



## Security Council

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### **Identical letters date 6 January 2021 from the Permanent Representative of Bahrain to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council**

On instructions from my Government, and with reference to the identical letters dated 31 December 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar addressed to the President of the Security Council and the Secretary-General (S/2020/1325) regarding the claim made by Qatar that Bahraini Navy vessels had penetrated the territorial waters of Qatar, I should like to state the following.

Bahrain, in keeping with its unreserved commitment to international law, the Charter of the United Nations, international customs and the principle of good-neighbourliness, rejects those claims because they are completely untrue. Bahrain exercises sovereignty over its territorial waters in accordance with international law and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, without prejudice to or infringing on the rights of neighbouring States.

In addition, Bahrain would like to draw your attention to the letter of protest that it lodged with the Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council on 10 December 2020. In that letter, Bahrain documents an incident that occurred on 25 November 2020 in which Qatari Navy vessels illegally stopped Bahraini vessels that were on a training mission in the territorial sea of Bahrain. The Qatari vessels did not fly any flag or bear any emblems, contrary to what is required by international norms, and pointed their weapons towards the Bahraini vessels, in clear violation of international law and Gulf Cooperation Council agreements, such as the security cooperation agreement that Gulf Cooperation Council countries signed in 2012 and the Gulf Cooperation Council joint defence agreement signed in 2000.

Contrary to what Qatar has claimed, the Bahraini vessels did not penetrate Qatari territorial waters. Instead, the armed Qatari vessels used force to stop them at coordinates N 26°15'56.4", E 51°00'21.0" in Bahraini territorial waters, as defined by Act No. 8 (1993) concerning the territorial sea of Bahrain and the adjacent area.

Bahrain believes that the Gulf Cooperation Council always has a significant role to play in respect of determining the common destiny of member States. Accordingly, Bahrain informed the Gulf Cooperation Council on 25 November 2020 of the illegal conduct of the State of Qatar, in keeping with its commitment to settling disputes between member States within the institutional framework of the Gulf Cooperation Council, as agreed upon by its States members, and in accordance with article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations, which provides that “[t]he parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution by negotiation, enquiry, mediation,



conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangements, or other peaceful means of their own choice”.

The Gulf Cooperation Council continues to exercise its role in resolving differences between member States and reconciling different points of view. Moreover, it should be noted that all Gulf Cooperation Council member States, including Qatar, have engaged in military cooperation with each other since the Gulf Cooperation Council was founded in 1981, that Qatar is invited to attend all meetings and participate in all military exercises, and that the Gulf Cooperation Council takes all decisions unanimously. Qatar should have pursued that path in order resolve any problems with member States. Unfortunately, it now seems that it has decided to pursue a policy of unilateral escalation within the international community by making completely unfounded allegations.

For years, Bahrain has been monitoring the attempts of the Qatari authorities to undermine its sovereignty, security and territorial integrity. Qatar has violated the territorial waters of Bahrain, in disregard of international law, and endangered the lives of Bahraini sailors by attacking them and restricting their freedom. Indeed, some Bahraini sailors lost their lives in at least one incident. Between 2010 and 2020, Qatar illegally stopped some 650 Bahraini vessels and 2,153 Bahraini fishermen.

The actions of Qatar violate the Charter, under which States, in their international relations, must refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. The actions of Qatar also violate the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, run counter to the principle of good-neighbourliness and threaten regional security and peace.

Bahrain calls upon Qatar to comply with international law and to cease making irresponsible allegations and claims that are not credible and are contrary to the principle of good-neighbourliness enshrined in international conventions, thereby threatening international peace and security.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Jamal Fares **Alrowaiei**  
Permanent Representative

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