After three months, the unresolved crisis surrounding Qatar and its blockade by the neighboring Gulf Countries continues: Qatar is being hushed up and an important game of power in the Middle East is taking place relatively quietly.

It all took place when Qatar denounced, back on the 5th of June, the hidden commercial relations between Saudi Arabia and Israel, together with the collaboration of an Emirati diplomat in the White House, who, according to the leaks, had connections with the Jewish American lobby. Initially quiet, the filtrations came to be more compromising and the tension escalated quickly, causing a coalition of 7 Arab countries to cut diplomatic ties with Doha. However, Qatar denied those claims and argued that Qatar News Agency was hacked by UAE-backed perpetrators who wanted to deligitimize Qatar. What was the main accusation of the Gulf countries? Qatar’s alleged funding of terrorism and close relationship with Iran.

While it’s true that Qatar and Iran have a good relationship -good enough to share a natural gas base- what bothers the other Gulf countries is that Qatar doesn’t conceive Iran as a threat, thus not following the line of opinion and ideology of its neighboring countries. The fact that the Gulf countries are heavily involved in the commerce with weapons and have an important role in the region’s politics and wars makes it imperative to keep the quiet and maintain a good public profile. If other countries such as Saudi Arabia are known for its conservative ideology and human rights’ violations (such as the arrest of IUM member Salman Al-Audah), why is Qatar to blame for a “shared feature”? Was Qatar punished for being “rebellious” for coming closer to Iran?

This year’s crisis wasn’t the first one that affected the GCC, but this time new questions arise: for how long will it last, how will it affect the region and what may have been the hidden reasons for Qatar to pay such a heavy price. The constant intent of Kuwait and the same Qatar to engage in dialogues in a civilized way to solve this conflict, to no avail, makes one wonder why the world figures, generally holding friendly relations with Qatar, are being so hard with it now.

Qatar used to be protected by the US when conflict shook the area – often carrying out actions that America wouldn’t want to be attributed to itself - as a way of collaborating for each other’s interests. Even nowadays, Qatar hosts Al-Udeid Air Military Base, belonging to the US Army, which shows the value of the relationship between both countries and serves as a bulwork for the United States against Iran. But if now Qatar retakes the relation with Iran against the neighboring Gulf countries, what will be the point of the military base, and how is the US supposed to react? That was, allegedly, one of the issues discussed by the Emirati diplomat in the White House, according to Qatari leaks.

We may want to go back a bit in time to check the heated situation with perspective: when the Saudi Shia cleric Nimr Al-Nimr was executed by Saudi Arabia and Iranians, as an answer, attacked Saudi diplomatic facilities, Qatar also recalled its ambassador from Teheran in solidarity with its Saudi neighbor. But since the blockade began, Qatar resumed diplomatic ties with Iran and the relationship between both countries seems to be stronger than ever. One can argue that, since Qatar is home to a non-rebellious Shia minority, its relationship with Iran should be at least respectful. Nonetheless, that doesn’t seem to be enough of a reason for Iran and Qatar to come politically so close to each other, especially after Turkey had chosen to support Qatar and collaborate with Iran since the blockade began.

Needless to say, the blockade, affecting all the land borders, has affected Qatar’s economy. If it wouldn’t have been for Iranian and Turkish help, probably Qatar would have had it difficult to manage these last three months, being dependent on Saudi and other Gulf countries in matters of food and other products. If Iran has indeed the intention to change the power-holders in the Middle East, keeping Qatar in a good condition in times of crisis does assure a long-time, practical ally, now that it counts with the support of Turkey. That would introduce another entity in the Gulf against its Saudi enemy, and would keep a sovereign position for Qatar by helping it not to fall to the conditions of GCC countries. The pro-dialogue, supportive approach of Iran lately regarding outer politics has given it the opportunity to tell Arabs that it’s Saudi Arabia, and not Iran, the country that threatens Middle Eastern countries’ sovereignty. Iran is showing itself as a peaceful neighbor who is committed to the security and prosperity of the Gulf states, sharing a common interest. This way, gaining Sunni allies in the Middle East may be more likely.

Truth is, that the more the GCC countries strangle Qatar, the closer it will come to Iran, and not the opposite. The strictness of Saudi King Salman has given him problems in his own country and now, for an issue that could be solved *intra muros*, the whole security policy of the Middle East (and even the traditional interest blocks) may change. Trump’s interest was to bring his Middle Eastern allies closer to counter Iran’s influence in the area, but the fact that there’s a dispute between the allies and that Iran seems to only get stronger may bring the situation to another level, affecting both American and Russian interest in the area. We should wonder, then, whether this is about Qatar’s rebellion or about moving cards beyond that.