

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2022

Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Amir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani of Qatar
January 31, 2022

Ukraine/Russia

President Biden. Well I—let me start by saying a few words—before I talk about our guest—about Russia and Ukraine. I've—I had a productive talk last week with President Zelenskyy. And we continue to engage in nonstop diplomacy and to deescalate tensions and attempt like the devil to improve security for our allies and partners and for all of Europe for that matter.

And today, in the United Nations, we've laid out the full nature of Russia's threat to Ukraine's sovereignty and the territorial integrity of Ukraine, as well as the core tenants of a rule-based international order. And we continue to urge diplomacy as the best way forward. But with Russia continuing its buildup of its forces around Ukraine, we are ready no matter what happens.

United Arab Emirates

I also want to note that the U.A.E. defeated a ballistic missile attack launched by the Houthis—a separate issue—from Yemen yesterday. And we've been in daily contact with the U.A.E. to address those threats.

And I've directed Secretary Austin to do everything he can to communicate the support of the United States for the U.A.E., Saudi Arabia, and throughout the Gulf region. America will have the backs of our friends in the region.

Qatar-U.S. Relations

Today—but I'm honored to be here with a good friend, who has been wonderful—relationship since I've been President and before. The Sheikh is—I want to welcome you to the White House.

Amir Tamim. Thank you.

President Biden. Fifty years of partnership. You're not that old, but 50 years of partnership. And this past year, our partnership with Qatar was—has been central to many of our most vital interests: relocating tens of thousands of Afghans; maintaining stability in Gaza and providing lifesaving assistance to the Palestinians; keeping pressure on ISIS and deterring threats across the Middle East; and a lot more.

And the Amir and I have a lot on our agenda today, and we want to talk about the security in the Gulf and in the broader Middle East, ensuring the stability of global energy supplies, continuing our work together to support the people of Afghanistan, and strengthening commercial and investment cooperation between our two countries.

And speaking of that, on that front, I want to applaud the new deal that Qatar Airways Group signed with Boeing for 20—a \$20 billion deal, one of the largest deals that Boeing aircraft has ever had. And it will support tens of thousands of good-paying U.S. jobs here in America.

Qatar is a good friend and a reliable and capable partner. And I'm notifying Congress that I will designate Qatar as a "major non-NATO ally" to reflect the importance—the importance—of our relationship. I think it's long overdue.

And I want to thank you again, Your Highness, for being here and for making this trip—for you, for your commitment to our friendship and between our nations. And I'm looking forward to our discussion today.

Amir Tamim. Well, thank you very much, Mr. President. Good afternoon to everyone. I'm very happy to be here, Mr. President. Two-thousand-twenty-two is a very important year. It marks the 50th anniversary of our diplomatic relationship between Qatar and the United States of America. It's a very strong relationship, and we're very proud about it. We are very proud of what we have achieved.

Of course, this afternoon I'm going to be talking with the President about different topics, mainly about the security of our region. I think we demonstrated that—how solid and how strong we can work together and cooperate—on what we did in Afghanistan. We are very proud that we managed to evacuate tens of thousands of people in—of Afghanistan.

Of course, we have other issues as well that we're going to talk about: the equal rights of the Palestinian people and other issues in the region.

So, you know, we're very happy and proud of this great relationship. And we're going to continue working together to find ways and means to bring peace in our region.

So thank you very much for, you know, seeing me today, Mr. President. And as you mentioned, that we'll be talking about several topics.

President Biden. Welcome.

Amir Tamim. Thank you, sir.

President Biden. Welcome.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:08 p.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Volodymyr Zelenskiy of Ukraine.

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