that there are divergent ways in analysing or describing some concepts in the international systems like conflict and war including human nature, the dynamics of national politics or major characteristics of the international arena (such as the lack of a central government, i.e., anarchy). In contrast, neoclassical realism primarily aims at explaining the foreign policies of states by referring to both international and national levels. In line with this view, the supporters of neoclassical realism claim that this theory can fill in the gaps and add to knowledge in other versions of realism, especially concerning previous failures in explaining and predicting foreign policy choices. More recently, neoclassical realism has evolved towards becoming both a “theory of foreign policy” and a “theory of international politics”, while a theory of foreign policy focuses on the explanation of behaviours of states in the international arena (Dawood, 2016).

The theory of Neo-classic realism maintains that domestic factors are dominant variables that function as a link between the dependent variable (foreign policy outcomes) and the independent variable (relative power). These factors include attitudes of elites interests of states and interests of domestic groups that contribute in determining a state foreign policy. In this respect, G. Rose (1998) argues that theories of foreign policy attempt to define when and what states seek to constitute and conclude a foreign policy.

In addition, the realists argue that behaviour of states in international system can be comprehended in full scale based on insights and misunderstandings of states grounded in systemic threats and pressures, in addition to systemic variables including capabilities of states and distribution of power (Dunne, Schmidt, Baylis, & Smith, 2001).

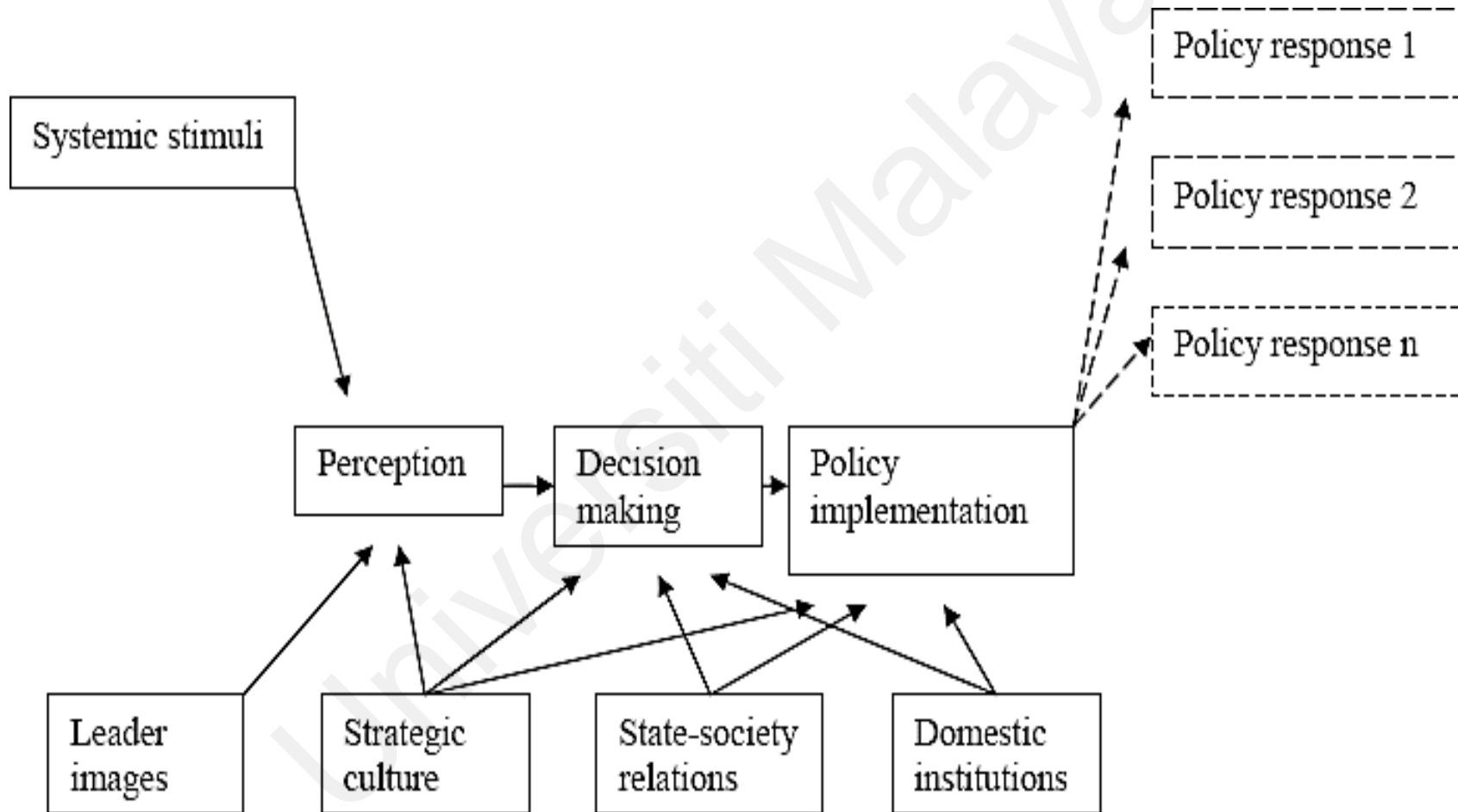
Furthermore, in the approach of neoclassical realism, the power of ideas is held to high esteem, based on historical antecedence which influences the foreign policies of each country in the international system. Therefore, it concerns what idea is constituted, as well as its impact on foreign policy. In understanding a state foreign policy, one should understand participating ideologies, their supports, and governing ideas. This does not indicate that external factors are not significant, but it indicates that internal factors are significant equally as the external factors. That is to say, neoclassical realism stresses that ideas are vital particularly when they are proposed by influential individuals. For instance, capabilities or personality of a certain president directly impact on a state foreign policy (Kitchen, 2010).

Finally, to sum up on the pitfall of this theory, it is still gaining ground to a large extent, yet only few works pertaining to it have been done since the theory is new. It is still immature theory; it is still giving general explanation without full details since it is a new one. While the strength of this approach is based on its applicability of analysing foreign policy of states and mutual understandings, the most important strength of neo-classical

realism is its simultaneous attention to systemic and unit factors and historical explanation (J. D. Firoozabadi & M. Z. Ashkezari, 2016).

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Figure 1.1 The Neoclassical Realist Model of Foreign Policy



Source: (Ripsman & policy, 2009)

1.4.1 Contribution of Theory

The choice of this theory is very appropriate for the current research for several reasons:

First, it explains the role of internal variables that are intertwined in explaining the behaviour of the foreign state and its pursuit of major strategies individually without being restricted to the regional and international environment. This is evident in both the Turkish and Qatari sides, each of which strives to achieve its strategic interests despite all the international and regional obstacles that surround it.

Second, the theory suggests that the internal factors of the state (national interests and concerns and the views of the elite) constitute the common vision in international politics and thus make it easier for researchers and observers to understand the foreign policy of any country. Turkey and Qatar have formed a vision of a common policy through the convergence of their own internal interests, as each side approaches each other through the national interests of each party in many areas. This ranges from profitable economic relations for both parties, and cooperation in various aspects of civilian and military life. In addition, the two countries share the same external and internal concerns, the most important of which was the state of isolation imposed on them after a series of common political positions such as their rejection of repeated Zionist violations against the Palestinians, and their support for the Arab Spring revolutions and the resulting new regimes in the region and finally their rejection of the measures against those revolutions by some countries in the region, such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Finally, the theory refers to the power of the ideas that combine two states, and their ability to influence the formation of the foreign policy of the state, especially on the basis of history. The theory suggested that the impact of these ideas is more effective and stronger when these ideas come from senior influential leaders. In addition, the

significance of this theory is realized in its interpretation of the role of state leaders in influencing the behavior of states and the foreign policy of their countries. This is very clear in the case of Turkey and Qatar, which share the same identity and ideas and are reinforced by a strong historical bond extending back to the time of the Ottoman Empire. In addition, President Erdogan is a strong figure who has ruled Turkey since 2002 with many electoral entitlements. In the new Qatar Development Journey, Prince Tamim, the Emir of the State of Qatar, also has a strong personality and charisma that has been concentrated in Qatar's Al-Thani family for hundreds of years, initiated by his father, Prince Hamad bin Jassim.

1.4.1.1 Neo-Classical Realism and Security Impact

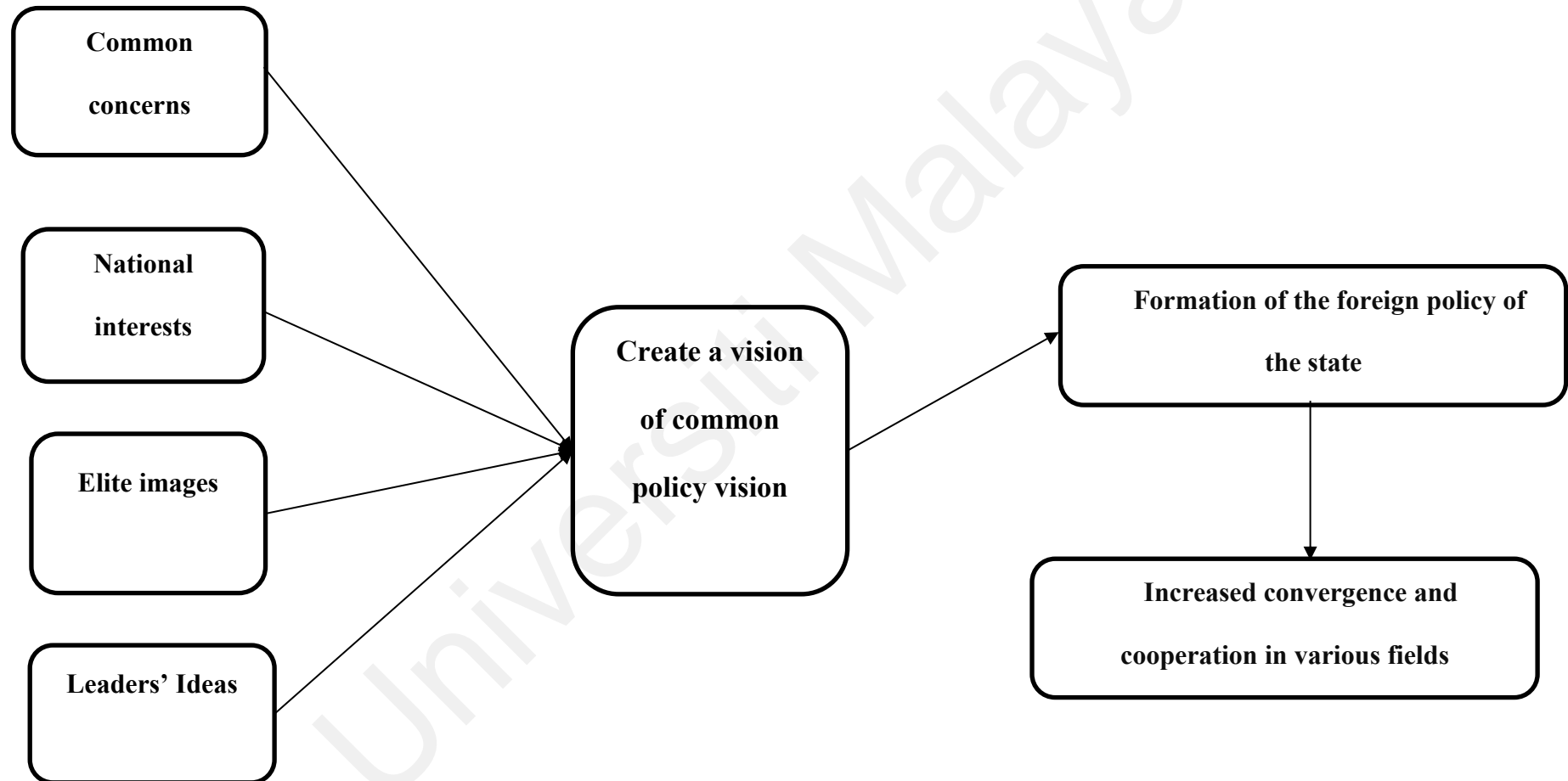
According to Neo-Classical Realism, there is a relationship between incentives, motives, stimulus, systemic limitations and the foreign policy of states; in a such a way in which systemic variables, international anarchy, relative distribution of power and their uncertainty make states endeavor to maximize their security. However, anarchy is more of a permissive condition than a tight causal and independent variable.

Neo-classic Realism, like other versions of realism, believe that politics is a permanent struggle among states to acquire power and security in an environment of scarcity. This is because they believe that structure is important, and it argues that anarchy is the main cause of the struggle. In other words, it accepts the effects of anarchy as part of the behavior of states and begins with the assumption that pressures of the anarchical system controls choices of states in foreign policy. This suggests that casual priority of independent systemic variables are the determinant factors of foreign policy of states. In other words, the nature of the states' foreign policy is rooted in the relative power of states. Similarly, just like classic realism, the characteristics of states and the unit variables are important as well. (J. D. Firoozabadi & M. Z. J. A. S. S. Ashkezari, 2016)

On the other hand, neo-classical realism rejects the assumption of neo-realism that argues that security is the sole goal of any state in the anarchical international system and, in instead, argues that states attempt to change the international system based on their own preferences by increasing their own power. Therefore the states that possess more power follow more ambitious foreign policy(G. J. W. p. Rose, 1998).

Since Neoclassical Realism is consistent with the concept of security, like classical realism, it can be stated that the security of the Gulf region, according to these two concepts, which are based on the concept of the Balance of Power (BOP), propagates increasing military and economic power, and forming alliances with other states. As such, the Gulf States follow these theories especially when taking into consideration the great wealth the Gulf States have and how it is used to increase their military strength and build an ambitious foreign policy to achieve security. Accordingly, this study will examine the impact of Turkish-Qatari cooperation on Gulf security based on the balance of power derived from foreign alliances that reflects the strength of the state.

Figure 1.2 Theory Modeling



Sours: by author (Bader Seyam, 2018)

1.5 Literature Review

This section will explore three stages in the development of relationship between Turkey and Qatar: the Turkish-Gulf Relationship, the Turkish-Qatari Relationship and Turkey-Qatar Military Relationship. These are necessary in the understanding and accommodating the nature and development of the relationship.

First, the Turkish-Gulf relationship is covered, without which one cannot understand the relationship between Turkey and Qatar and between Turkey and any Gulf country. It deals with the beginning of the relationship between the two parties and the beginning of the Turkish shift to the East, only to the direction of the Muslim world and the Arab world. This was of great importance to the GCC countries and significantly this was after the AKP took power in 2002 in Turkey. This section also covers the reasons for the Turkish-Gulf rapprochement and the launch of a strategic dialogue between the two parties. It also covers the developments and setbacks in the relations between the parties, the reasons of each, and the future of the relationship between the two parties. It includes the need of the relationship for rehabilitation. By studying the development and progress in the Turkish-Qatari relationship in this second section, we can trace the future relationship between the parties.

The second section discusses Turkish-Qatari relationship which covers the Turkish-Qatari relationship and their beginnings and the convergence of identity, culture, economic and political interests between the two countries. It includes the international and regional events that led to the development of the relationship and the reflection of these events on the foreign policy of both countries. The studies dealt with the political position of the two countries towards regional and international issues and their reflection on their relationship with the rest of the Gulf countries in particular and the countries of the region in general. The section also studies the reflection of this relationship on foreign

policy towards each other, which led the two parties to form a high-level strategic committee at the highest levels of the state. Many bilateral councils have taken part in it and witnessed the signing of many agreements, including military cooperation, which will be the third part of the literature review.

The studies in Part I and II were characterized by force and their reliance which were related to clear theories in international relations as well as their accuracy in the method of research and analysis of the data for the accuracy of the information on which they were based on, and important results that one can apply in his research.

In the third section, Turkey-Qatar Military Relationship between Turkey and Qatar is discussed. This section tells us the beginning of the military cooperation between the two countries and the agreements signed between them. It also clearly covered the formation of the supreme strategic committee between the two countries, which added to the signing of a military cooperation agreement between the two countries, the most important items of deployment of troops and the construction of the Turkish military base in Qatar, that impacted on the rest of the terms of the agreement. However, there is a lack of sufficient information from the few sources on which it was based as the subject is still new and did not satisfy scientific research. Therefore, the literature was insufficient in its coverage of the reasons for transformation and access to the strategic stage, military cooperation between the two countries, ~~and~~ the motives of this cooperation and its impact on the Gulf and the region. This is specifically research gap that will be covered by this research.

Thus, the literature review is arranged in chronological according to their respective research purpose.

1.5.1 Turkish-Gulf Relations

The reform packages were approved to launch accession negotiations with the European Union (EU), the leadership of the Turkish Justice and Development Party (AKP), which came to power after the 2002 elections, increased the process of normalization in the Middle East.

The Turkish government has devoted its effort to build friendly and cooperative relations with the Middle East and play a more active role in the region's politics. As part of this strategy, the Turkish government has begun to approach the Middle East from a multidimensional perspective. This rotation coincided with many events that encouraged the two parties to start real dialogues to discuss serious cooperation (Kiliç Buğra Kanat, 2010).

According to Bulent Aras (2005), despite the international and regional problems in the Middle East, Turkey believes that the development of relations with the GCC countries is a necessary option to respond to the terrorist threats that has hit the region and the world, for instance, the Iraq War Crisis. In addition, Turkey has adopted a policy of dialogue that would reduce its problems with neighbouring countries and expand and strengthen relations with them. Turkey sees the GCC as one of the most important countries in the region. Bulent Aras (2005) also pointed out that the climate after 9/11 and after the Iraq war led to the creation of an appropriate environment for improving relations between Turkey and the GCC countries. This may create an opportunity for peace and security in the Middle East, which begins from the internal structures of state organs, that require an in-depth understanding of the security network within the region. The emerging relations between Turkey and the GCC can be seen as an example of that common understanding.

Yet Foley (2010), sees both Turkey and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) are trying to create new strategic alliances, such as in the European Union and the United States. Yet, their relations are in a precarious situation, where they have divergent views on many issues. They also disagree on Iran's nuclear weapons program. This limits the political, economic and cultural relations between Turkey and the Gulf, as the Gulf States demand that all their friends have a clear position on Iran's nuclear program. This runs counter to the Turkish theory of peaceful coexistence with their neighbours on the basis of a zero-problem strategy. This strategy is built on strengthening its economic and political relations with the GCC and Iran. However, the magnitude of the Iranian crisis with the Western world will determine how things are developed between Turkey and the Gulf states in the future.

Stephen Larrabee (2011), studies the Turkish policy towards the Gulf Cooperation Council countries in the context of the expansion of Ankara's policy in the Middle East as a whole. He based his study on the forces that constitute the Turkish policy and strategic objectives. In addition, he analysed the impact of the Arab Uprising, and the challenges it poses to Turkish policy towards the Gulf and the Middle East. He outlined three factors that enhance the impact on Turkish policy towards the Gulf region. First, is the development of Iran's nuclear program and its ability to acquire nuclear weapons. Second, the political situation of Iraq and its development, if it can continue as one country after the United States withdraws its army or not. Third, is the US policy towards the GCC States. Despite the indicators that the US policy is unlikely to change radically, the US commitment to Gulf rulers is more uncertain than ever.

Cook and Ibish (2017), investigates local and regional issues that identified Turkey's foreign policy options, vis-a-vis the Gulf states, and vice versa, and its impact on regional stability and US foreign policy. They also discussed the views of Turkey and the Gulf

Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and valued the bilateral relations between Turkey and the Arab Gulf states. Thus, it was found that the common interests of Turkey and the Gulf States prompted them to cooperate and maintain a positive working relationship and partnership to address regional security threats and internal political challenges. The challenges include contending with Iran and conflicts in the region, such as wars in Syria and Iraq. In addition to the challenges, is balancing trade and economic security and cooperation, and, sometimes, military cooperation. However, Turkey's support for Islamist movements in some countries of the region and Turkey's long-term regional ambitions are worrying many Gulf Arab leaders. Moreover, it is in the interest of the two sides to maintain political and economic cooperation, and therefore positive relations are likely to continue in the foreseeable future within the region as a whole.

Talbot (2013), in his critical assessment of the relations between Turkey and the GCC, agrees that the geopolitical changes in global politics are reflected in Turkey's relationship with its vital Arab sphere, which led to gradual convergence between Ankara and the Gulf rulers. This relationship led to an increase in the friendly agreement between the parties on regional security issues and the fight against terrorism. He also pointed out that Turkey and the GCC countries are gaining a great deal of weight in the Middle East arena and have great relations that can develop to a greater level especially in the Syrian crises, which caused a lot of political and humanitarian damage. Relations between the two sides have opportunities for development despite Turkey's support for democracy, political freedom and reforms in the Middle East and North Africa following the Arab Uprising, which appears to be inconsistent with the agenda of the Gulf leadership.

However, the literature review did not address the fact of differences between the two parties, some of which have historical roots, which are usually reflected on the behaviour of the parties. The literature also did not discuss that there are several factors that prevent

the maturation of the state of cooperation and access to integration, especially as the Gulf Cooperation Council countries which are not one bloc and governed by one foreign policy. There is no doubt that there are many things in common among the GCC countries, but they are different in the political position on many issues and this is what Turkey has noticed recently and began to strengthen its relationship with the Gulf countries separately, which is the Turkish-Qatari relations, and this is the second part of the literature.

1.5.2 Turkish-Qatari Relations

According to Ö. Pala (2014), the mutual economic, political and security interests have witnessed historical developments between Turkish and Arab Gulf relations. Turkish-Qatari relations cannot be viewed separately from the overall course of relations with other Gulf States. However, the Arab Spring seems to have questioned these results based on reality on the ground. Moreover, Ankara and Doha currently have exceptional good relations both in foreign policy platforms and tools in dealing with international and regional issues that add to the current regional development. This has helped create a fruitful and enabling environment for cooperation. The leadership role shown by both parties on the basis of the friendly relationship that forms the basis of their identity policies has become a central force that shaped their relations as a whole.

In addition, Pala and Aras (2015) researched how the geopolitical and international political thinking developed in Doha and its local and international interventions to facilitated the cooperation and strengthened relations to a level of political consensus. However, the outbreak of the Arab Spring revolutions produced an effective atmosphere for the two countries to achieve their geopolitical goals, by supporting the demands of the rebels in the towns that witnessed the revolutions and the recognition of outputs in the post-revolution elections. Turkey aspires to become an international actor as a

regional or dominant power. On the other hand, as a small country, Qatar seeks to strengthen its security and sovereignty and become an indispensable regional middle power.

In his thesis, Başkan (2016), debated that through the awakening of the Arab Spring, Turkey and Qatar became the most active regional players in the Middle East. In addition, they attempted to expand their influence further in the region, especially after the rise of political parties that follow the Muslim Brotherhood movement in the countries of the Arab Spring, which links the two countries with good relations with them. Turkey and Qatar, driven by their interests, have consolidated their foreign policies on many issues in the region, such as their support for the Muslim Brotherhood movement, which has led to further isolation with the rest of the region. However, Turkey's place in the region will depend on its willingness and ability to strike a balance between Iran and the rest of the region. However, the researcher did not include the view that Iran had a different ideology with some members of the region, such as Saudi Arabia. Yet, he argues that continuing challenges and treatment in the region is likely to push Turkey into an indispensable mediator: continuing good relations with the Gulf states to improve the Gulf security.

This assumption is less likely to be empirically proven, especially as the Gulf crisis intensifies and the division of the GCC increases, forcing Turkey to launch separate bilateral ties with some of the GCC states separately from each other. In addition, the Gulf foreign policy, especially of Saudi Arabia, remains fully dependent on US protection.

It is vague whether there are any repercussions on Turkey's relationship with the US because of Turkish-national interests, especially the military cooperation. However, the Republican Trump administration is expected to take a cautious stance on this new military partnership and continue to stress that Turkey and Qatar are indispensable

partners of the United States, and that Turkey's permanent military foothold in Qatar could bolster security for the region.

On the other hand, it is argued that the military cooperation came to disrupt the isolation situation imposed on Turkey since 2016 when it began to improve its relations with many countries in the region such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, and even try to normalize diplomatic relations with Israel in order to break this state of isolation with the Israel and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

From my point of view, this hypothesis did not last for long, not because of the weak evidence of the researcher, but to change the political situation in the region and the neglect of researchers looking deep into the relationship between the Turks and rulers of the Gulf region. Therefore, military cooperation between the two countries has become a means to confront the isolation imposed on the two countries from the rest of the region, especially after the tensions in their relations with the countries of the region, especially Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Egypt.

Viala (2017) refers to a deep part of the relations between the Turks and the rulers of the Gulf region, but he also discusses the Qataris and the point of contact between the parties, and why the relations between Turkey and Qatar are significant. It is an exceptional relationship that transcends economic, financial and strategic interests, but is rooted in shared values and historical depth. The partnership between Turkey and Qatar is more than Ankara's relationship with almost all other countries, even Azerbaijan, for which Turkey has maintained a coherent agreement. He stressed that Turkey and Qatar will increase investment in 2017 on the basis of a bilateral agreement to enhance the standard of living of the population in the region. Several major actions and investments will continue to enhance the symbolic and historical dimensions of their relations.

Bülent Aras and Akpınar (2017) discusses the relationship between the two countries after the Gulf crisis, and between Qatar and its Saudi neighbours and the UAE. Their study aims to understand whether this alliance will continue after the Qatari crisis. The study also investigates the hard and soft power capabilities of Turkey in the region of the Middle East and the GCC by taking advantage of recent progress in establishing a military base in Qatar and its attempts to mediate in the crisis.

Harunoglu (2016), however, tried to study the implications of the military cooperation between Qatar and Turkey on the relations between Turkey and the US. According to Harunoglu (2016), it is difficult to know if there are any implications on Turkey's relation with America because of the Turkish-Qatari close bilateral ties especially its military cooperation. However, the Republican Trump administration will certainly take a cautious position vis-à-vis this new military partnership, no doubt continuing to emphasize that Turkey and Qatar are indispensable partners for the United States and that Turkey's new permanent military foothold in Qatar might add to the security of the region. At the other side, he sees the military cooperation as one of the reasons for Turkey's isolation so that, Turkey, starting from 2016, began to improve its relations with a lot of countries in the region, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, even attempting to normalize diplomatic relations with Israel in order to break this isolation with the Israel state.

Al-Jassim (2017) presented a broad presentation of the relations between the two countries in various political, economic and military fields, in which he pointed out that the development of the relationship between the two countries came after many developments in the region. He also pointed to the feeling of the two countries with regards to unity and destiny and their identification through one ideology and one policy on many issues at the regional and international levels.

1.5.3 Turkey - Qatar Military Cooperation

Despite the bilateral protection agreements signed between most of the Gulf countries and their first ally, America, there have been many attempts by Turkey to be involved in this aspect. Turkey can help the Gulf states improve their institutions and security structure in the Gulf to meet potential challenges and ease the security dilemma in the Gulf region. However, this structure cannot continue without exceptional cultural, educational and economic cooperation. In addition, the two sides should encourage people to cooperate in many issues at each level. Nevertheless, the GCC should establish a common defence system and develop its own military capabilities for future purposes.

To a large extent, the Turkish and Qatari sides have achieved this depth of cooperation to reach military and security cooperation agreements. However, previous studies on this aspect are still sketchy and incomplete and have not yet covered the essence of military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar.

There are many reasons that drove Turkey and Qatar to make a military agreement between the two states in 2015 such as the increase of significant cooperation in strategic cooperation between two states especially the cooperation in the defence industries and military training. This cooperation eventually led to making a comprehensive military agreement to achieve the common strategic goals and consolidate the efforts of the two states against the common threat and enemies (Cochrane, 2016).

Gurcan (2017a), pointed out the dates of the military agreements signed between Turkey and Qatar, which included training and exchange of defence industries, paved the way for a major agreement between the two countries in 2016, under which Turkish troops will be deployed in the Qatari territory and a Turkish military base established in Qatar, which was the last military positions left by the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. Cochrane also discussed the secrets and terms of the agreement between

Turkey and Qatar. He noted that the agreement was the beginning of a long-term strategic alliance between the two countries. He further stated that this agreement covers the issue of providing protection to Qatar and taking into account cooperation in many security and military issues, such as military training, intelligence cooperation and the exchange of military industries. In addition, the researcher pointed out that this agreement came to achieve the common strategic objectives of the two countries that faced common enemies.

According to Gürcan (2015), Turkey and Qatar have established closer ties in respect of defence and security, because they face similar security dilemmas. Iran's growing influence in the region, its ballistic missiles and its nuclear program has forced cooperation between Turkey and Qatar. This cooperation structures continued despite the White House announcement that Iran is "in a notice" based on its nuclear weapons programs and for supporting terrorism. Russia's growing presence in the Middle East is another reason for closer relations between Turkey and Qatar, which began with the election of the US President, Donald Trump.

The military agreement with Turkey has special meaning for Qatar, which is concerned about growing Iranian influence in the Gulf, improving US relations and China's growing role in the Middle East. Qatar lacks a serious military force and appears determined to compensate for its deterrent weakness in the Gulf by entering into a military alliance with Turkey and diversifying its defence capabilities. A strong military alliance with Turkey will enable Qatar to strengthen its defence capabilities, improve its military training, reduce its military dependence on the United States by diversifying its military partners to counter Iranian influence, and possibly develop stronger NATO cooperation through Turkey. It has to be pointed out that Turkey's motive for the agreement is Turkey's recognition that the Gulf is important in the global economic and political equation, and Turkey seeks to have an opinion in the Gulf. A close military alliance with

Qatar will provide the Turkish Ministry of Defence with an attractive opportunity to reach a lucrative market. It will also provide Turkey with a way to counter Iranian influence strategically in the region and enhance Turkey's role in global security and global energy security.

This researcher felt that the agreement was logical at the time he prepared his paper, but fears the parties related to the rise of Iran in the region, its growing influence and nuclear agreement with the West, as well as the ambiguity on the US side towards its allies in the region. Now this paper has ignored the turmoil in the relationship between Qatar and some of its neighbours from the GCC countries, especially Saudi Arabia and the UAE, as well as the tensions between Turkey and the UAE on several fronts. It also did not take into account the volatile situation witnessed by Saudi-Turkish relations. This aspect, which was overlooked by the researcher, was made clear at a later date and the military agreement between the two countries was implemented following the Gulf crisis between Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

The study of Vagneur-Jones and Kasapoglu (2017) is more realistic and aware of the nature of the military agreement between Turkey and Qatar, which referred to the increasing isolation suffered by Turkey and Qatar in the region because of their political positions. They referred to the embargo imposed on Qatar with the outbreak of the Gulf crisis in 2017 between Qatar, on one hand and Saudi Arabia and the UAE on the other hand. Moreover, Qatar expects a threat from the position taken by the US President and from the time of the outbreak of the crisis, despite the US presence in its territories. This fear was accelerated with the implementation of the military agreement signed between Qatar and Turkey.

The Turkish troops deployed at the military base in Qatar aims at protecting the regime in Qatar and come in line with Turkey's geostrategic ambition in the region. It also

emphasizes the importance of the relationship between Turkey and Qatar as an important part of Qatar's foreign policy, which does not change with the changing political situation. In addition, the researchers point out that this step is not directed against Saudi Arabia, but to protect Qatar, and this is confirmed by the Turkish official statements on the Gulf crisis that indicates that Turkey is keen to maintain its strategic relationship with Saudi Arabia and to explicitly avoid any internal conflict. However, the Turkish move was met with great criticism by the countries besieging Qatar who considered it a blatant interference in Arab affairs and clear Turkish bias towards Qatar. These responses were clearly shown in the list of demands by the embargo countries to close the Turkish military base and withdraw its troops.

All the above authors argue that al-Qaeda would give Turkey a range of military advantages. With the military deployment in important places and the reorientation of its navy, to the deployment of an air force there, the move to improve Turkey's military presence on the peninsula strengthens its ability to show force throughout the Middle East, although it is seen as a major defence burden on Turkey. Despite all this, it is clear that Ankara considered its geopolitical interests in Doha to outweigh this burden and costs. They added that the close relations between the Qatari and Turkish governments are based on the similarities that unite their positions on regional issues. As a result, Turkey will continue to stand by Qatar to overcome the current crisis. As the Doha Armed Forces are constrained by its limited strength, Qatar relies on its status as a host country for military security. Thus, the Turkish deployment allows Qatar to hedge its bets and avoid reliance solely on the United States. Despite the cancellation of the Saudi-led coalition's request to close the Turkish base, Ankara's outspoken foreign policy remains an important milestone to the Arab states.

1.6 Research Methodology

This study will be performed based on a qualitative methodology. The data will be collected both from the primary and secondary sources. The research encountered difficulties in collecting sufficient data from primary sources. However, he managed to collect some data from the sites of relevant government ministries, such as the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Economy, including official foreign policy statements, official speeches of heads of states, prime ministers, ministers, and ambassadors, as well as some statistics covering forms of cooperation between the two countries. The research also attempted to interview senior statesmen, diplomats, defence department, but only one interview with an expert from the Qatari Defence Ministry was conducted. The researcher depended on vitals from other sources to give in-depth insights for the study like official websites of news agencies.

The secondary sources entailed books, book chapters, journal academic articles, periodicals, magazines, newspapers and other relevant materials that added value to the study. This included some of the studies from statements, well-known organizations like Carnegie Middle East centre, Arab centre for research and policy studies, Brookings Doha centre, Al-Ahram centre for political and strategic studies, Centre for Political, Economic and Social Studies (SETA), and Turkish Political Studies Centre.

Finally, news agencies were an important source too which included Al Jazeera, BBC, CNN news and other international and regional Media. In addition, data triangulation was carried out, starting with a review of the secondary sources with the interviews conducted with politicians, think tanks, scholar researchers, experts, thinkers, and researchers close to the decision-making centres of the two countries, among others.

1.6.1 Data Collection

The data collection was carried through Google Scholar, Jstor, Web of Science and others academic websites as well as from websites of news agencies and magazines. The interview questions were prepared according to the three main research questions stated in this chapter and the interviewer's questions were answered and presented in chapters two, three, and four. The researcher had discussions with a large group of specialists, experts, decision makers and scientists. The researcher has contacted more than 40 people in Turkey, Qatar, America, India and the Arab world. Finally, 13 interviews were carried out and there were still 10 others waiting to be interviewed, but due to time constraints, the remaining interviews could not be conducted.

The researcher has been to Turkey twice for interviews and has received assistance in the arrangement of meetings and the translation process from a group of Palestinian colleagues there who work in Turkish segregation centres. The researcher tried to visit Qatar but failed due to some visa concerns. However, a colleague who is specialized in international relations and works at the Arab Center for Studies and Researchs helped in the completion of a series of interviews in Qatar. The researcher also tried to meet the Qatari Minister of Foreign Affairs, who was at a conference then, however the Minister's concern in the follow-up of the development of the Gulf crisis prevented the interview.

1.6.2 Data Analysis

The researcher depended on an analytical method of qualitative methods which was cited by many scholars such as Creswell (1998).

The method is in the following order:

1. Reading the texts of the interviews many times in order to understand the views of the interviewees, as well as reading the secondary references.

2. The paragraphs and sentences directly related to the research were identified and indexed.
3. Catalogues were classified in subjects.
4. Categories were categorized and linked together.
5. Categories were described and linked to the research questions and theoretical framework and the results were written.
6. The results were discussed and explained.

1.7 The Significance of the Study

As the literature review has shown, many academics, researchers, and writers have written about Turkey's foreign policy towards the Middle East, especially towards the Gulf region, as well as, the Turkish-Gulf relations; however, there is insufficient literature dealing with Turkish relations with some of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

Therefore, the importance of this study is that it covers the development of Turkey-Qatar relations at the present time, in addition to dealing with the most prominent development in the relations between the two countries mainly the military cooperation and the establishment of the Turkish military base in Qatar. In addition, this study investigates the motives of the military cooperation between the two countries, its effects on the Gulf regional security, the reactions of international and local actors and the future of the two countries' relationship with the regional and the most important countries in the periphery. Therefore, this study covers the literature gap in this new field and tries to be a case study as an example of military cooperation in the region which can help decision makers and planners in the field of foreign policy and security and military cooperation.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The study deals with the strategic relations and military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar since 2014, after the signing of the agreement that appeals for the formation of a high strategic committee as a tool to promote bilateral strategy between the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Prince Tamim Emir of Qatar. The study discusses the Turkish-Qatari cooperation at various levels until the writing of this dissertation. The study also focuses on the issues of military and defence cooperation between the two countries because it is a situation that witnessed significant developments in relations between the two countries.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

The main limitations are summarised below:

1. The rapid political, security and military changes and developments in the region makes it difficult to understand the external behaviour of the countries of the region, especially those with a volatile political opinion.
2. The difficulty of interviewing senior state and decision-makers in both countries, and the need for an interpreter from Turkish to Arabic during the interviews conducted by the researcher in Turkey.
3. The lack of academic articles of senior researchers and specialists in the region, and the lack of primary sources for the novelty of the subject.

Having highlighted these limitations of the study, the researcher employed two approaches through which the limitations could be overcome or mitigated. Source triangulation was employed during this dissertation by using secondary literature which includes books, chapters of books, journal articles, reports, newspaper articles, and government statements. Moreover, the researcher also employed semi-structured interviews related to this topic using Email and WhatsApp.

1.10 Organization of Dissertation

This dissertation has been divided into five chapters. Chapter one deals with an introduction to the entire research, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, the scope, as well as, theoretical framework, literature review, research methodology and the limitation of this work. Chapter two highlights the historical relations between Turkey and Qatar and the similarities in political attitudes such as the Palestinian cause, the Arab Spring, the Syrian crisis, the Russian aircraft crash, and the Qatari stance towards the failed coup attempt in Turkey 2016. Also, it has been studied the strategic ambiguity and security vacuum in the region, economic cooperation, and the Gulf Crises in general, the effects of Gulf Crises 2017, demands made to Qatar and reactions and the international position. Chapter three focused on the military capabilities of Turkey and Qatar and the supreme strategic committee and the military cooperation with adding comments on some provisions of the agreement. It, also, has identified the security impact on the course of the Gulf crisis and the impact of the relations of Turkey and Qatar with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Moreover, the study highlighted the impact the cooperation between Turkey and Qatar on the Gulf regional security which includes the impact on the economy and power recourse, impact on the US presence, and impact on Iranian influence. Chapter four has investigated the internal challenges which include the top-down elite relationship, the ruling structure, and the internal opposition. Moreover, it has analysed the regional challenges includes the Saudi and UAE pressures, the Iranian influence, and the International challenges. Chapter five summarises the entire work with a succinct conclusion based on the findings of the current study.

CHAPTER 2: THE DEVELOPMENT OF TURKEY-QATAR STRATEGIC MILITARY COOPERATION

This chapter explore the underlying factors that developed the strategic-military relationship between Turkey and Qatar by answering the question “How does the Turkey-Qatar relations develop into a strategic military cooperation?”

The chapter explores the historical relationships between Turkey and Qatar and its role in the current development between Turkey and Qatar. Also, it discusses the factors that have been led Turkey - Qatar relations to military-strategic cooperation. It delves into the similarities of their political attitudes, such as their positions toward the Palestinian cause, the Arab Spring, and the Syrian crisis. Moreover, it covers the role of Turkey - Qatar economic cooperation and the state of ambiguity and strategic in the region. Furthermore, it discusses the Gulf crises as the main factor in the development of the strategic-military relationship between Turkey and Qatar.

2.1 Turkey and Qatar Relations (Past and Present)

The historical and friendly relations between Turkey and Qatar and their people have existed since the time of the Ottoman state. This historical ties between Qatar and Turkey are grounded on brotherhood and mutual understanding that helped to build bilateral relations (Shafi, 2017). It can be traced to the period when the Ottoman Empire ruled Najd, a region in the Arabian Peninsula. Qatar, which was located in the province of Basra, was a region under its rule. After that, the regime in Qatar established good relations with the Ottoman state. During the late nineteenth century, there was intense rivalry between the English and the Ottomans in the Gulf region, which resulted in establishing pragmatic relations between Britain and some rulers of the provinces in the region. To facilitate the expansion of British control of the region and the eviction of the Ottoman state, Britain helped the then local ruler of Qatar, Jassem bin Mohammed al-

Thani to defeat the attempts of the Othman-supported opposition that aimed to overthrow his rule in 1893. Nevertheless, the positive relations between Qatar and the Othman state were still maintained. After the defeat of the Ottoman forces, Qatar also allowed Ottoman forces to stay in Qatar. Consequently, the Ottoman army remained longer in Qatar than in any other Gulf province. When Qatar was under the Ottoman rule, its integration into the expanding Saudi state was prevented between 1899 and 1926, despite the Qatari-Saudi Wahhabism shared agreement (Cagaptay & Decottignies, 2016). Therefore, the Qataris are grateful to the Turks and the Ottoman state for helping them to preserve the independence of their state, and building their own national identity (Kilic, 2018).

However, since the downfall of the Ottoman state in 1924, the Turkish Kemalist (of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder and first President of the Turkish Republic) elite, who supported the regime in Turkey at that time, viewed the Middle East as a hazardous and complex area, filled with religious fundamentalism, sectarian violence and tribal ruling completion, and was not in favour of having close relations with its constituents. Instead, it expressed interest in establishing relations with the Western world (Cafiero & Wagner, 2016). This view was maintained until the Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power in Turkey after winning the 2002 parliamentary elections. This electoral victory made it possible for them to restore Turkey's influence in the Middle East by creating a new foreign policy approach that made it possible for Turkey to maintain, not only balanced relations with the West, but also to increase its regional and global influence. Also, Turkey's geostrategic and historical advantages, grounded on the geographical and historical heritage of the Ottoman state, was later known as the theory of strategic depth (al-Faqih & Taqia, 2010). The introduction of this foreign policy coincided with the growing dissatisfaction and delay in Turkey's membership to the European Union which forced Turkey to move in other directions of the Western world, disregarding the strategic geographical connection with Europe, and looking for

alternative partners in the Middle East. These alternative partnerships led to emerging political and economic investment strategies, and the strengthening of Turkey's social, religious and economic interdependence with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and the Middle East region in general (Hürsoy, 2013; Kilic Bugra Kanat, 2010). In this way, the relations between Turkey and Qatar were re-initiated after bilateral agreements were established between the two countries during the 1980s. The relations of the two countries gained momentum and witnessed growth and development in the years that followed. Observers noticed an escalation in the relationship, especially during the period of Turkey's Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and Qatar Prince Hamad bin Khalifa, when the two countries signed a number of political, trade and military agreements resulting in a significant improvement in bilateral relations (Elhaj, 2015). During the first decade of the 21st century, the two countries endeavored to expand their strategic influence when the US attention in the region declined in the aftermath of Iraq's invasion and occupation. At present, the leaders of the two countries have acknowledged that: "Today we are not building a new alliance but rediscovering historic and brotherly ties"(Finn, 2015a). In this present era, the relationship between the Republic of Turkey and the State of Qatar was reinstated in 1971 after Qatar gained independence and was officially recognised by the United Nations.

On assuming office in 2002, the leader of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) reinforced Turkey's image by using the propaganda of Islamic brotherhood and the importance of reconciliation between its people and the Arab world. This was achieved by showing the party's ideology that encouraged democratic authority and legitimacy, as well as suggesting the benefits of the commercial and investment opportunities offered by the Turks to the Arabs. In addition, the anti-Israel speeches delivered by Turkey's Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, especially after the 2008-2009 war on Gaza, and the incident of the attack on the Turkish ship in May 2010, helped strengthen Turkey's

presence in the Arab and Muslim world. This led to an increase of the Turkish leader's popularity in the years before the Arab Spring uprising.

Qatar has wholly relied on the reputation of Al Jazeera, a multinational multimedia conglomerate, which has been established as one of the most powerful tools and a fair mediator in regional conflicts, to enhance the impact of the country's soft power beyond the Arabian Gulf. Al Jazeera's coverage exhaustively focused on the US-led war against Iraq in 2003, and on the Palestinian cause. The role of Al Jazeera served as a forum for those affected by the harsh censorship of their views and on the media, that are based on existing regimes in the Arab region, and was well received by many Arabs (Cafiero & Wagner, 2015a).

After the Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani took office in Doha on 25 June 2013, relations progressed, and Erdogan moved from premiership to the presidency. On the first visit of the latter to Qatar, after taking office, in September 2014, an agreement to form a higher council for strategic cooperation between the two countries was initiated. There were several official visits between the two countries at different levels, which clearly indicate that there has been progressive development in the diplomatic relations between both countries. President Erdogan emphasised in his speech that the two countries enjoyed the same strong political drive that will enhance the bilateral relationship and the mutual trust of both countries which has risen to strategic levels. Erdogan, also, stressed that cooperation between both countries in all fields had yielded positive results. During the Emir's visit to Turkey in December 2014, a mechanism for cooperation and consultation under the name of the "Supreme Strategic Committee" was established. This was a very important step as it resulted in the signing of 30 agreements at several meetings in Doha (the capital city of Qatar) and Trabzon (a city in Turkey). Since then, the Turkish President has acknowledged that the two countries have witnessed very important

developments where the cooperation and friendship between the two countries had been strengthened day by day. This opened the doors for a very bright future for the region. Furthermore, the Turkish President expressed his confidence that the upcoming meetings of the Higher Strategic Committee will significantly be of interest to both countries and the region (QNA & Peninsula, 2017). Among the important agreements signed were military cooperation agreements, the most significant of which was the deployment of Turkish troops to Qatar until a Turkish military base was established in Qatari territory.

2.2 Similarities in Political Attitudes

Both Turkey and Qatar seriously contemplated the partnership and the growing relationship with each other, each believing that the other is a good partner to fulfil its ambitions and achieve foreign policy objectives. Turkey formulated new foreign policy in search of greater influence at the regional and international levels by focusing on the adoption of historical heritage, its geostrategic location and its system of governance which is based on democratic authority and legitimacy

For Turkey, Qatar is a potential candidate and a good partner to achieve its objectives of its new foreign policy (Murinson, 2006).

Qatar, which is strategically located and serves as an important air corridor for the Arab nations, is rich in natural resources, especially energy sources, mainly gas and oil. Though it is a small country with deep security and political vulnerabilities, it is located between the two dominant regional powers, Iran and Saudi Arabia, whose relationship has been strained by tension and stability across times. Qatar is mediating between the regional powers to survive and to preserve its independence and sovereignty. It also plays an ambitious role through practical regional geopolitics aimed at establishing reliable relationships with a diverse range of national and international actors, by applying soft power tools,(Kamrava, 2015). A set of requirements for the successful formation of stable

foreign policy for small states has, thus, been formulated (Elman, 1995). In addition, the two countries share many common elements for many years, especially the dream of renaissance, development and regional leadership, in economic fields. They also realise each other's strategic importance in the area. In addition, both capitals have since suffered from an inflamed environment which had limited their potential for shaping their foreign policy (Said Elhaj, personal communication, October 3, 2017).

However, the two countries started with a vision for the region, where they believed in granting more social justice for the people of the region, sponsoring the welfare of the people, fighting backwardness, spreading science, advocating the Palestinian cause, supporting the revolutions of the Arab Spring, protecting its political and democratic base, and ensuring that the political parties with Islamic references play a larger role. Turkey and Qatar also share the same concerns with regard to the political life in the region, which is the fear of American presence in the region, the rejection of the Iranian military intervention in the countries of the region, and the establishment of the same solutions to the conflict in Syria, Yemen and Egypt (Tastekin, 2017); (Said Elhaj, personal communication, October 3, 2017); (Andreas Krieg, personal communication, December 4, 2017).

The following are some examples of similarities in the political attitudes between both countries.

2.2.1 The Palestinian Cause

In the case of Palestine, the situation of the two countries is have similar visions in a number of important issues. First is its vision of a final solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict according to the principle of a two-state solution. This is similar to the European position which stipulated a June 4, 1967 Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. In fact, it is not known if their vision originates from a complete faith in this solution or only

to bring about a breakthrough in the state of stalemate to the final solution, and Israeli intransigence to show flexibility to reach this solution. Many experts have asserted that Israel does not believe in this solution and will not seek it. However, the two countries of Qatar and Turkey expressed their full agreement to the principle of a two-state solution in local, regional and international forums (al-Mughrabi, 2012). The other similarity shared between Qatar and Turkey in the Palestinian case is their total and permanent condemnation of the Israeli violations against the Palestinian people and the policy of collective punishment imposed by Israel on the Palestinian people, especially during the three wars launched by Israel against the Gaza Strip. The Turkish President boycotted the meeting he held with former Israeli President Shimon Peres stating that Israel is a terrorist state, not the Palestinian people, or the resistance. This Turkish reaction came as a consequence of the 2008-2009 Israel's war on Gaza (Bennhold, 2009).

In the same war, the former Emir of Qatar, Hamad bin Khalifa, called for an Arab summit to denounce the Israeli aggression against Gaza and hosted the Arab summit in Doha (QNA, 2006). The Turkish Foreign Minister, Ahmed Daoudoglu, visited Gaza during the second war on Gaza. Turkey strongly condemned the repeated aggression on the people of Gaza. Similarly, the Former Emir of Qatar, Hamad bin Khalifa, visited Gaza after the aggression, announcing a package of charity projects provided by Qatar for reconstruction, and lifting the siege on Gaza (al-Mughrabi, 2012).

On the other hand, the two countries maintained a common stand on the results of the 2006 Palestinian elections, in which Hamas won by a majority. This was rejected by the United States, Israel and the Western community, which described Hamas as a terrorist movement, but it had to accept the conditions of the international Quartet in order to be assimilated as a political party that has the right to exercise practical policy. Hamas demanded that it had to respond to the popular desire for change and to consider the

importance of political reforms and economic development as crucial elements of true democracy. However, Turkey, in this regard, stated that, " Hamas is a legitimate representative of the Palestinian people because it won a clear electoral victory in the transparent Palestinian elections in 2006" (Pala & Aras, 2015). Turkey also stressed that involving Hamas in the key Palestinian politics would legitimize Hamas's role in the democratic process, while its exclusion would bring more extremism to the region. The Turkish President had established several times that if the world wants to see democracy take place in this region, it has to respect the choice of the people who have voted for Hamas, an inescapable part of the Palestinian society. Moreover, the then Emir of Qatar pointed out at the Doha Forum 2006 that, "The controversial reform that began in the Middle East is necessary and must continue until citizens gain their share of political and economic freedom, since regional security cannot be achieved unless democratic practice is achieved"(QNA, 2006).

While Qatar provided diplomatic and financial support to the Hamas-run government, it refused to support their terrorist activities because that would promote extremism and harm the faith of the Arab people in the democratic process. In fact, both Qatar and Turkey have a common stand on the Palestinian cause which garnered international support. This was based on their rejection of extremism and their belief that security, stability and positive change in the Middle East depended on responding to the legitimate demands of the Palestinian people.

Both sought to break the political isolation of Hamas, which gave them a more active regional and international role as mediators of peace, and their position on the Palestinian issue. This brought them closer to the hearts of the Arab people.

They also stressed on the importance and necessity of filling the gap of Palestinian interests between Hamas and Fatah after the events that took place in the Palestinian

territories in 2007, which resulted in the Hamas takeover of Gaza and Fatah in the West Bank. Qatar has hosted a number of diplomatic rounds of Palestinian dialogue to fill the gap and end the division. It can be said that the positions of Ankara and Doha are similar on the Palestinian issue, before the Arab Spring, which was the first indication of a close relationship between the two countries (Pala & Aras, 2015).

2.2.2 The Arab Spring

Prior to the Arab Spring, Turkey and Qatar emerged as influential players in the region. Turkey enjoyed high levels of soft power and social, economic and political prestige throughout the region. This was because of its regional foreign policy and far-reaching contributions to resolving religious problems such as the sectarian tensions in Iraq and Lebanon. Similarly, Qatar enjoyed a significant presence in the region through its foreign policy, which combines the economic gains and its soft power that has affected the thinking of many people in the region. The leaders of countries considered the Arab Spring as a political opportunity to strengthen their regional and international influence in the region, and the influence is realized by their leading positive social and political transformation (Ulrichsen, 2014) (Mufti, 2011)

When the Arab Spring began, the two countries had established strong relations with all parties of conflict. Their regional and international activities became clearer and more visible inside and outside the Middle East. Qatar was the first to congratulate the Tunisian people after the overthrown President Ben Ali left the country. They expressed their respect for the will and choice of the people. Al Jazeera was the first to broadcast a tape of the self-sacrifice of the Tunisian Mohammed Bouazizi in late 2010 and provide a platform for the voice of the Tunisian state to be heard by the world. Following this, in January 2011, Turkey officially announced its support for the Tunisian demands for freedom and democracy (Başkan, 2016). As Turkey's and Qatar's influence increased,

political Islamists, and more specifically the Muslim Brotherhood, were seen the most likely candidates to assume political power in the countries of the Arab Spring. Both sides were well aware that supporting such a popular movement would contribute to its geopolitical goals. In this respect, Ankara and Doha increasingly approached each other and presented their positions to their internal and external audiences by standing up to the people's issues and supporting their just demands (Pala & Aras, 2015). After confirming the seriousness of popular action, the two countries intensified their efforts to develop stronger economic and political relations with the governments of the Arab Spring in Tunisia and in Egypt.

In addition, according to Dr. Ramazan Yildirm (personal communication, October 25, 2017), Qatar and Turkey added the ideological perspective in dealing with the issues of the region, especially the Arab Spring. They supported the axis represented by the people who demanded freedom and social justice, which was consistent with an axis that wanted change, but only through the continuation of the ruling regimes in the so-called deep state apparatus known as counter-revolutions.

Qatar directed its media legend, Al-Jazeera, to keep abreast of the events and details of the Arab Spring and became the voice of the revolutionaries and the pulse of the street. With the uprisings that swept the Arab world in 2011, journalists, intellectuals and researchers began to pay close attention to it, with Qatar playing a major role in media coverage of the uprisings. For example, the state-owned Al-Jazeera television network has become the voice of many rebels. The Qatar Air Force joined the NATO-led campaign against Muammar Gaddafi in Libya, and Doha funded and armed the Libyan and Syrian rebels. This kind of support continued until the success of the Arab revolutions and the victory of the Islamic forces in the elections held in the countries of these

revolutions. This brought the relations between Turkey and Qatar closer (Ulrichsen, 2014).

However, the move of Turkey and Qatar supporting the Arab Spring, especially in Syria, Egypt, Tunisia and Libya, acquired a hidden hostility from the Arab parties that had felt the earthquake of the Arab Spring. Consequently, they began to finance the counterrevolutionary forces with money and weapons, and they began to hope the Arab Spring revolutions would fade especially in the coup against the Egyptian President Mohammed Mohamed Morsi. At this juncture, Turkey's Foreign Minister, Ahmet Davutog Oulu, announced that Turkey's foreign policy was based on values based on democracy and the will of the people (Lynch, 2017). The two countries, both with their strong presence and economic capabilities, continued to support the forces of the Arab Spring, such as the Muslim Brotherhood and the rebels who confronted Bashar al-Assad's regime in Syria, and warned of the effects of Iranian intervention in the region. Both condemned Russia's intervention together with the Assad forces fighting in Syria (Finn, 2015b)

2.2.3 The Syrian Crisis

The Syrian crisis is one of the manifestations of the waning of hope of the Arab Spring revolutions, which is supported by Turkey and Qatar. After the Syrian regime's refusal to respond to any demands and mediations or listen to the demands of the Syrian people, which was expressed by peaceful demonstrations calling for political reform, freedom and some civil rights. Turkey and Qatar were among the parties that demanded that the Syrian regime respond to the demands of the people. It was through their channels of direct contact with the Syrian people and a wide network of diplomatic relations that culminated in the tripartite meeting held in Istanbul. This meeting brought together the leaders of the three countries in 2010. However, Bashar Assad's excessive use of violence

and the use of armed force to quell the demonstrations has been described as an outright plot aimed against his country.

Turkey and Qatar have publicly sent a directive to Assad's regime to respond to the people's demands and stop Syria's bloodshed, as Ankara and Doha could no longer-deter growing moral and popular pressure against Assad's use of armed violence against peaceful protesters (Pala & Aras, 2015; SNS, 2010). Bashar al-Assad's regime of violent and armed revolutionaries, resulted in the killings of hundreds of civilians,-resulting in the transformation of the Syrian opposition from a peaceful one to an armed opposition through the defection of officers from the regular army and forming the nucleus of the Free Syrian Army, under which many of the Syrian people were engaged. The Free Syrian Army supported by Turkey and Qatar, demanded support and recognition by the international sector, requested the supply of material and financial support and announced that there is no solution to the Syrian crisis except by Bashar Assad's immediate departure from the Syrian political scene. Meanwhile, the efforts of Ankara and Doha in mediating the conflict were undermined by Russia and Iran and the military intervention of Hezbollah against the rivals of the regime. Despite the efforts made by Ankara and Doha to topple Assad, the regime and its army remain one of the strongest influences on the Syrian territory. However, the two countries remain convinced that Bashar al-Assad must be removed from power as a precondition for peace, and that the two countries still offer all means of support for the factions fighting the regime of Bashar al-Assad and his allies (Cafiero & Wagner, 2015b).

The Syrian crisis and other Arab revolutions have provoked reaction to Turkey and Qatar and have seriously damaged their reputation. By sponsoring issues in Egypt, Palestine, Libya, Syria, and Tunisia, Ankara and Doha were severely condemned by other forces in the region. Many have accused Turkey and Qatar of stirring up sectarian unrest

and promoting extremism (Cafiero & Wagner, 2015b). Nevertheless, the two countries seem determined to strengthen their military ties, seeing more potential as they are linked to a joint mission in the battlefields of Syria and elsewhere that has made Ankara and Doha closer than ever before.

Doha and Ankara have the potential to contribute to the Syria's case, since Turkey has a strong army and long borders with Syria, while Qatar has deep pockets to sponsor training and arm Syrian armed factions, and to provide full political support in international forums (Cafiero & Wagner, 2015b).

2.2.4 The Russian Aircraft Crash

If the Syrian crisis is one of the repercussions of the revolutions of the Arab Spring, the crisis of the Russian aircraft crash by Turkey is a Syrian crisis, which almost destroyed the Turkish-Russian relations which was already deteriorating due to divergent positions the two countries held towards the Syrian crisis. Noting that Russia is Turkey's first supplier of gas, Qatar intervened directly and prepared to supply gas if it is cut off from the Russian side and help compensate for the loss of the tourism sector left by the Russian action towards Turkey, which amounted to three billion dollars. In a clear reference to the gravity of bilateral relations reached by the two countries, a message addressed to Russia and other countries in the region states that Turkey and Qatar have very strong relations while Qatar is a real competitor to Russia in the supply of liquefied natural gas (Anderson, 2006).

Experts believe that this crisis and Qatar's reaction, was to one of the most important motives of the change of the relations between the two countries, from a purely political and economic one to a military association. When the Qatari side offered its services on the plane crash, part of the terms of the signing of the military agreement between the parties was revealed, under which Turkey is committed to protecting Qatar from external

risks in return for Qatar providing Turkey with its natural gas and other supplies (Berger, 2016). This is an expected development of the gradual strengthening of military relations between the two countries dating back to the 2007 Defense Industry Cooperation Agreement. Turkey and Qatar signed two subsequent military agreements in 2012. Under the current agreement, which will also implement the exchange of intelligence, and the deployment of up to 3,000 Turkish military personnel in Qatar (Cochrane, 2016) (Cafiero & Wagner, 2016). The details of this cooperation are discussed in Chapter III.

2.2.5 The Qatari Stance Towards the Failed Coup Attempt in Turkey 2016

Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) was subjected to an armed military coup planned by a large group of Turkish army leaders. Without the measures taken by the Turkish government and the unity of the Turkish people, who suffered from the scourge of previous incursions in the country, the region would have had a different form of government. The world observed the event, but the Emir of Qatar was the first leader to call for solidarity with President Erdogan and respect of the will of the Turkish people. To follow up on the event, he sent his Minister of Defense and Chief of Staff on an official visit to Turkey. This was followed by the Qatari Foreign Minister's expressive statement of Qatar's rejection of the coup attempt (Girit, 2017) in a clear and strong message on the strength of the relations between the two countries, which was the strongest signal of support for President Erdogan against the military coup attempt.

This is one of Ankara's most important motives for expanding its strategic military partnership with Qatar (Gurcan, 2017a). In addition, the strategy of the counter-revolutionary forces of targeting both countries against one another, drove both countries to support this wave. It is believed that the coup attempt, and all forms of retaliatory measures and pressure on Qatar, finally led to it being besieged by its neighbours. It is clear that these two factors were behind this growing rapprochement, which was in the

general interests of Turkey in creating more military relations, and having locations in different places throughout the region, including Qatar (Gerd Nonneman, personal communication, December 27, 2017).

2.3 Economic Cooperation

Prior to 2002, Turkey mostly focused on building trade relations with the EU countries, but since the AKP came to power, Turkey has been trying to diversify its trading partners by seeking more economic ties with the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America. Economic relations between Turkey and Qatar have gained momentum during this period of time, especially after the Arab Spring. The strong political will of the leaders of the two countries has led to an improvement in trade relations (Gü, 2016). As pointed out by the former Turkish Prime Minister, Ahmed Douawoglu, during his official visit to Qatar, this development in fruitful and constructive economic cooperation came as a result of the high-level integration and coordination in relations between his country and Qatar, at all levels, as befits two brotherly Arab countries. In regional and international issues, he pointed out that the Turkish model of economic cooperation should be an example in the region which is rich in resources although embroiled in internal and external conflicts. He added that his country had a strategy to promote cooperation in the sectors of health care, agriculture and energy (Douawoglu, 2016).

In addition, Qatar's wealth and energy resources show the world's highest per capita income of around USD\$ 75,000, placing Qataris at the head of the world's richest people, making it an attractive trading partner for any regional or global player, not just Turkey. Turkey as a large and rising economic power with strong qualified manpower, enjoys an important geostrategic position in the international trade corridors and owns huge development projects that will be to the benefit of the two countries.

According to Dr. Andreas Krieg (personal communication, December 4, 2017), Turkey can bring in a lot of investments to Qatar. In the same way, Qatar brings to Turkey investments in food and logistics companies. The volume of trade between Turkey and Qatar was USD\$ 1.3 billion to USD\$ 300 million in 2015, and it is expected that the volume of this cooperation will continue to grow between the two countries (mfa, 2016). However, it should not be overlooked that the origin of their alliance is primarily political and economic in nature.

As the Emir of Qatar said during the meeting of the strategic cooperation committee between the two countries in Trabzon, the two countries attach great importance to the emulation of each other. In a similar discourse during his visit to Qatar in February, the Turkish President, Erdogan, stated that Turkey considers the importance of economic value of the country's investment in Qatar (QNA, 2016b) and that Turkey is also looking to attract more direct investment from Qatar, and to increase Turkey's stake in major infrastructure projects launched by Qatar in preparation of hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup (al-monitor., 2017). Turkey's investment in Qatar is about USD\$ 11.6 billion, and in addition, Turkey is an important economic destination for Qatar. Qatari investments in Turkey are the second largest in terms of volume, amounting to USD\$ 20 billion. These investments are concentrated in agriculture, tourism, real estate and banks. While the value of Qatari investments in Turkey is estimated about USD\$ 1.5 billion dollars and that investment has been rising since 2013, and out of USD\$ 1.5 billion, comes 1.2 billion dollars of investments made over the past few years. The country's major investments include foodstuffs, defense industries, heavy equipment, media, banking, real estate and banking (al-monitor., 2017).

Turkey's exports to Qatar have increased significantly over the past 10 years, with ships, yachts, electronic products, machinery and furniture accounting for about USD\$

440 million. Turkish imports from Qatar are estimated USD\$ 271 million in 2016 with oil and its derivatives, aluminum and plastic products constituting the largest part. Qatari imports are mainly iron and steel products, electrical equipment, automobiles, home textile products, food and furniture from Turkey. On the other hand, Turkey imports natural gas, plastic products, aluminum and chemical derivatives from Qatar (mfa, 2016).

Given the trade balance between the two countries and the composition of the goods being exchanged, it can easily be said that the economic relations between Turkey and Qatar are not based on a winning and losing principle, but on a principle of gain and gain. This means that Turkey and Qatar are not competing to become a source of the same products. This makes it easier to develop economic relations. Therefore, this is very encouraging for both parties to increase the degree of cooperation and access to higher ranks from it because each one is useful to the other (Hürsoy, 2013) (Gü, 2016). This accelerated development in economic cooperation between the two countries is a great indicator of the development of relations between the two countries and their strategic relationship. This volume of economic transactions automatically brings with it military cooperation as the money holder brings weapons to protect it (al-monitor, 2017). As common political and economic relations developed, it has resulted in military agreements to demonstrate the development of close relations between the two countries (Tung, 2015).

At the same time, as a small country rich in natural resources, it faces the problem of protecting its wealth and growth. It, therefore, aspires to achieve protection and defense agreements with the well-armed countries, its allies and countries that offer their services of defending Qatar. Turkey is one of these countries which while defending Qatar and offering protection, is also a market for military products produced by Turkey recently, and allows for the deployment of Turkish troops in Qatar (AvazTVTurkishchannel,

2016). On one hand, the economic and defense relationship between the two is a mutually beneficial relationship. The military agreement is a result of the development of political and economic relations and includes protection for both. On the other hand, the military agreement is useful for economic cooperation. In addition, there is a rich market that will showcase the military products of Turkey, which will help Qatar develop its military strength.

Referring to the security situation that dominates the region, Ahmed Douawoglu noted that the two countries faced common security challenges in an unstable and turbulent region, which necessitates vigilance and security coordination. Therefore, the focus is on economic aspects as a means of protecting against these challenges, "as a result of this high cooperation between the two countries in various fields, economic and security, we signed the military agreement between the two countries, which is the subject of great interest and appreciation of both sides" (Douawoglu, 2016).

2.4 The State of Ambiguity and Strategic and Security Vacuum

The US occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq led to the collapse of these two countries, which led to the outbreak of chaos in the region, which in turn was a real test for international and local players in the region, especially after the emergence of some terrorist organizations in the region, which extended from Iraq to Syria. A state of concern and confusion resulted after the coup d'état against President-elect Mohamed Morsi after the 2011 January revolution led by counter-revolutionary forces. The wars have emerged as an agent of the region and have become a feature of the region. All this has led to a real test for all the actors in the region.

So that, the regional and international forces and the active players in the region, mainly Turkey, have been working to re-establish its political and strategic position and to establish and set up its counter-force to counter offset these threats. Among these

Measures and reinforcements was strengthening the relationship with Qatar. (Atef Jilani, personal communication, November 16, 2017).

One of the common perceived threats is the common regional adversary, Iran, with had many strategic advantages in the region, its growing influence in the region, its direct involvement in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen; its skill in mobilizing militia and arms; and its nuclear missile programs and nuclear programs.

Moreover, the growing presence of Russia in the Middle East, especially in the GCC, is also seen as a obscurity and uncertainties. While GCC countries expect economic benefits from Russia's interest in their region, they are also concerned about their security implications. They are particularly concerned about Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov's recent reference to the "post-West" world order, which was seen as a reflection of Russia's corrective stance. This was further enhanced by Russia's intervention in the Syrian conflict. As a key player in the Middle East, and developing its cooperation with Iran, it has made its mark in the Arab world, thus impeding Turkey's determination to expand its influence in the region. This was a greater impetus for Turkey to continue to form a regional alliance to face these challenges, especially in the absence of any interest by the US to take a leading role towards containing the volatile situation in the region and avoiding all security risks (Cafiero & Wagner, 2016).

This has led to uncertainty by the countries of the region towards the US, especially after the change to the Trump administration in the White House. Numerous by the President and his advisers on radical Islamic terrorism; his policies on the ban of visas, some Islamic countries; his preoccupation with the Asian rulers and the rise of China and the rise of North Korea and its buildup of nuclear weapons (Harunoglu, 2016).

In addition, Qatar and Turkey are also involved in security threats from extremist violent terrorist networks in the region (Finn, 2015a; Gurcan, 2017b). Turkish Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu pointed out clearly that there is a major security challenge from home and abroad. His concerns are the common security challenges, such as the growing terrorist threats and the terrorist groups deployed in some countries. These groups are backed by states and governments and that it is a big problem confronting these groups. He stressed that the Gulf region and Turkey are the most stable in a region plagued by unrest and called for a unified program to work against terrorist groups and against aggressor countries and terrorist regimes. He stressed that the Turkish-Qatari relations are an excellent example of work for stability and peace in the region. “Turkey wants a partner like Qatar to strengthen its strong relationship with the Gulf and Qatar needs a partner such as Turkey in Europe and the Asian-European region in general”. (Douawoglu, 2016)

Fear of terrorism is used as a common denominator in strengthening military relations between the two countries. Despite this, achieving regional balance and providing military cover against regional threats remains the most important factor behind Qatar's desire to strengthen its military cooperation with Turkey (Atef Jilani, personal communication, November 16, 2017).

According to a security source from the Center for Strategic Military Studies in Qatar, who spoke on condition of anonymity for Alountoer, there is a security vacuum in the region due to the Arab Spring created by the gradual withdrawal of Iraq, Syria and Egypt from the Middle East; the preoccupation of Saudi Arabia and European countries with their own issues; and the decline in US interest in regional security. Therefore, Turkey has a chance to counter Iranian and Russian influences. The Qatari expert, a retired

colonel, said it was time to question the validity of “old habits of putting our eggs in the same basket. It is time to diversify Qatar relationships”.

The Qatari prime minister pointed that "The Qatari-Turkish relations are being nurtured by the leadership of our two countries, which stems from their great wisdom and their realization that the serious challenges facing the world at all political, economic and humanitarian levels, especially in the Middle East, require more bilateral cooperation to achieve our common interests” (QNA, 2016a).

In the midst of major setbacks and failed strategies in the volatile Middle East, the Turkish leadership later came to see Qatar as Ankara's most trusted ally in the world and the region. In fact, in this geopolitical context, Ankara's ambassador to Doha announced his country's intention to establish a joint Qatari-Turkish military base in Qatar as part of an agreement signed in 2014 to strengthen partnership with Doha at a time of heightened instability in the region. He added that Turkey and Qatar are facing common problems, which concern the developments in the region and the ambiguous policies of neighboring countries that differentiates them on Middle East issues. Cooperation between the two countries is vital in this regard and it is the critical time for the Middle East (Finn, 2015b) (CCNArabic, 2016)

2.5 The Gulf Crisis

Qatar's relations with its neighbors from the Gulf countries have undergone several fluctuations that have been characterized sometimes by stability and at times characterized by tension and diplomatic rupture, especially with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. The recent crisis that surfaced in 2017, has deep roots that dates back to 1926, when King Abdul Aziz took power in Saudi Arabia, and took the side of Bahrain in the disputed islands crisis. Qatar was under threat of invasion at that time and in the Khufous crisis in 1992, following military intervention in the territories of Qatar.

In the crisis of 1996, when Saudi Arabia and the UAE led a military coup against Qatar, it was centralized in Bahrain with the participation of Egypt.

Former Qatar's crown prince, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, assumed power in 1995 after a soft coup against his father over a small country with a small territory and a small population. It has been dominated since independence, in 1971, by its largest and most powerful neighbor, Saudi Arabia, and he believed that Qatar will only find security by rejecting Saudi Arabia's control to turn itself from a Saudi ally to its become its rival (Fisher, 2017). This caused tidal waves and the difference in the foreign policy of the two countries, disturbed Saudi Arabia and resulted in it recalling its ambassador from Qatar in the period between 2002 and 2008. However, this approach had failed considerably in an attempt to put pressure on Qatar to limit its policy and independent directions away from Saudi control and further escalated the dispute. (Roberts, 2017). This state of affairs was thought to have caused the deterioration of security in the Middle East region, and in the Gulf region in particular. It had a significant impact on the internal structure of the Gulf States and on the foreign policy of these states. The political, economic and military violations and the ambiguous policies of neighboring countries was one of the reasons for the increasing uncertainty pointed out by Turkey and Qatar when signing the mutual military cooperation agreement (Can Acun, personal communication, September 21, 2017).

In 2014, the relationship between Qatar and its neighbors witnessed renewed tension, resulting in the withdrawal of ambassadors from Doha and drove Qatar's neighbors to carry out a military exercise against it under the name of "Zayed 1" which sent a clear message to Doha that the direct intervention against it is not impossible. Adding to this, in May of 2017, the Gulf crisis broke out (Ishaq, 2017). In March 2014, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates withdrew their ambassadors to Qatar because of

what they called Doha's non-compliance with previously agreed decisions of the Gulf Cooperation Council. The most prominent of these was the Qatari position on the July 3 coup in Egypt and the support of the State of Qatar for the Arab Spring revolutions and Muslim Brotherhood, and the media handling of Al Jazeera. In November 2014, the ambassadors of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and the Kingdom of Bahrain were summoned to return to Doha after the Government of Qatar announced its commitment to some of the previously agreed decisions of the Gulf Cooperation Council (BBCarabic, 2014; Chief, 2014; Khalid Hassan, 2015).

In May 2017, the Qatari government announced that the Qatari News Agency and other state media platforms had been hacked. According to Qatari-based Al-Jazeera, the pirates issued mock statements to the official Qatari News Agency, attributed to the Emir of Qatar, who expressed support for Iran, Hezbollah and Israel. It stated that, "Iran represents a regional and Islamic weight that cannot be ignored, and it is not wise to escalate with it." It is a great force that guarantees stability in the region (AlJazeera, 2017b; Gambrell, 2017). However, the Saudi and Emirati media ignored the statements of the Qatari government. The statements attributed to the Emir were widely heard in various Arab media outlets, including Sky News Arabia and Al Arabiya TV, which were close to the authorities in Qatar (QNA, 2017). Following the statements attributed to Qatar's Emir, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain announced the severing of diplomatic relations with Qatar, followed by the UAE and Egypt. The relations included the withdrawal of ambassadors and the imposition of a ban on trade and travel, which was later known as the Gulf diplomatic crisis. The 2014 agreement with the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, denounced Qatar's continued support for terrorism and its good relationship with Iran as well as the agenda of the network, Al Jazeera media (Reuters, 2017a).

This policy between Qatar and its rivals, especially Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, of managing foreign policy independently continued. On one hand, it hastened to fill the gap created by the Arab Spring revolutions by supporting the demands of the rebellious peoples and supporting the revolutionary forces in those countries, headed by the Muslim Brotherhood; on the other hand, Saudi Arabia and its allies sought to fill this gap, by supporting the anti-Arab spring revolution. Qatar also continued to allow its Al Jazeera channel to broadcast from its territory and continued to maintain good relations with Iran. When Saudi Arabia and its allies accused Qatar of supporting terrorism, Qatar denied it vehemently stating it is a close ally of America, Qatar accommodates the most important military base of America in the region and is an important US partner in the fight against terrorism (Porter, 2018).

2.5.1 Effects of 2017 Crisis

Since the outbreak of the crisis until the writing of these lines, the significant weight of its cost and the social, economic, political and strategic implications to the Gulf countries and its regional and international spheres has become clearer. The Kuwaiti mediation supported internationally and regionally, sought to find a quick solution to avoid these repercussions. However, even if it succeeded in avoiding the escalation of the crisis to the level of military confrontation, it could not find the desired exit (Can Acun, personal communication, September 21, 2017).

Between 5 and 6 June 2017, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Egypt, the Maldives and Bahrain, severed diplomatic relations with Qatar. A variety of diplomatic measures have been taken. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have informed the ports and freight forwarders not to receive Qatari ships or ships owned by Qatari companies or individuals. Saudi Arabia has closed its border with Qatar and restricted its airspace to Qatar Airways. Instead, Qatar was forced to redirect flights to

Africa and Europe through Iranian airspace. The Saudi central bank advised banks not to trade with Qatari banks in Qatari riyal. In addition, the countries participating in the declaration ordered their citizens to leave Qatar. Three Gulf countries namely: Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Bahrain gave visitors and Qatari residents two weeks to leave their countries. The foreign ministries of Bahrain and Egypt gave Qatari diplomats 48 hours to leave their countries and expelled Qatar from the Arab coalition led by Saudi Arabia. Yemen, Kuwait and Oman remained neutral.

Observers and researchers can notice the crisis of Qatar and the Gulf crisis escalating while these lines are being written. The siege set for the Emir of Qatar and the people of Qatar did not end despite all attempts to resolve the crisis. This was evident in many areas, especially the daily logistics of Qatar after the closure of the borders which links Qatar with the outside world and a crossing point with Saudi Arabia, where Qatar imports all the necessities of daily life, and construction supplies for construction projects. The ban on travel to and from Qatar and the closure of airspace to the navigation movement of the Qatari fleet, the prevention of shipping from Qatar to the marine borders of the UAE and the request of the nationals of the two countries to leave the countries in the diplomatic crisis affected the daily life of Qatar (BBC, 2017a; Beaumont, 2017).

2.5.1.1 Demands Made to Qatar

The following are the 13 demands made on 22 June 2017 by Bahrain, Egypt, the UAE and Saudi Arabia through the mediation of Kuwait, which had to be fully agreed upon by Qatar in order to end its siege (GlufNews, 2017; TRTWorld, 2017).

1. The closure of the Qatari-state Al Jazeera and its group channels.
2. The closure of other media outlets funded by or affiliated to Qatar including the Middle East Eye, Al Araby Al Jadeed, Rassd and Arabi21.

3. The closure of the Turkish military base in the Qatari territories and the termination of any Qatari-Turkish military cooperation.
4. The limitation of the Qatari-Iranian relationship to commerce and trade sectors following the regulations of the international community with regard to the sanctions imposed on Iran.
5. The termination of any intelligence and military cooperation between Qatar and Iran, especially the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).
6. The termination of any relations with sectarian, ideological and terrorist groups and organization mainly: Jabhat Fateh al Sham, Hezbollah, Al-Qaeda, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood.
7. The termination of any funding to terrorist organizations, groups or individuals and the submission of such for justice.
8. The termination of any intervention of Qatar in the internal affairs of all of the claimant countries including Qatar relations with the oppositions in these countries
9. The termination of the Qatari citizenship program which grants political asylum to wanted persons from the demanding countries.
10. The termination of Qatari citizenship to those specified in the previous point.
11. The re-construction payment for the Qatari wrong-doing in the past years.
12. The observation of Qatar for a period of 10 years.
13. The alignment of Qatar with the agendas of the Gulf countries at all social, political, military and economic levels based on the Saudi agreement set in 2014.

These demands were rejected by Turkey and Qatar as they stated that these demands violated the sovereignty of Qatar and that these demands were not a way to resolve the crisis. Turkey rejected demands to close the military base and withdraw Turkish troops

deployed in Qatari territory, stating that the Turkish base did not target any country in the region.

2.5.2 Reactions and the International Position

The reactions of countries and regional and international powers varied. While some small states joined the decision of the blockade, others rejected the blockade decision calling for a solution to the problem at the dialogue table. The US position on the crisis was unclear as US President Trump, posted in his Twitter account his support for Saudi Arabia and its allies on June 6.

He stated that, "During my recent trip to the Middle East, I said there could be no funding for radical ideology, It is good to see Saudi Arabia's visit with the king and 50 countries already paying off, saying they will take a hard line on extremism and funding, and every [such] signal was referring to Qatar, and perhaps this would be the beginning of the end of terror" (@realDonaldTrump, 2017). This statement was made despite the presence of a large US base at the Air Force Base, which is a basic base for US air strikes against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS). This was in contrast to the position of the Department of State and the Department of Defense, which called for America to remain neutral in this crisis. The US ambassador to Qatar, Dana Shell Smith, said that the United States had taken a neutral stance and called for dialogue. The Pentagon praised Qatar for hosting the US air base and its "permanent commitment to regional security." A Pentagon spokesman said that the diplomatic crisis would not affect the US military position in Qatar (CNBC, 2017; Reuters, 2017b).

The Israeli position was expressed by the Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman and described the situation as an opportunity for Israel. "The interests of some Arab countries overlap with Israeli interests, including the issue of the Al Jazeera Channel," he said. He went on to describe Al-Jazeera as an "incitement machine" and called on the Israeli Prime

Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to close Al-Jazeera's offices in Israel (STAFF, 2017). Meanwhile, the German Foreign Minister, Sigmar Gabarbel, expressed his opposition to Saudi Arabia and its allies cutting off the diplomatic relations with Qatar. He also expressed Germany's support for Qatar in this crisis and accused the US President Donald Trump of fueling conflicts in the Middle East. Germany is one of the most interested in the issue, especially with the parties of the crisis and it visited the area several times (DW, 2017). The Foreign Ministry of the UK said that Qatar should do more to stop the funding of extremist groups and called on the demanding states to ease the blockade on Qatar (The Guardian, 2017). While other countries such as Iran, Russia, Malaysia and Indonesia called for a solution to the crisis at the dialogue table.

The Turkish position was different from other regional and international powers: the Turkish government has declared that they are supported the Qatari regime and rejected all the actions against Qatar, and it called for a solution to the crisis at the dialogue table. This is due to the aforementioned relations between Qatar and Turkey such as the similarity of the political position on many issues and the agreements signed between the parties in various files and levels. Also, the Turkish political makers believe that the charges that against Qatar could be charges against Turkey too, and that means Turkey could face the same difficult situations (Said Elhaj, personal communication, October 3, 2017). Therefore, Ankara called to deal with the crisis wisely and rationally and through dialogue to reach a peaceful political solution. It rejected the blockade imposed on Qatar since the early hours of the Gulf crisis. Turkey crystallized a clear and progressive position along with Qatar. In the early hours, it hastened to open an air bridge carrying food for Doha, breaking the economic blockade and easing the pressure on Qatar. Erdogan also confirmed his country's stand by Qatar with many statements and condemned Qatar's segregation from the other Arab states as "inhumane and against Islamic values (BBC, 2017b).

However, Qatar's support for Islamic factions in the Middle East and North Africa remains a source of tension in Qatar's relations with the GCC and Egypt. By strengthening ties with Turkey, which has a foreign policy agenda closely connected to Qatar, Doha is trying to secure greater influence over its Gulf Arab neighbors by increasing its military partnership (Cafiero & Wagner, 2016). Turkey has not criticized the countries of the blockade, especially Saudi Arabia, and maintained an acceptable area of neutrality and continued to stress on a peaceful solution, thus allowing it to play a role in the crisis. Erdogan continued to activate Turkish diplomacy, by telephoning a number of ~~and~~ related Arab leaders including the Emir of Qatar, the Emir of Kuwait and the King of Saudi Arabia. In addition, he also contacted some international leaders with influential power, such as Presidents Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin and Emmanuel Macaron. Turkey did not just offer itself as an alternative to Kuwaiti mediation; it also supported the efforts of the Emir of Kuwait in his mediation to resolve the crisis (Aljazeera, 2017a). The most daring and important was the approval of the Turkish parliament to send troops to Qatar. This was in accordance with the military cooperation agreement between the parties in 2015, which provided for the deployment of Turkish troops at a military base in Qatar.

Moreover, he called an emergency session in the Turkish Parliament to negotiate and implement the military cooperation agreement between the two countries, and he got the sanction from the Turkish Parliament, then the Defence Ministry, to send soldiers and military hardware to Qatar which was considered as the most important step of the Gulf crisis. This accelerated the voting for the ruling Justice and Development Party for greater political significance and influence (Celik & Lantier, 2017).

In addition to that, Turkey tried to avoid exacerbating the crisis and preventing the military option by Saudi Arabia and UEA and its allies' soldiers against Qatar. That was possible especially with the help of Turkish soldiers who arrived in Qatar successively since the day of voting, and joint military exercises between the parties, and Turkey's

refusal to close the Turkish military base in Qatar, as listed in the demands (Lederman & Schreck, 2017).

Therefore, the crisis is an essential and strong motive to the transition of the Turkish-Qatari relationship from the political and economic levels to the military and strategic levels, especially after the acceleration of the Turkish side to implement the terms of the military agreement signed earlier (mentioned in Chapter III). Especially, this coincided with the conflict in the US position of the crisis between the White House and other institutions such as foreign and defence ministries. All of which indicates that the crisis played an essential role in the escalation of military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar, and The transmission of the relationship relations to the military-strategic level (Mehran Kamrava, personal communication, December 2, 2017) (Can Acun, personal communication, September 21, 2017) (Said Elhaj, personal communication, October 3, 2017) (Atef Jilani, personal communication, November 16, 2017).

2.6 Conclusion

To conclude, the motives and factors that led to reaching the strategic cooperation and the military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar were similar to the political situation of the two countries in several issues in the region, the most important of which are the Palestinian issue, the Arab Spring, the Syrian crisis as well as Qatar's support for Turkey in the crash of the Russian plane and the failed coup in Turkey. Moreover, the increasing economic exchange between the two countries, the state of ambiguity and strategic vacuum experienced by the region and the frequent Gulf crises between Saudi Arabia and the UAE on the one hand and Qatar on the other, all contributed to access at the highest level of the Turkish-Qatari military cooperation. The following chapter will discuss the security impact of military cooperation between turkey and Qatar.

CHAPTER 3: THE SECURITY IMPACT OF MILITARY COOPERATION

This chapter aims to identify the security impacts of the increasing military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar by answering the question “What is the security impact of the Turkey-Qatar military cooperation?”

The chapter shows the two countries military capabilities and their international range. It also, discuss the size of the military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar and the establishment of the Turkey-Qatar supreme strategic committee and its outcomes such as the defence and military agreements. Also, it identifies the security impacts of the turkey-Qatar military cooperation on the Impact on the course of the Gulf crisis and the relations of Turkey and Qatar with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Furthermore, it identifies the impacts on the Gulf regional security and discusses the impact on the economy and power resources, impacts on the US presence and Impact on Iranian influence.

3.1 Military Capabilities of the Two Countries

The Turkish-Qatari military agreements go back almost a decade. Ankara and Doha signed an agreement in 2007 seeking cooperation on the defence industry and signed another military training agreement in 2012. In 2014, military agreements were signed between Qatar and Turkey aimed at strengthening military cooperation between the two countries which became effective on June 7, 2017. The said agreements were approved by the Turkish parliament and accepted by Turkish President, Recep Tayyip Erdogan on the ninth of the same month.

It is important to note that the military capacity of the Turkish army ranks eighth in the world, while the army ranks 91 among the most powerful 133 armies in the world. Turkey has a population of about 80,274,604 million, of which 41,640,000 are able

enough to work, and USD\$ 3.5 million have been recruited into the service. The population of Qatar, however, comprises of 2.5 million people, including 600 thousand who are able to work and are fit for military service in Qatar.

Moreover, Turkey has more than 1.3 million soldiers a year as compared to the number of in military service in Qatar, which is only 12,000. The number of soldiers serving in the Turkish army is 382,850, in addition to 360,565 who are from the reserve forces, compared to 12 thousand troops in Qatar. Unlike Turkey, Qatar has no reserve force. Turkey's defence budget is about USD\$ 820, 800,000 whereas the national defence budget is only USD\$ 1.9 billion. The Turkish Air Force has in its possession 1,018 aircraft, including 207 combat aircraft, interceptors, 207 attack aircraft, 455 helicopters, 70 helicopters, 439 military transport and cargo and 276 training aircraft. On the whole, Qatar Air Force includes 98 warplanes, including 9 fighter aircraft and interceptor aircraft, 15 attack aircraft, 43 helicopters, 53 military transport aircraft and 28 training aircraft and 6 airports. The Turkish fleet consists of 194 marine items, including 12 submarines and 16 frigates. It is served by 9 marine ports, which are connected with 80 marine pieces of the Qatari navy fleet, while each does not have aircraft carriers (GlobalFirePower, 2017).

3.2 The Supreme Strategic Committee and the Military Cooperation

An agreement to form a Higher Strategic Committee between the two countries as a bilateral mechanism for high level dialogue and cooperation was signed by the President of the Republic of Turkey and the Emir of the State of Qatar on December 2014. The provisions of this agreement stipulated that a large number of ministries and several governmental and private institutions were involved in preparing bilateral cooperation agreements. The first meeting of the Supreme Strategic Committee held on December 2, 2015, was set up at the level of the two countries' leaders. It has been aimed to establish

bilateral relations between the State of Qatar and the Republic of Turkey on an organised track that leads to the extension of its horizons and achieve the excellence in various areas, especially the economy, trade, investment, culture and security. As well as it aims to achieve excellence at the political level (QatarEmbassy-Ankara, 2016).

Subsequently, the second meeting was held on December 18, 2016 in Turkey in the Black Sea city of Trabzon, which was attended by the Turkish President Erdogan and the Qatari Prince Tamim and other high-level delegations from both countries. The meeting witnessed the signing of a series of agreements in all fields, but the most important of all were agreements in the military and defence fields, where a military training and cooperation agreement was signed in the defence industries. Of all the agreements signed at this meeting, the most notable agreement signed was for the establishment of a Turkish military base in Qatar and the deployment of Turkish troops in the territory of Qatar. that resulted in about 150 members of the Turkish army, navy and special forces being temporarily stationed at a Qatari military base since October 2015, pending the completion of construction work at the permanent Turkish base, which can deploy up to 3,000 Turkish troops upon completion of the base. (Gurcan, 2017b).

The third committee meeting was held in Ankara on September 28, 2017 under the leadership of the Foreign Ministers of the two countries in order to follow up on the most important developments in the region and to oversee the completion of the implementation of the bilateral agreements signed at the two previous meetings and to sustain the high level of relations between the two countries (mfa, 2017; mofa, 2017).

3.2.1 Comments on some Provisions of the Agreement

There are many scholars such as Abdullah Tung, researcher at the Ankara Strategic Institute, who has written their own analyses and comments based on the text of the agreement, as is mentioned in the appendix of this study.

The military agreement between the two countries was drafted in Turkish, Arabic and English, and Articles IV and V of the military agreement between the two parties, state the following:

- Deployment of Turkish military forces in Qatar.
- Conducting joint training and educational programs.
- Giving Turkey the right to benefit from Qatar's airspace.
- Promoting joint military cooperation between the two countries in the fight against terrorism, defence and logistics industries and allowing joint military exercises on a regular basis.
- Deployment of land, sea and air units in Turkey.
- Conducting joint intelligence and military work.

Article 17 of the agreement states that the agreement will be binding on both parties, after it is endorsed by the national governments of both States. This legal obligation begins after the official declaration of the agreement. According to Article 18, "the agreement will continue for ten years, and after the expiry of this period, and if there is no objection to the agreement by both parties, the agreement will automatically continue for a further one year." Article 15, concerning the resolution of disputes between the two countries, states that "in the event of any dispute on the surface between the parties, this dispute shall be resolved through consultation and strategic negotiations and shall not be referred to any local, regional or international tribunal." As for the solution of the dispute between the parties without going to the international courts, it is legitimate, and there is no rule in international law indicating that there is a need to submit an application to the International Tribunal if there is disagreement between them as the International Tribunal states that, "States may use the path of negotiations, conciliation and mediation before submitting a request to resolve the dispute by judicial means." This shows the

compatibility of the military agreements between Qatar and Turkey with the rules of international law (TurkPress, 2015).

It was therefore necessary for the two countries to sign the agreement to legalise political legitimacy to strengthen Ankara's presence in the Gulf, and to find a regional alignment for the alliance with Qatar and with other Gulf countries. The military agreement was deemed indispensable for the sustainability of the Turkish-Qatari strategic relations (Jonathan Schanzer, 2016). Unlike previous agreements, this military agreement has been dominated by economic or purely civil status, as it carries the meaning of the "perimeter agreement" to exclude some countries in the region and evade outstanding issues in the region. This could be a new Turkish strategy for dealing with regional issues and giving up soft power as a single tool to deal with the various thorny issues (Elhaj, 2015). Qatar's reason to endorse the agreement with Turkey was to expand and diversify its security tools through this agreement, which is grounded on the principle of joint defence (Kilic, 2018), which will have security overtones in the region. This will ~~the~~ exhaust effects in the area.

3.3 Security Impact

This section examines some of the security implications of this cooperation-between the two countries.

3.3.1 Impact on the Course of the Gulf Crisis

The agreement came into effect after it was endorsed by both the Turkish Parliament and the Turkish President. In the midst of a political crisis in the Gulf which was prompted by Saudi Arabia, other Arab nations such as UAE, Bahrain and Egypt went to the extent of isolating and besieging Qatar. This was against the backdrop of accusations by these nations against Qatar and severing relations with Qatar. All these accusations were rejected by Doha and Ankara.

The severity of the Gulf crisis and its escalation to imposing a blockade on Qatar into various aspects of life was a real test of Turkey's political rhetoric. It tried to play the role of mediator on the first day of crisis and called for resolving the issue through diplomacy and dialogue. However, the development of the crisis and the position taken by the countries led by Saudi Arabia drove Turkey to further stand firm next to its friend, Qatar, and subsequently has it has since lost the role of mediator in the Gulf crisis. This is a clear indication of the real fear of the repercussions of the crisis on its friend, Qatar, which has been well-documented in the region (Metin Gurcan 2017).

Meanwhile, information about the possibility of the crisis escalating into a military operation against Qatar, was announced early by Qatar's Defense Minister, Khalid Al-Attiyah, as well as the Ambassador of the State of Qatar in Ankara in many interviews with them. This was also clearly stated by the Emir of Kuwait in Washington when he talked about the success of his mediation in the crisis. He declared that he had tried to prevent the implementation of the military operation against Qatar which was directed at overthrowing the existing regime in Qatar. This had posed a real and serious challenge to Turkey, forcing it to accelerate the ratification by the Turkish parliament on the final version of the military agreement ~~under~~ which proposed the deployment of 5,000 soldiers instead of 3,000 Turkish troops in Qatar (Ali Bakeer, personal communication, September 20, 2017) (Atef Jilani, personal communication, November 16, 2017).

Following the amendments to the agreement, the Turkish Parliament dealt with these documents, by approving and expediting them immediately. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was entrusted with full powers to increase the strength of the current Turkish army units, consisting of infantry, military engineers, combat support units and Special Forces elements. Several days after the Gulf crisis broke out, the first batch of Turkish troops arrived in Qatar after parliament's approval (Quamar, 2017).

This arrival of new military troops further complicated the scene in the region but prevented the inflammation of a crisis in the region or direct military intervention against the Qatari regime. Turkey's move to expedite parliament's vote to send Turkish soldiers to Qatar, along with other factors, had sparked international protest and hindered mediation efforts by the Emir of Kuwait to derail this course. (Said Elhaj, personal communication, October 3, 2017).

The Turkish military intervention had made it more difficult to invade Qatar, not because they could not stop the invasion militarily, but simply because Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Egypt would directly oppose Turkey, and that was something they did not want to do, at least at this contemporary time. The Turkish presence in Qatar had halted further deterioration of the security situation on a wider scale in the region (Gerd Nonneman, personal communication, December 27, 2017).

The heightening of the Gulf crisis and the corresponding situation of the Turkish crisis confirms what was mentioned in the second chapter, that the Gulf crisis played a major role in accelerating the transfer of relations between the two countries to the strategic level of military. Turkey rushed to help Qatar by sending military forces to its base after the Gulf threat escalated when a military attack was being planned against Qatar and a palace coup was planned against the royal family in Doha. Turkey's quick resolution, passed by the parliament, to send military forces to Qatar, which was considered to be one of the most important impediments to taking military action by the countries of the siege against the Qatari regime. The continuing threats by the countries of the blockade to work together to overthrow the regime in Qatar further reinforced the long-term survival of Turkish forces in Qatar. It acted as a form of deterrent to the countries of the siege imposed by Turkey in the event of an attack and reflected Qatar's inability to engage in a war. (Mohammed Alzawawy, personal communication, October 30, 2017).

There is no doubt that the quick Turkish action and the deployment of Turkish troops in Qatar on the basis of the previous military agreement between the two countries had a major role in preventing an escalation of the crisis militarily despite the fact that many sought to market it as an escalation from the Turkish side. In fact, however, the Turkish-Qatari move was aimed at preventing the siege from turning into a military conflict between Turkey and Qatar and the closure of the Turkish military base in Qatar (Ali Bakeer, personal communication, September 20, 2017) (Can Acun, personal communication, September 21, 2017).

Doha and Ankara also strongly rejected the thirteen demands that imposed by the boycotting countries of Qatar, as it has been mentioned in chapter two, that have been considered as "violation of sovereign rights". In his speech on July 21, 2017, Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani praised Turkey's position on the Gulf crisis, saying: "We are grateful to Turkey for its rapid implementation of our cooperation agreement and meeting our basic needs" (Gurcan, 2017a).

3.3.1.1 Impact of the Relations of Turkey and Qatar with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates

The strategic dialogue between Turkey and the Gulf states began in 2008. In the eyes of the leaders of Turkey and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the political gap created in Iraq following the US-led invasion and the declining credibility of the US were the most important factors in this strategic dialogue. Turkey had developed a growing interest in the Middle East which is an important factor in the new understanding between Turkey and the GCC. The relationship between the two sides had passed through several stages of attraction and mutual understanding over the past years. Similar factors have resulted in the creation of conflict around certain specific issues. The initial disputes between Turkey and the Gulf Cooperation Council countries were on the issue of Iran's

nuclear program, the Iraqi- Kurdistan issue and other issues in the volatile region (Taspinar, 2015). Other issues that raised more questions in the Gulf countries about Turkish intentions in the region were Turkey's new stance towards Israel, especially after Israel's 2008-2009 war on Gaza and the ensuing Davos crisis in 2009; and effects of the Israeli assault on the Mavi Marmara fleet in 2010 in its symbolic attempt to lift the siege on Gaza (TESEV, 2012).

The position of the Gulf states including Saudi Arabia and UAE are completely in the opposite direction to the Turkish position when they rejected the Arab Spring revolutions, and they spent billions to abort and stop the output (Harunoglu, 2016). Turkey and Qatar had supported the Arab Spring revolutions, and adopted their demands of freedom and social justice, and accepted their democratic exodus as a real alternative to the old regimes in the countries that broke out in these revolutions.

Despite being one of the GCC countries, Qatar has long considered Saudi Arabia to be a tyrannical neighbour who does not always respect the sovereignty and independence of the smaller Gulf Arab states. Though both had their differences in the past, building relations with Turkey was one of the ways that Qatar could keep some of its options open and make room for maneuver under the dominant Saudi position (Cafiero & Wagner, 2016). It can, therefore, be assumed that the cooperation between Turkey and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which started in 2003, has been distorted. What was intended to be a dialogue session turned into a partnership between Turkey and Qatar, especially during the outbreak of the Arab revolutions, causing internal breaks and conflicts within the GCC. However, even before the outbreak of the Arab uprisings, Qatar began to distance itself from the policies of the other GCC countries and adopted a more independent policy than the rest of the Gulf countries, especially Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Eventually, the relationship between Turkey and Qatar became more systematic,

coordinated and co-operative with Turkey (Harunoglu, 2016). The goal was to meet their ambitions, achieve their goals and maintain their common and similar policy views on the outstanding issues in the Middle East, especially with regard to their allegiance to the Arab revolutions and support of the Muslim Brotherhood, which has disturbed Saudi Arabia, the UAE and their allies (Sheldon, 2016).

These changes have led Turkey to turn more towards hard power at the expense of soft power, which was seen in the Ankara projection of power, particularly in Iraq and Syria. The change had infuriated several countries including Saudi Arabia, the UAE and the US (Cafiero & Wagner, 2016). The best example of this was the military agreement between Turkey and Qatar, under which Turkey established its first military base in the Gulf, which happened after the crisis of the withdrawal of ambassadors from Qatar in 2014. After the Gulf crisis that erupted in 2017, this was explicitly rejected by the UAE and Saudi Arabia, in their 13 demands to end the siege on Qatar (Andreas Krieg, personal communication, December 4, 2017).

Turkey and Qatar, reflected on all attempts by Turkey to maintain diplomatic relations between them and Saudi Arabia, specifically Turkey's attempt to play the role of mediator in the Gulf crisis. Turkey had tried through frequent high-level official visits to the region to participate in maintaining Gulf security even though Turkey's many assurances that the construction of the military base in Qatar was not directed against anyone in the Gulf and the region. Nevertheless, these assertions have not been viewed positively in Abu Dhabi and Riyadh because of UAE and Saudi Arabia fears that Turkish-Qatari relations will once again affect Arab wealth, and promote the spirit of Muslim Brotherhood (Cochrane, 2016). They reckon that strengthening the Turkish-Qatari military cooperation basically means that, "extremist" movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood will become more active, and will compete with regional players (Berger, 2016).

Turkish-Qatari military cooperation and military deployments in Qatar put more pressure and competition on Turkey's relations with the UAE and Saudi Arabia and had already weakened Turkey's relationship with the two countries (Iskenderov, 2016). In his analysis of Turkey's relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, Kasapoglu (2017) says that it would be better for Turkey to make a distinction between its relations between the countries. If Turkey's diplomatic relations with the UAE was strained before this cooperation, Turkey aimed to continue maintaining a good relationship with Saudi Arabia. Qatar, however, will significantly strengthen its military and political independence away from its neighbor Saudi Arabia and UAE.

On the other hand, this Turkish move has cast a shadow over the already strained Turkish-Emirati relations under implicit accusations of the former for tampering with its security and supporting the failed coup attempt in 2016. Also, concerning Turkish-Saudi relations, Ankara confers particular importance and seems very keen despite the recently strained relationship. Also, concerning Turkish-Saudi relations, Ankara confers particular importance and seems very keen despite the recently strained relationship. That means that the relations between Ankara and Riyadh is going through a more significant chill and tension, especially when the path of rapprochement between Turkey and Iran is on the side-lines of the Gulf crisis and so is the referendum of Iraq's Kurdistan. Ankara now looks closer to Tehran, the arch-rival of Riyadh, Doha and its neighbor rival. Perhaps the effects of the transfer of power in Saudi Arabia and the signs of rapprochement between them and the Israeli occupation state also feed the path of further divergence between Riyadh and Ankara, in exchange for deepening Turkish-Qatari relations and improving Turkish-Iranian cooperation. (Said Elhaj, personal communication, October 3, 2017).

Turkey's military involvement into the Gulf crisis is likely to increase tensions in Turkey's and Qatar's relations with Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Saudi Arabia and UAE

view the strengthening of military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar as a bully from Qatar by an external regional party and implicating it in the Gulf equation in an attempt to stop their pressure on Qatar to respond to their demands (Atef Jilani, personal communication, November 16, 2017).

The study on the impact of military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar is significant because it has caused unrest with Saudi Arabia and UAE but not to the extent that these two countries relinquish their relationship with Turkey and discontinue the relationship with Qatar. This is not sustainable because the networks of relations and interests between the two parties will ultimately be more important than the presence of Turkish troops in Qatar (Gerd Nonneman, personal communication, December 27, 2017). However, the future of the regional relations between the two states, namely Turkey and Qatar, on the one hand, and Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are unpredictable on the other. This is because it is having been difficult to read and understand the demeanour of the Saudi and UAE foreign policy on the outstanding issues in the region, especially in the past years (Mehran Kamrava, personal communication, December 2, 2017).

3.3.2 Impact on the Gulf Regional Security

One of the motives of the military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar is the state of ambiguity and strategic vacuum experienced by the region, which is one of the most important components in the Gulf region. This security situation has negatively affected the parties of the region, and the study on the security impact of this cooperation in the Gulf region cannot be studied in isolation from this situation (see Chapter 2). However, it should be noted here that both Doha and Ankara's regional influence, due to their political rapprochement in the region, are ambitious. They are among the most regional capitals concerned by monitoring the strategic and security situations of the region. They

face enormous constraints to curtail their foreign policy ambitions while trying to unify their regional influence in a deeply geopolitical climate dynamically. However, for Ankara, the two-party alliance is limited to its quest for strategic allies and its open appetite for access to energy and investment opportunities. Doha has always been keen to maintain its sovereignty and preserve its security in the light of these changes in the region (Ahmed Hussein, personal communication, December 20, 2017).

However, it is challenging to study the security impact that this cooperation will leave in the region, especially since the size of this Turkish military deployment in Qatar (not more than 5,000 soldiers) is satisfactory for Qatar in its preparation to face the escalation of the crisis in the Gulf scene, which has become a more volatile environment like other areas in the inflamed region. This deployment will at least provide Turkey with options to showcase its military industries, possibly marketing them, as an indispensable logistics hub for desert warfare training, and a center for future overseas operations (Cagaptay & Decottignies, 2016; Roberts, 2015). In addition, this is the desire of the NATO armies to engage in the Gulf states individually. It also highlights the partnership of small and rich Gulf States with militarily powerful NATO countries in a sequence of partnerships, in anticipation of other regional threats (Cagaptay & Decottignies, 2016).

Nevertheless, the Turkish base will have its own private sea port which has been initially listed for its unmanned aircraft and then for its military flights. By the end of 2018, there will likely be Turkish naval personnel patrolling the Gulf, unmanned aerial vehicles and early warning and airborne surveillance systems flying over the Qatari and Gulf airspace. According to the military analyst, Kasapoglu, the deployment of 3,000 Turkish soldiers would be almost equal to all active Qatari military. Thus, within the framework of bilateral agreements between Ankara and Doha, the base can play a key role in the defense planning of the State of Qatar, as well as in the Emir's regional affairs

agenda(Kasapoglu, 2017). By adopting this step, Turkey transforms into a country that directly affects security in the Persian Gulf and in time to come, this base will also provide the Turkish armed forces with a hub of operations in the Red Sea and North Africa, as well as access to the Pacific waters which were withdrawn by the Turkish Othman Empire since the last century (Berger, 2016; Kilic, 2018).

Both the Turkish military base in Doha and the joint Turkish-Qatari military exercises in Ankara will ensure that they will be represented in the Gulf as Turkish leaders, and government officials have highlighted the importance of this move, emphasizing that it is a step towards ensuring security and stability in the Gulf, without any intention to target any specific adversaries. Furthermore, the setting up of a Turkish military base in Doha is part of the AKP's plan for "strategic depth" in the Middle East. The difference is that these positions may polarize the fragile regional geopolitical situation and increase the strategic responsibility for Turkey (Quamar, 2017). Although some experts consider the presence of Turkish military to be symbolic and political more than military, it is direct and immediate and has long-term strategic prospects. Therefore, in addition to preventing catastrophic scenarios in the recent Gulf crisis, the balance of power there has been changed. In other words, Saudi Arabia no longer has absolute superiority in the Gulf region, and after the military cooperation agreement between Ankara and Doha, it cannot impose on Qatar what it wants, or be completely unique. This is important since other countries within the GCC system are perturbed by this crisis and its implications and fear that its role in the boycott will be the next after Qatar. These countries are Oman and Kuwait, who are also talking of a military agreement to be signed with Turkey to train the Kuwaiti National Guard. Hopefully it will open the way for future agreements on military cooperation with a higher ceiling. The military and security balances in the Gulf region have since changed significantly, which has been clearly reflected in the course of the Gulf crisis and the statements of various parties who are involved in it. The pivotal

role of the Turkish move in this crisis is not to include the two conditions related to the Turkish rule and the military cooperation agreement within the four countries of the blockade within the 13 demands from Doha (Said Elhaj, personal communication, October 3, 2017).

Although the military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar has enhanced the intervention of regional and international parties in the Gulf security system at the expense of the role of local parties, it has negatively affected the independence on the decision of the Gulf security self. It is, therefore, likely that the strengthening of Turkish-Qatari military cooperation will play an important role in achieving a good balance with the roles of other regional and international parties. In so doing, it may contribute to a situation of deterrence, leading to increased security stability and reducing the chances of some parties to the military option to resolve differences in the political situation (Atef Jilani, personal communication, November 16, 2017).

3.3.2.1 Impact on Economy and Power Resources

Their importance of the Gulf region is that its territory lies on a geographical location which is one of the richest places in the world that is blessed with oil and gas and other sources of natural energy. Another, of paramount importance is its geo-strategic location: it is a nexus between the East and the West providing power supply lines. Obtaining energy sources is one of the most important targets for regional and international countries in their relationship with the Gulf countries. Therefore, the security of energy in this region is an international affair which is much larger than regional or local and, therefore, tampering with it is unacceptable internationally, regionally and locally. In addition, one of the motives for strengthening military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar is the volume of economic cooperation between the two countries, which is important to export Qatari gas to Turkey. The Gulf countries are, therefore, important for

global economy and regional political equation, and Turkey seeks to have a hand in the Gulf. A close military alliance with Qatar will offer to the Turkish Ministry of Defence an irresistible opportunity to reach out to a lucrative market. Similarly, Turkey will also provide a way to combat Iranian influence in the region strategically in order to enhance Turkey's participation in global security and global energy security(Al-Monitor, 2015).

According to many experts, the military cooperation between the two countries have proven that Qatar and Turkey have not abandoned the idea of establishing a natural gas pipeline that passes through Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Syria to Turkey and from there to Europe. This in a way competes with Russia as the main source of natural gas for Europe. The offer was rejected by Bashar al-Assad in 2009 as a strong ally of Russia, who explained that Russia's violent military intervention in maintaining Bashar al-Assad's regime after the outbreak of the Syrian revolution (Cafiero & Wagner, 2015b; Karyakin, 2015).

The presence of Turkey may positively affect energy security in the region as it will have more influence in the region and will help Qatar to continue the production and export of natural gas. In addition, the Turkish foreign policy has maintained cordial economic and cultural relations with other countries, even if political dispute exists. For example, the Turkish president said in his speech during his visit to Egypt before the coup that the volume of trade between the two countries has reached five billion within five years but it has now reached six billion, despite the presence of the political herd as well as the Turkish rapprochement with the Arab region, which is not an alternative to the European relations (Blanchard, 2011).

3.3.2.2 Impact on the US Presence

During the first decade of the 21st century, Qatar served as a base to the US military stationed in the Gulf region. This has been a crucial starting point for the US military to

operate in Qatar. To strengthen this alliance, a 10-year defense cooperation agreement between the United States and Qatar was inked in 2013 (Blanchard, 2014). Turkey, having the second largest NATO army and being home to the US Incirlik Air Base, has been a crucial ally for the United States since the inception of the Cold War. The United States considers Turkey and Qatar as strong partners in the Middle East. Qatar has a military defense link with the United States, through an agreement signed in 1992 to provide facilities for the US Air Force and Navy and for the storage of equipment and equipment for the Army and Air Force in its territory. Towards the end of 1996, the US began the construction of the "Sailiya Camp" in Qatar. In 2001, Qatar granted the United States the right to use the Al-Undid Air Base, which is one of the largest US military base abroad (Lendon, 2017).

The setting up of the joint military base between Turkey and Qatar is was not to replace the US; but it was part of Doha's plan to diversify the Emirate's network of defense partners, with more influential countries around the world including Turkey (Cafiero & Wagner, 2016). Based on this, it can be assumed that Turkey's intensive partnership with Qatar, and in particular the planned military base there, was welcomed by the United States. Indeed, Turkey's intentions towards the Gulf States has long been appreciated, and the US considers them indispensable for the stability and security of the region, because both Turkey and the Gulf States had actively partnered with the US initiatives in the Middle East. In line with this, the US welcomed Turkey's planned military base in Qatar. However, it should be noted that failure to respond either positively or negatively does not guarantee that full American support for this partnership is granted because the recent military agreement between Turkey and Qatar has not been discussed specifically yet by the relevant committees in the US Congress at the time of writing this research (Harunoglu, 2016).

However, the emergence of the Turkish military base in Qatar, adjacent to the US air base, raises the question of the intensity of the American influence in Doha. Although, there are areas of friction between Turkey and Qatar with the US, it is expected that Americans are actively working to influence the internal situation in Qatar (Balmasov, 2015). The initiative also demonstrates that the United States has increased its allies in the Middle East for the purpose of collective defense. Even though Washington has expressed interest in Asia, it is not certain that the US forces will withdraw from the Gulf. The truth is that the United States is keen to share the expenses for maintaining regional security with its allies. The US officials stated that, "To intensify the role of its allies and to improve the security environment in the Gulf region, the British military base in Bahrain, the French base in the UAE and the Turkish base in Qatar are all part of the US strategy." The present US strategy in the Middle East acts as a reminder to us of the Nixon-Kissinger doctrine during the Cold War era. Not long after the end of the war in Vietnam, Washington had lost interest nor had the resources to deploy troops elsewhere. Instead, the United States has instructed its regional partners such as Iran or Saudi Arabia to pursue and secure its interests in the Middle East (Heyran-Niya, 2016).

According to Jean-Marc Rickli, a professor at King's College, London and at the joint Command and Staff College in Doha "the United States' perception of the Gulf is purely the diversification of potential allies." However, Alexei Vinenko, an associate professor at the School of Global Politics at the Moscow State University, does not agree that the Turkish move could be part of a strategy developed in Washington. This is because ~~since~~ the measures are outside the US umbrella, especially the Turkish-US relationship which is undergoing tensions due to the Syrian crisis, the increased tension after America's position on the failed coup attempt in Turkey in 2016 and the US position on Qatar after the Gulf crisis in 2017 (Fenenko, 2015). He argued that, "Assuming you are a small country like Qatar, and have interest in hosting many allies in your territory, it is because

it provides you with an indirect security guarantee from your ally, and it further increases the costs of the aggressor from any possible attack (Finn, 2015b).

Qatar has decided to compensate for its weak deterrent power in the Gulf before entering into a military alliance with Turkey, to diversify its defense capabilities, and improve the training of its army. This is to reduce its military dependence on the United States, especially after the US position comes in contradiction to the Gulf crisis and President Trump's statements supporting the position of Saudi Arabia and the UAE in the Gulf crisis. In addition, Qatar's motive is to diversify its military partners for the purpose of addressing the security risks surrounding it and even develop stronger cooperation with NATO through Turkey (Gürcan, 2015). However, this cooperation will not have a real impact in the field because of the US military presence in Qatar, and especially because Qatar is very interested in multiplying its military allies, and not vice versa. In addition to this, the Turkish military presence so far is not comparable to the size of the US presence (Finn, 2015a).

However, this is inextricably linked to the region's volatility and crises and the intention to entrench the truth towards Qatar and Turkey. The US does not seem to defend Qatar if it had been invaded by other US allies in the region: Saudi and the United Arab Emirates.

3.3.2.3 Impact on Iranian Influence

In fact, many analysts, military experts, security people and those interested in the Gulf region have pointed to the role of Iran. It was one of the most important Turkish-Qatari military rapprochement that has a great concern with the growing influence of Iran in the region, especially as Turkey and Qatar which have fought this influence in Yemen and Iraq, and in Syria, where they directly supported the factions of the Free Syrian Army that fought the regime of Bashar and his Iranian ally. This received great acclaim on the

Saudi side, which explains why Saudi relations with Turkey and Qatar were dramatically changed at the beginning of King Salman's reign.

In the midst of the region's confusion, and successive and contradictory changes, the military agreement between Turkey and Qatar was the first to be targeted at the siege of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates on Qatar. Although there is a slight rapprochement between Iran, Turkey and Qatar after the Gulf crisis, it does not exclude Turkey and Qatar's fear of the growing Iranian influence in the region. The recent Gulf crisis has caused some changes to this data, perhaps in terms of priorities (tactical) and not in terms of strategies. At least at this stage, as there is no guarantee that regional data will not change again. With the Iranian threat capturing the attention of Qatar and Turkey, the Turkish base in Qatar then plays a different role. Iran's challenge to this issue is not only related to Turkish-Qatari relations, but also to the extent of American influence at that time, as well as to the extent in which Iran can exert pressure on Turkey regionally (Quamar, 2017).

Saudi Arabia welcomed the cooperation agreements between Turkey and Qatar signed in 2014 and considered it as an important step to counter Iran's growing regional influence. The US ignores the concerns of the Gulf Arab states over Iran's nuclear deal, during the days of Obama's rule and enhanced security and stability in the Gulf. Iran has been considered the real danger of the Gulf. Since Turkey and Qatar are members of this general military alliance, Riyadh may eventually host the joint military base in Qatar, as well as play a stronger Turkish military role in the security landscape in the Arabian Gulf. Now that Tehran is faced with a Cold War, the rulers of the Al-Saud may be more acceptable to the joint military base, to the extent that Ankara and Doha are still in tune with the basic principles of their own foreign policy, particularly with regard to Syria and Yemen (Cafiero & Wagner, 2016).

Moreover, Turkey is an additional line of defense against Iran after the normalization of relations between Iran with the West through the signing of the Iranian nuclear deal. According to Atilla Yesilada, an Istanbul-based analyst at Global Source Partners, it is still very unclear whether the United States will fight for Qatar or for the Gulf states as the whole region is terrified that the United States sold them to Iran (Cochrane, 2016). It is obvious that the present security measures in the Gulf is not capable of providing full protection to the state due to the existing security tensions as the Iranian military and political influence in the countries of the region represents a large part to these tensions. Some experts argue that the region needs a coherent security system that is based on cooperation between the countries' regional commissions. The Turkish base in Qatar is likely to contribute to this regional cooperation to preserve the security situation in the Gulf region which poses a threat to the Iranian influence.

3.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the military cooperation between the two countries witnessed a qualitative transition after the structure of the Supreme Strategic Committee and the signing of military agreements. These military agreements led to the establishment of the Turkish military base and the deployment of troops in the Qatari territory, which had a significant impact reducing disastrous results in the Arabian Gulf crisis. It gave Qatar an opportunity to protect itself and its foreign and domestic policy, which was rejected by the UAE and Saudi Arabia. In addition, this military cooperation affects the relationship between Turkey and Qatar with the UAE and Saudi Arabia and adds more tension between the two sides and deprives Turkey from playing the role of mediator in the internal Gulf issues.

In addition, this cooperation allowed the Turkish forces to deploy in the energy-rich region and adjacent to the American presence and others and make it close to the vital

trade corridors in general. It has allowed Turkey to present itself as a military and security ally that some GCC states can trust, especially given Iran's increasing influence coupled with uncertainty about the US ally. The following chapter will discuss the challenges of sustainability of the Turkey-Qatar strategic military cooperation.

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CHAPTER 4: CHALLENGES OF SUSTAINABILITY OF THE TURKEY-QATAR STRATEGIC MILITARY COOPERATION

This chapter aims to investigate challenges that confronted the Turkey-Qatar military cooperation by answering the question “What are the challenges to the sustainability of the Turkey-Qatar military cooperation?”

It should be noted that with the passage of time, developments, and changes in the region, Turkish-Qatari relations are closer and are more cooperative in various fields, including defense and military cooperation. The cooperation had witnessed great developments and clear strategic transfers in the relationship between the two countries. These hurdles have an enormous impact on the fate of the two countries. However, despite, these positive developments between the two parties, and in a region that is undergoing geopolitical changes in a continuous, accelerating and contradictory manner, there are more challenges ahead. Therefore, this strategic cooperation needs to be strengthened and expanded in the future as it will face the challenges amidst the turbulent geopolitical turmoil in the region.

However, this cooperation was not coincidental and momentary, as experts believe that this level of common relationship reached by the two countries has gone through many stages. At each stage, the bilateral relationship between the two countries was upgraded to a higher and more reliable level than before. This military and strategic cooperation is a continuation of the previous defense cooperation agreements signed between the two countries about a decade ago. The Turkish-Qatari Joint Military Training Agreement was inked in 2012. Therefore, the current cooperation was not a drastic shift in relations between the two countries as much as it is the expression of natural evolution to enhance the cumulative or upward degree of alliance between them (Cochrane, 2016).

According to the terms of the agreement, Turkey vowed to protect Qatar from threats that are external, as well as a wide array of cooperation such as training, development and intelligence sharing, including the launching of a military base of about 5,000 Turkish military personnel (Cafiero & Wagner, 2016). The military base will have multi-purpose functions serving land, air and naval forces. The relation between Turkey and Qatar, have reached high levels of strategy that have impacted the region and will continue to do so in the coming days, in addition to what this cooperation will have for both countries. The deployment of Turkey's military in the Gulf, in the presence of US military, and others have allowed it to connect with countries that govern security in the Gulf region. Apart from the United States, Ankara will also have a military deployment site in the tiny Gulf state. In so doing, it gives Qatar an opportunity to confront its adversaries in the Gulf and to preserve its independence, sovereignty and independence of its political opinion (Heyran-Niya, 2016).

However, the launch of the Turkish military base in Qatar paved the way for a long-term Turkish military presence on the territory of Qatar. According to the intentions and effects of this cooperation, which were examined in the second and third chapters, there will be challenges to the continuation of this cooperation and strategic relationship. This chapter, therefore, examines these challenges at three different levels. The internal challenges and the regulations governing the relationship of the two countries; the stability of the governance which leads the two countries; and the internal opposition faced by them. In addition to the regional and international challenges, as well as their relationship with other relevant countries in the case of influential international and regional players, it is likely the two parties will lose more friends regionally and internationally as the pressure increases on bilateral relations. It is true that such problems might push the two parties closer to convergence, but it may not be a deliberate or a calculated approach as much as a solidarity.

4.1 Internal challenge

Investigating the domestic factors in each country could be challenging to military cooperation.

4.1.1 The top-down Elite Relationship

The cooperation between the leaders of Qatar and Turkey, grounded on friendship and good relations, is so far a top-down elite process that still needs to develop foundations that are supported by substantial inputs from the political, security, military, intellectual, cultural and commercial bureaucracies of both countries. This was pointed out by Erdogan when he launched the Supreme Strategic Committee through which he looks forward to institutionalize the relationship between the two countries and gain access to the proper administrative tools. If the relationship between the leaders of the two countries continues, the relationship will not be exposed to risks in the absence of either party (Birol Baskan, personal communication, November 19, 2017).

However, both countries will always have the determination to develop this relationship, especially at an institutional level, so that it is sustainable and able to overcome the challenges and difficulties that are encountered, regardless of regional and international changes. This does not mean that the relationship between the two countries will not face challenges in the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, what is most important is the imbalance in the relations between the two countries. Despite the joint efforts to lift bilateral relations at various levels, the relations of a political, economic, cultural or military nature between the two countries remain unbalanced. This means that it is not the durability that may appear necessary, but it may also be subject to political consensus.

4.1.2 The Ruling Structure

In theory, in addition to the main internal challenges, there are possible internal transformations in both countries, which may lead to change the political system. This may reflect the level and volume of relations between the two countries depending on the type and source of change. However, the Justice and Development Party (AKP) controls all the power in the Turkish state at present. After the necessary measures were taken following the failed coup attempt, it is unique to form a government and control a comfortable majority in parliament, which allowed it to pass the law, with less legislative difficulties, to increase the military presence on Qatari territory quickly. The Turkish President also tightened his grip on the military, which in the past was a challenge to his intentions to play foreign military roles. In the light of this reality, the internal challenges facing the Ministry of Justice in its relations with Qatar are very limited, and do not exceed the positions of some opposition parties that may take a negative attitude towards sending troops outside the border.

In Qatar, there are a few internal challenges that are confronting the government in terms of official status or popular status. The indicators proved to be strong for a clear public understanding of the reasons for strengthening the country's military relationship with Turkey under the threat posed by the Gulf crisis. The economy is not an effective challenge for the government in view of Qatar's strong economic situation.

However, the Turkish internal challenge is most dangerous, as Turkey has a turning point, which is the pending presidential election in 2019; in view of the results of the last vote on the Constitution, which was able to pass the AKP by a small percentage of only 1.5%. If the regime of the country changes and another party comes to power, it is expected that the first files to deal within radical changes is the file of foreign relations. This will be the head of the Turkish military's presence abroad and the restoration of

foreign relations with NATO and possibly with the Gulf states (Mohammed Alzawawy, personal communication, October 30, 2017).

The change in the ruling regime in Turkey, for example, because of a loss in the elections or because of a military coup or for any other reason, will negatively affect the relationship between the two countries in the future. This hypothesis is not impossible and must be taken into account, as Turkey is one of the countries in the Middle East that have suffered military coups, and the last attempt was in July 2016.

In the case of Qatar, a change in the political system is theoretically possible through both an internal coup and outside efforts, as Saudi Arabia and the UAE have recently done. In reality, the current Emir of Qatar is a very prominent figure in the country despite external pressure to oust him from power and try to seize the national and sovereign decision of his country (Ali Bakeer, personal communication, September 20, 2017) (Mehran Kamrava, personal communication, December 2, 2017).

Changing the regime in either country is a small possibility according to current data, but it must be taken into account. The current cooperation, as detailed above, is the result of political choices by the leaders of the two countries. Today, Turkey will oversee crucial presidential and parliamentary elections in 2019 after the introduction of the presidential system. Signs of a Gulf effort to try to change the regime in Qatar (such as polishing royal figures, etc.) are on the horizon, something that will have a direct impact on the course of cooperation between the two countries (Said Elhaj, personal communication, October 3, 2017).

4.1.3 The Internal Opposition

In discussing the internal challenges, In discussing the internal challenges within the two countries it is a necessary to refer to the declared and undeclared internal opposition.

in turkey they have especially in a democratic country such as Turkey that has an electoral process that allows for the political parties in which the political parties can compete fiercely but cannot predict its outcome.

On the Qatari side, which is based on rules of the tribal clan, which overlaps demographically with neighboring countries, there is an internal challenge that can develop later on based on the social equation in Qatar. There are national fears of attempts by the Gulf countries against playing on the tendon of tribal workers and the entry of some Qatari tribes with extensions in neighboring countries. This is what the recent Gulf crisis has shown that some members of the ruling family who believe in their rights to rule rather than Prince Tamim and his family.

When discussing the agreement, the Turkish Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee expressed the following strong views: "Do you need Turkey to send soldiers to train them; there is a need for that, as there are American soldiers in Qatar. We are sending a military unit there who will eventually join an international task force which will be set up there," said opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) deputy Ali Ozganduz (Gürcan, 2015). Aytog Atsei, another Republican People's Party deputy (CHP) agrees with Mr. Ali Ozganduz, and said that: "Our soldiers will go there, but will they defend Qatar against someone? ... Is there anybody who knows what the Turkish armed forces will do in Qatar? I signed an agreement with the United States, and I now say that you will send troops to Qatar to train and supply to the Syrian opposition" (Gürcan, 2015).

According to Mehmet Akif Okor, the head of the Politics and International Relations department at Yildiz Technical University, the ties of the military and security with the oil states need to study the links between private and public interests further. "The objectives of deploying Turkish troops to Qatar need to be clearly defined," he said. "Qatar is a country that had border issues with Saudi Arabia," he said. "Qatar is now

afraid of threatening Iran, subject to disputes for power, and is trying to be influential in regional developments through its ways." This means that Turkish soldiers who are serving in Qatar may be subject to a broad spectrum of tensions (Al-Monitor, 2015).

This is important since there were previous attempts to try to stop the rule of Al Thani without the clear support of the United States of America. The general aim of these attempts was to overthrow and reinstate the Emir, with the aim of placing Qatar under the same level of Saudi influence and control of Bahrain. This nightmare scenario has been widely discussed in Ankara among government circles. Most Turkish officials are terrified that the crisis will end with the second demand of Al-Thani for "Bahrainis" which is a mere claim of independence but ruled by Riyadh. The fate of al-Thani is vital. If the demands of the UAE and Saudi Arabia, are not met, there will be protests from the larger tribesmen in Qatar. Should this happen, the Qatari army is unlikely to respond effectively. What is feared by the Qatari society is that later, the decision to abandon the Emir and restore the state to a state of peace with Saudi Arabia and the UAE could be taken instead of heightening the crisis militarily (Metin Gurcan 2017).

In the same manner the Turkish opposition has drawn important criticism against the Turkish government for signing the military agreement with Qatar to establish the military base there. The political opposition accused the government for forcing Turkey to join the Sunni camp in the Middle East. According to the opposition, this had deprived Turkey of its power. Turkey's particular neutrality is what made it a respected and valuable country in the region, giving it the power to mediate. In the Turkish Grand National Assembly, parliamentarians from the Progressive Socialist Party have repeatedly asked the government whether this new cooperation is targeting Iran and its intense partnership with the Shiite Turkey with Qatar. They fear its implications for

Turkish-American relations in the Middle East to review affairs internationally (Harunoglu, 2016).

Some opposition figures commented that the joint military base in Qatar is closely aligned with Erdogan's plan of playing the national card on the international arena, distracting attention from local matters. Historically speaking, Erdogan is not the first leader to do so, but his tendency to obtain absolute control of power by his party has not been as strong as it was today. His actions have not only made the critics in Turkey to question him, but also question the international community, on how to define his political ambitions for Ankara's foreign policy (Cafiero & Wagner, 2016).

Nevertheless, the relationship between the two countries has grown until it has reached a level which indicates that it will not stop at this point; it may witness more qualitative developments, especially in military cooperation. Certainly, the question that arises is whether the parties can bear the consequences of this matter. In fact, as long as cooperation is at this point, it is completely sustainable, because it does not effectively undermine the fundamental interest of all players. While the two parties are ambitious to raise this cooperation further, such as significantly expanding the troop numbers or transforming them into a real military security alliance, this has significant implications in the event the two countries may not be able to achieve such sustainability in this cooperation, which is also one of the expected challenges (Ersoy, 2016) (Gerd Nonneman, personal communication, December 27, 2017).

4.2 The Regional Challenge

On one hand, at the regional level, the challenges are the security and political situations surrounding the two countries and the geopolitical changes in the region. This is one of the most important manifestations of the growing Iranian influence in the region,

with its repercussions on the Syrian crisis as well as the war in Yemen, the growing influence of Al-Huthi, its confrontation of the storm and the targeting of the Saudi territory with ballistic missiles. On the other hand, the Gulf crisis still exists, and the blockade imposed by Saudi Arabia, the UAE and its allies on Qatar continues.

4.2.1 The Saudi and United Arab Emirates pressures

The implications of the Gulf crisis seem sustainable, long-term and are open to many scenarios. Although, they have primarily exceeded the possibility of disastrous tracks such as a coup or direct military intervention. However, the concessions that Qatar might have to face in solving the crisis if it reaches the stage of resolution might include military cooperation with Turkey and the presence of its soldiers in the Gulf region. This is what the Turkish President pointed out when he said that his country would close the military base in Qatar only if requested (Said Elhaj, personal communication, October 3, 2017).

Also, the pressure exerted by Saudi Arabia and the UAE on the two countries is to close the Turkish military base in Qatar. According to some experts, this will be a significant challenge for the two countries, especially since the sum of common interests between the two sides is higher than the Turkish military deployment in Qatar. There is a lack of clarity in the foreign policy of Saudi Arabia and the UAE, which relies heavily on the external agenda. In addition to relying on their external relations to implement what they aim for they cannot put enough pressure on Turkey. Unlike the Iranian side, which has an expansionist project in the region and has political and military ambitions and influence, it has reached more than one Arab capital (Gerd Nonneman, personal communication, December 27, 2017).

However, the pressure exerted by Saudi Arabia and the UAE has not stopped many controversial issues despite believing that they do not have the strength to confront Turkey; it is more about the UAE. They have always been putting real pressure on

Turkey, sometimes in non-political and illegal ways with Turkey making direct accusations that they have supported the failed coup attempt in 2016 (Gerd Nonneman, personal communication, December 27, 2017). Therefore, Saudi Arabia and the UAE will exert over Turkey and Qatar all options of expected pressure in order to end their military cooperation. However, some experts believe that Saudi Arabia and the UAE do not think so because they believe they do not have enough power, and they cannot persuade the international community to do so. In the end, perhaps they will eventually accept the new reality in the region (Hugh Miles, personal communication, December 2, 2017).

4.2.2 The Iranian Influence

Iran, as an influential regional state is concerned with strengthening its regional presence and weakening the influence of other regional and international parties that are targeting its influence by taking a negative attitude towards it. Iran's concern remains that Turkey will strengthen its military influence in the Gulf region, albeit a delayed concern in the light of the current Turkish-Iranian rapprochement (Atef Jilani, personal communication, November 16, 2017).

According to Mohammed Alzawawy, (personal communication, October 30, 2017) Turkey has already declared its criticism of Iran's sectarian policies in the region, as there are problems between the two sides regarding the militia policy pursued by Iran under the cover of doctrine. This was made public by the Turkish Foreign Minister through Erdogan on more than one occasion. Cooperation in joint military files includes targeting armed Kurdish militia and other economic files. Turkey was one of the countries that condemned the provocative behaviour of the Iranian state in the final statement at the last meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) held in Turkey, as Iranian influence is an unwanted influence for both the Gulf States and Turkey.

Iran prefers the absence of any regional or international forces in the Arabian Gulf, and it is uncomfortable with such Turkish-Qatari military cooperation. Regarding the presence of the Turkish military base in Qatar, and especially taking into account the decision to establish the base at the beginning on conditions that the Gulf Cooperation Council seeks to balance with the increasing Iranian influence in the Gulf and the Arab region. Iran also prefers the absence of any regional powerhouse or international forces in the Arabian Gulf, and it feels uncomfortable with any alliances or influence of other regional powerhouse states in it. Therefore, Iran considered the Turkish-Qatari military cooperation as a threatening presence in the region, especially the establishment of the Turkey military base in Qatar. This is especially important if it has taken into consideration that the decision to establish the base, in the beginning, because of conditions that the countries of Gulf Cooperation Council took to try to balance the increasing Iranian influence in the Gulf and the Arab region. The Iranians were also aware of this understanding (Ali Bakeer, personal communication, September 20, 2017).

On the other hand, the reality may not be the case, because both Turkey and Qatar were against Iran's policy in Syria, but they were aware that there were other issues Iran could be a useful functional partner, but not a real alliance. However, they can deal with pragmatism and politics in some files that can which they can cooperate with Iran. Iran can be a useful resource too. Turkey and Qatar have decided that this is precisely how they will approach Iran. They can work together against the other threats agreed by them, and where they disagreed, they will have to agree to disagree. Iran could very well challenge this cooperation if it poses a real threat to its interests in the region (Gerd Nonneman, personal communication, December 27, 2017).

However, several experts believe that Turkey- Qatar cooperation and the construction of the military base is a direct reference to all influential players in the region which are the US, Russia, Iran, along with Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

4.3 The International Challenge

Qatar, though the smallest country in the Middle East, and is surrounded by bigger powers, is exceedingly rich in minerals. In order to safeguard Qatar's sovereignty and security, officials in Doha have historically relied on external support for defense. As a key ally of the US military, and a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Qatar relies heavily on its relations with Washington to achieve internal security. However, the Doha strategy for international security depends on the adoption of a group of countries as defense partners, taking into account their competing geopolitical interests and promoting Qatar's national interests (Cafiero & Wagner, 2016).

In this regard, Qatar considers Turkey as a defense partner, especially during growing regional unrest, including tensions in the Gulf region which created the Gulf crisis. In addition, Qatar's fears the US position towards this crisis; of all the Gulf, it fears the decline of US interest in the region. This has created a strategy, although unwelcome by many of its partners, for a new security structure in the Middle East. The effort of the Saudi-led military is part of an attempt to redefine the security structure of the region. The new Turkish-Qatari military alliance can also be viewed from the same perspective. The question now remains whether this will act as an independent hub in the region or fall within the scope of the Saudi sphere (Cafiero & Wagner, 2016).

The US regards the Gulf as a private and exclusive region, even though all the Gulf states are bound by defense agreements with the United States. Thus, any military presence outside its close friends may be considered unwelcome. The US cannot be happy with the presence of Turkish military in the region, which it regards as a region of exclusive influence; especially since its relations with Ankara are not at their best due to Washington's support for the armed Kurdish factions in Syria. Another point of grievance was the delay in the extradition file of Fathullah Kulen who has resided on its territory,

which Ankara accused of standing behind the failed coup attempt in the summer of 2016. All in all, the Turkish military presence, which is expected to increase in quantity, will need some kind of coordination and arrangement with the American forces on the Qatari territory (Said Elhaj, personal communication, October 3, 2017).

The US administration may resort to diplomatic options to maintain its influence and dominance in the region by strengthening the relationship with the parties of the crisis in a state of balance, and free from bias. Another alternative to ease the tension between the parties to the Gulf crisis is to prevent the need for Qatar to resort to other regional or international allies in the military field (Atef Jilani, personal communication, November 16, 2017).

In addition, it is possible that America will resort to diplomatic channels since Turkey and the United States are part of the north The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The two countries have strong relations and great understanding, so the United States is willing to coordinate with Turkey despite friction and tension in the relationship between the two countries. Subsequently, both sides will try to contain this dispute among themselves, and perhaps the United States will not oppose the Turkish presence in the Qatari territories. However, the friction will persist in the next few years, but it is unlikely that it will become hostile. What remains important is to know the views of both sides on the Gulf crisis, the siege of Qatar, and the extent of America's acceptance according to its interests for the Turkish deployment there (Gerd Nonneman, personal communication, December 27, 2017).

In addition, according to Ali Bakeer (personal communication, September 20, 2017), US interests in the region, especially in the Arabian Gulf, posed a challenge to various players from outside. But so far, no official position has been issued by the US or other international powers on Turkish-Qatari military cooperation and the deployment of

Turkish troops in Qatar. The United States and other international powers are likely to mull closely at this relationship and try to study it further.

The other player in the region is Russia, which is a strong country seeking to increase its influence in the region. It had intervened militarily in Syria providing protection for the regime of Bashar al-Assad and supporting its continued rule. This may be a challenge to this cooperation, which brings together two countries that are opposed to the Russian presence and policies in the region, especially in the Syrian crisis, although they enjoyed good bilateral relations with Russia in several different ways. In addition, Russia is looking at the most significant motive of this cooperation which is Turkey's quest to find those who can provide energy as an alternative to Russia at a time of crisis that may erupt for any reason between Russia and Turkey. Therefore, Russia will pose a real challenge to this cooperation if it presents its strategic interests in the region.

In addition, this cooperation as mentioned in the third chapter will step up the foreign military presence in the region. such as, the British presence in Kuwait, Bahrain and the French presence in the UAE. The foreign presence in the whole region will further complicate the security landscape in the Gulf. This region depends on the nature and role of each presence in the region, as well as the intention and interest of each state in the Gulf states. The future in the region will reveal more about the nature of the security, military and political challenges of the Turkish-Qatari military cooperation.

4.4 Conclusion

To conclude, this growing and escalating military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar will face several challenges for its continuity and its consequences. It is divided into three levels: the internal level, the most important of which is the stability and continuity of the systems of governance and the political situation in both countries need

to transfer the relationship from the highest levels and personal friendship to the comprehensive state institutions; and public opinion in both countries.

At the regional level, the continuation of the Gulf crisis will be a challenge either by abandoning such cooperation as the key to resolving the crisis or that the crisis will go to more violent options leading to an increased form of cooperation in both quantity and quality. Therefore, countries, such as the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Iran and others that do not agree with such cooperation will regard it as a clear threat to them. At the international level, the military presence of Western countries in the region will not be pleased with the presence of Turkey next to them in the Arabian Gulf. It will be in line with its other political positions: from Turkey, the Gulf states and Iran.

In conclusion, all these challenges will be subject to political and security changes in the volatile and unstable region and will be subject to the states' positions on all conflicting regional issues.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

The Turkish-Qatari relations have witnessed remarkable progress in successive stages at various levels including political, commercial, economic and cultural, reaching the levels of strategic and military cooperation. This cooperation was inaugurated by the launching of the Supreme Strategic Committee for Strategic Cooperation between the two countries in 2014, which established a new phase of the relationship between the two countries. Therefore, the two sides witnessed remarkable increases in the level of cooperation at various levels. One of the most important features of this stage was the military agreement signed by both sides which established the Turkish military base in Qatar and deployed Turkish military forces in the territory of Qatar.

This study attempted to understand the motives and reasons for the arrival of the Turkish-Qatari relationship to the strategic military levels. It also examined the effects of this cooperation on the regional security of the Arabian Gulf and the challenges that are expected to face the future of this cooperation.

This dissertation adopted in its theoretical framework the new classical realism theory. The new classical realism theory is concerned with the understanding of the internal variables of the countries, which include the views of the elite and national interests and concerns in shaping the external behaviour of states and their pursuit of achieving their major strategies without being constrained by the external environment and other obstacles. In addition, it includes the role of leadership and ideas in the building of the foreign policy of the states and the implications of external relations, alliances and bilateral cooperation. This theory explained the external factors influencing Turkey, Qatar and their foreign policy. It explained also the reasons for the rapprochement between them, the role of their leadership and the strong ideas that bring them together

in forming their common political vision on many issues, which led them to reach the strategic levels in the relationship and access to military cooperation.

This study adopted a qualitative research method realized in reviewing secondary literature such as books, book chapters, press articles, reports, press articles and government statements. Also, several semi-structured interviews were conducted with well-informed researchers, specialists and scientists through face-to-face interviews, e-mail and telephone. It also used some initial references in this respect. In addition, it adopted the principle of triangulation of information in the research. In order to reach the accurate results of this message, it presented three research objectives and dealt with three research questions. Three chapters were devoted to the analysis of the research data, and these chapters are the key chapters of this study that aimed to understand, explain and answer these questions, and the results are as follows:

5.2 Findings

The second chapter discussed the motives and factors that brought the relationship between Turkey and Qatar to the military strategic level. This chapter examined the motives of the Turkish-Qatari relations moving from the political to the military and to strategic levels. This was related to the extension of historical relations that linked the two countries under the rule of the Ottoman state to the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula until the official relations between the two countries were established following the independence of Qatar in 1972. The development of relations between the two countries improved, especially with the change of the head of government in the two countries: in Turkey, the AK Party rose to power and in Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa became the 8th Amir of Qatar on 25 June 2013 after his father's abdication.

This chapter addresses the total and shared visions and political positions of the two countries on the serious issues of the region, advocates and defends them many times in

international and local forums to meet their political aspirations, to enhance their strategic influence in the region and to achieve the strategic objectives of the two countries. In the relationship, which culminated in the signing of the military agreements between Qatar and Turkey, which is discussed in the third chapter, one of the most important topics that brought together the two countries was a common vision of the two-state solution as an option to resolve the Israeli-Arab conflict as well as supporting the Palestinian state in international forums and rejecting Israeli practices against the Palestinian people, especially in the wars against Gaza. Moreover, they share the recognition of the results of the 2006 elections, which resulted in the victory of Hamas, which was boycotted by the international community on the pretext that Hamas is a terrorist organization. This pretext was rejected by both countries.

As for the Arab world, both countries supported the Islamic parties and considered them as a major component of the Arab politics. They also supported the Arab revolutions which led the Islamists to power in some Arab countries after being overthrown by the old Arab regimes, which upset Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and US. There were many attempts by these countries to contain the Arab Spring and support the political regimes that emerged after the Arab Spring. Both Qatar and Turkey have provided many kinds of support to the Arab revolutions, which triggered some isolation against them. After losing their heads of Islamic and revolutionary parties in the Arab Spring countries, the two countries have been forced to converge in relations, vision, goals and agreed to their position on the Syrian revolution, its transformation from a state of revolution to a state of intractable war. Both countries refused to use force and arms against the Syrian people, which led to the free armed factions of the armed forces that view no solution to the Syrian crisis except with the departure of Bashar Assad as a prerequisite for a political solution in Syria. They had similar views in their opposition to the Iranian intervention in the region, especially Yemen, Syria and Iraq, as well as the

rejection of the Russian military intervention in Syria, which resulted in a Russian-Turkish clash, as Russia is the main exporter of gas to Turkey. Qatar announced its readiness to meet all the energy demands of Turkey, while stopping the supply of Russian gas to Turkey. Qatar has also pledged to compensate Turkey for its losses in the tourism sector which further pushed relations to the strategic military level. In addition, Qatar's refusal to support the military coup that took place in Turkey in 2016 represented the Emir's support of the Turkish President Erdogan and democracy in Turkey and he sent senior Qatari state officials to visit Turkey.

These similarities, partnership and alliances on the political arena were among the most important motives of the transformation of the relationship to a strategic military one, which also showed a marked development in economic cooperation in recent years. Both countries mutually benefit each other economically. Compared to previous years, the volume of trade between the two countries in 2015 reached USD\$ 1.3 billion and the announcement of both parties to increase joint investments, was based on the equation of profit and profit, not profit and loss because they do not invest in the same products. This in turn encouraged them to strengthen economic cooperation, where Qatar exports oil and gas. While, it imports food products, steel, and huge machinery. Despite, the advanced economic status of Qatar, its security was weak compared to neighbouring countries it had to find a true ally to provide protection and rich resources. Qatar had to find a strong alliance in the present setting due to many reasons. Qatar had grand plans to sponsor projects such as the World Cup 2022, despite the relative weakness of its national security. In addition, security vacuum and strategic ambiguity that were created as a result of US occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq led to weaknesses of the social fabric, emergence of terrorist groups, economic recession for many of the regional states, and increased Iranian influence in the region. After the decline of US attention in the region during the Obama era, there was a focus on many powerhouse states such as Saudi Arabia

and Egypt that were embroiled in its own issues. Furthermore, the White House ruling and its positions on extremism and Islamic terrorism and the uncertainty of Trump's policy drove Qatar to choose Turkey as the perfect alliance at this time.

The Gulf crisis that exists between Qatar on the one hand and Saudi Arabia and the UAE on the other, and the state of diplomatic, social, political and military boycott imposed by the boycotting countries of Qatar, was rejected by Turkey which attempted to play the role of mediator for a political solution and it strengthened the role of the Kuwaiti mediation, which was one of the most important political and strategic steps. The rapid developments in the region, which suggested major changes and transformations in the region, affected the internal component of peoples and foreign policies of several countries and the form of alliances in the region.

All this have led to the creation of a state of mutual trust between Turkey and Qatar looking to each other as the most reliable friend in the region, which led to the transition to the strategic level and military cooperation to enhance the similarities of their positions, political participation, protect their economic cooperation and large projects, achieve strategic objectives, security and strategic space in the region.

The third chapter examined the effects of increased military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar on Gulf regional security. This chapter examined the effects of military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar on the security of the Gulf region. The cooperation starts with the signing of a military agreement in 2007, followed by a military training agreement in 2012. Turkey - Qatar relationships have developed in the past few years as a result of their political rapprochement to safeguard their interests and security towards the dangers that surround. Accordingly, the two leaders agreed in 2014 to establish a high strategic committee as a tool to facilitate strategic cooperation between the two parties. This committee witnessed a series of meetings in 2015, 2016 and 2017,

resulting in agreements in various fields and levels. The most important of these was the military agreements signed in 2016, which included cooperation in the defence industry, intelligence work and the exchange of information.

One of the essential items is the setting up of a Turkish military base in the Qatari territories, with the deployment of about 5,000 Turkish soldiers, including training of the reserved military. This included intervening to maintain the security of Qatar if necessary, to allow Turkey to use Qatari military airports, ports and open Qatari airspace. The contracts for the completion of this agreement began in 2016. Under the Gulf crisis, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and its allies have threatened military action against Qatar if it does not meet the demands of these states. Although Turkey had rejected this call to blockade Qatar and tried to play the role of mediator and called to resolve the crisis at the diplomatic table, these efforts had failed. Consequently, leading to accelerating the Turkish parliament to approve the deployment of military forces in Qatar.

This prevented the acceleration of the Gulf crisis to disastrous options such as the military attack on Qatar, which would further ignite the problem and will complicate the political and security scene in the region. As a result, this strengthened Qatar's steadfastness against the diplomatic boycott campaign imposed on it and allowing it to arrange its internal and external with Turkey. This hurt Turkey's relations with the UAE and Saudi Arabia that has already been strained by the crisis. Both Saudi Arabia and the UAE refused the Turkish mediation efforts, demanded the withdrawal of troops from Qatar and the abolition of the agreement to establish a military base. Tension on the relations between Turkey and Qatar on the one hand and between the UAE and Saudi Arabia, on the other, will have repercussions on the security of the Gulf region. The Qatari military cooperation was seen as an opportunity to strengthen the defence position of the Gulf countries against the Iranian influence in the region and an opportunity to improve

the relationship of the Gulf states with Turkey as an effective regional force on the Middle East issues, especially as Gulf countries are increasingly concerned about the US administration's declining interest in the region, especially after the signing of the nuclear deal with Iran.

Furthermore, this cooperation will strengthen the position of Qatar, which is in search of greater independence from Saudi Arabia and UAE will undermine the chances of Saudi Arabia and its allies to impose their policy on Qatar. This proliferation has made other countries, which anticipate Saudi Arabia's invasion of Kuwait, Oman and a conflict with the Turks, to start to negotiate similar agreements for cooperation with Qatar. In addition, it will not only bring more foreign security arrangements and military presence in the region, but also increases Turkey's chances of influence in the region to gain access to important waterways in the shipping lanes and provide it with a rich market to showcase its new military products.

Besides that, it will also play a role in maintaining global energy security. Qatar and the Gulf region are considered the most important energy resources in the world, enhancing their regional, international presence on the outstanding issues and reducing the chances of their swap with Russian gas.

This cooperation between the two countries has in turn brought the Turkish military presence next to the US military presence, where Qatar is hosting the largest US military base in the region at a time when the Turkish-US relations are in a state of tension on many issues. It may have a political impact on the US military presence in the region but not in the field compared to the size of the presence. At a time when the confidence of Qatar and the rest of the Gulf is declining, the US will commit to protect these countries from security risks and military attacks which makes the Turkish presence compete in the area of confidence of the Gulf States. Despite all these developments, the Gulf States still

considers the Iranian influence in the region the real threat for them as they seek to build an integrated security system based on the regional and international ally, which may reflect the Turkish military presence in one of its components. Therefore, Turkey's cooperation with Qatar had seen as a tool to counter Iranian influence. Thus, the impact of this cooperation in the Gulf region, on the one hand, strengthened internal stability among the Gulf countries and prevented the deterioration of the situation after the Gulf crisis. While on the other hand, it has an impact on the further political breaks among these countries. Despite its rivalry to win the confidence of the countries of the region, Turkey has a robust military cavity that can be relied upon.

The fourth chapter investigated and identified the most critical potential challenges facing the continuity of the Turkish-Qatari cooperation. This chapter examined the challenges facing Turkish-Qatari military cooperation that will pose a threat to the future of the deployment of its forces in the region. The cooperation had developed between the two countries and reached the strategic military levels, is the culmination of the tracks of cooperation between the two countries in the past years. Also, it has resulted in the establishment of the military base in Qatar and cooperation in intelligence and other areas of the military. This cooperation gave the two countries many of the benefits of the Turkish military deployment in the region that are rich in energy resources, strengthened its regional influence, giving Qatar more independence and moving forward in a way to maintain security and stability in the region. In this way, it helps the two countries to achieve their regional ambitions.

However, this cooperation came at a time when the region was plagued by security issues, strategic vacuum, and successive crises. Therefore, it must meet the current and future challenges that cooperation. They have examined at three levels, namely the internal level, the regional level and the international level. For the internal level, ensuring

the continuity of the regime of government and the head of power in the two countries will be a challenge to continue the cooperation. Turkey and Qatar are facing challenges and are dangerous at the level of competition. The Turkish opposition is actively competing in the country's elections. While Turkey faces a severe presidential election in 2019, the first-ever since Turkey's regime has changed to the presidential system. For Qatar, the Gulf crisis has shown the intentions of Saudi and UAE in the change of the ruling regime either by a military coup or by politicizing other figures from the ruling family calling for the right to rule, rather than Prince Tamim. Also, the Turkish issue explicitly calls for the lack of importance of this cooperation and that this will cost the state significantly at the political level and will lose its neutral role which is essential for the region.

At the regional level, during the exacerbated of Gulf crisis, Saudi and UAE have explicitly demanded to the dismantling of military cooperation with Turkey and the closure of the military base Turkish from the territory of Qatar. This will push the UAE and Saudi Arabia to give way either to announce or not to announce to the Qatari and Turkish regime to end this cooperation. However, the regional crises and political turmoil in the region will also have a role in challenging this cooperation as it may impose more burdens on the two countries, which are larger than the current level of cooperation. They will have to increase the volume of cooperation, which will be rejected by the regional powers, especially the growing Iranian state. The countries in the region are not happy with the increase in this cooperation will interpret it as a threat if it conflicts with its interests in the region.

At the international level, this chapter has examined the challenge that America will pose to this cooperation. The US, as the superpower in the world, has the most substantial influence in the Gulf area, having defence agreements with all the Gulf States, and having

the most extensive airbase in the Middle East on Qatari land. It will not be pleased to launch any new military cooperation in the region without its close friends, especially as the other side of this cooperation in Turkey. That is witnessing tense relations between them and America, on issues including support for the Kurds in Syria and inviting them to the failed coup in Turkey during 2016 and other issues. On the other hand, despite the stable relationship between the two countries with Russia. It views this military cooperation between Turkey and Qatar as a convergence that challenges its interests in the Middle East. Turkey and Qatar opposed Russian intervention in Syria and demanded the departure of Bashar al-Assad as a condition to get out of the Syrian crisis and reach the transition. Also, to their aspiration to cooperate in the field of energy and export. However, the absence of any statements from the United States, Russia and other international powers that have a military presence in the Gulf region, does not mean that it is not essential to them. On the contrary, they need more time to study analyse, understand this military cooperation between the two countries, the nature of deploying Turkey's role in Qatar, what its real objectives are and who are opposed to its interests in the region.

In conclusion, this is the whole range of challenges at three levels, some of which could theoretically become possible. Some are realistic that could pose a real danger which the two countries can overcome. Some of which is present a real challenge at the current time, some of which are related to the decisions and policies of influential regional and international players in the region.

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