

CHAPTER IV

CONSIDERATIONS OF SAUDI ARABIA TO TERMINATE DIPLOMATIC RELATION WITH QATAR

In Chapter II has outlined the bilateral relations that have been established between Saudi Arabia and Qatar. Relations that began in the history of diplomatic cooperation then spread to the economic and security fields. Although Saudi Arabia and Qatar have many differences of opinion in various problems, but it does not become a barrier for them to establish cooperation. Then in Chapter III, it was explained that the relations between Saudi Arabia and Qatar deteriorated. An escalation of conflict between the two countries led to the termination of Saudi Arabia's diplomatic relations with Qatar in 2017 and mentioned the impact caused by the termination of diplomatic relations.

In this chapter researcher will describe the reasons underlying Saudi Arabia's diplomatic relations with Qatar. The discussion will be divided into three sub-chapters. The author explains about politics in Saudi Arabia, next Saudi Arabia thinks that Qatar's economy is a threat and the last explains about Saudi Arabia suspects Qatar supports the Radical Movement.

4.1 Domestic Politics in Saudi Arabia

Decision makers determine national interests, set strategies and make policies or evaluate policies that have been implemented. Before explaining Saudi Arabia's domestic politics, it is better to discuss in advance about which parts of domestic politics will be discussed. Coplin focused his analysis on the relationship between foreign political decision makers and domestic actors who sought to influence their foreign policy behavior. Coplin gave the term policy influencers for those who influence policy or decision makers.

Therefore, in discussing domestic politics Saudi Arabia will focus on discussing its policy influencers.

Saudi Arabia is a country that applies the monarchy system. The system of monarchy applied in Saudi Arabia is not an absolute monarchy where the authorities are given unlimited authority and power. The Saudi Arabian monarchy is also not an absolute monarchy because the authority of the ruler is not limited by the constitution (Alsultan, 2013).

The system of monarchy applied in Saudi Arabia is a dynastic monarchy system. Dynasty monarchy is a term introduced by Herb in his famous book: *All in the Family: Absolutism, Revolution, and Democracy in the Middle Eastern Monarchies* (1999). There is an Herb statement in his book which can be concluded that the power of the King of Saudi Arabia is not absolute. The royal family has a big influence in determining the policies given by the King both domestically and out (Alsultan, 2013).

The Saudi Arabian royal family is an actor who chooses candidates who qualify as kings. The royal family also has the power to replace the king, if the King endangers the dignity or future of the dynasty or if he acts excessively which might endanger the country (Alsultan, 2013, pp. 237-238). Important decisions in the dynastic monarchy were always built on consensus among senior members of the royal family. Before making such a decision, the king must discuss it with senior dynasty members and he must listen to all available inputs (Kjetil Selvik and Stig Stenslie, 2011, p. 163).

The royal family authority was obtained from a royal decree issued by King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz in 2006. He announced the formation of the Allegiance Institution. The body consists of thirty members of the royal family, each representing a branch of the son of King Abdulaziz bin Abdurrahman. Articles 11 and 12 of the Allegiance Institution stipulate that members of the Institution have full authority to nominate and elect the Crown Prince, the next King of Saudi Arabia. In addition, in article 15 the Allegiance Institution has the power to replace the King and / or Crown Prince if they

find that they are permanently unable to lead the kingdom because of improper health conditions (Henderson, 2009, pp. 30-33).

With this monarchy system, Saudi Arabia's foreign policy making is influenced by circles within the royal family. As said by Nizar Bin ObaidMadani, Saudi Minister of State for Foreign:

The King always consults with the Crown Prince, the deputy Crown Prince and other senior members of the royal family when performing internal and external policies. The King also consults various bodies before making decision. The Ministry of the foreign affairs, Defence Ministry, Ministry of internal affairs, the National Security Council the Saudi Intelligence and Majlis Ash Shura (the Saudi Parliament) all play an important role in providing the King and his deputies with the necessary studies, advice and suggestions. In addition, the King has a privet consultants, wither they are religious scholars, economists, politicians, militaries and other experts. Saudi Arabia has a unique system which allow the government to study and analyzes all suggestions, views and advise, and when the government make its decision, the whole country work together as one unite to achieve its goals. (Madani, 2009).

From Madani's statement above, we can see that in making foreign policy for Saudi Arabia, the king is not a single actor. The royal family is the dominant actor who influences the king in making decisions. With the existence of a system like this, Saudi Arabia's foreign policy is expected not to endanger the good name of the royal family.

The problem underlying the royal family involved in terminating diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Qatar is the displeasure of Saudi Arabia with Iran, where Qatar cooperates well with Iran. The displeasure of royal members towards Iran was also due to the spirit of the revolution spread by Iran. The spirit of this revolution affected the minority

Shiite population in Saudi Arabia. The spirit of the Iranian revolution gave rise to activist movements and demonstrations in the Southern Province of Saudi Arabia where the majority of the population is Shia. Shiite minorities in the area have repeatedly demonstrated that voiced discrimination experienced by the Shiite minority in Saudi Arabia (TV, Anti-govt. protests hit S Arabia cities, 2011).

Moreover, Riyadh accused Doha of being involved in an attempt to assassinate King Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. Osama bin Mohammed Abdullah Al Shuaibi as Ambassador to Indonesia reported by CNN Indonesia revealed that Qatar had been involved in efforts to assassinate King Abdullah about 10 years ago. Qatar is also involved in a number of terrorism projects with Muammar Gaddafi in Libya (Suastha, Saudi Tuding Qatar Terlibat Upaya Pembunuhan Raja Abdullah, 2018).

Osama said the Saudis found at least 200 hours of recorded conversations between Qatari officials, ex-Libyan leader Gaddafi, and a number of other individuals who were considered terrorists. Fill in the conversation, he explained, discussing the plan to assassinate King Abdullah. The murder plan failed. Osama said the Saudis had also succeeded in arresting several people involved in the conversation. However, instead of holding back, Osama said King Abdullah decided to forgive the people and release them.(Suastha, Dubes Saudi Buka-bukaan soal Reformasi, Zaini dan Israel, 2018).

Al Arabiya said, around mid-2017 the documents revealed by the Saudis called Gaddafi and the father of the Qatari Emir Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, had a discussion to plan the assassination of King Abdullah. This plan of assassination began with Gaddafi's desire to take revenge on the Saudis for being offended. Around 2003, amid the Arab League Summit in Egypt, Gaddafi issued a statement attacking the Saudis and King Fahd. King Abdullah, who was still a crown prince, responded to Gaddafi's statement violently by insinuating that he could

become a Libyan leader only because of Western aid (Suastha, Saudi Tuding Qatar Terlibat Upaya Pembunuhan Raja Abdullah, 2018).

Gaddafi was furious with King Abdullah's statement at the time and vowed to repay him. Since then, Gaddafi's idea has emerged to kill King Abdullah. Gaddafi had tried to contact a number of Saudi "dissidents" abroad, especially those living in London, England, to ask for help. Because it was unsuccessful, Gaddafi was then called to contact the Emir of Qatar at that time Hamad bin Khalifa to work together to plan the murder. According to Saudi documents, Hamad bin Khalifa expressed his willingness to help Gaddafi reciprocate the behavior of Prince Abdullah (Suastha, Saudi Tuding Qatar Terlibat Upaya Pembunuhan Raja Abdullah, 2018).

A number of Qatari officials refused the request for fear of the consequences if the effort failed. That angered Gaddafi. However, Hamad bin Khalifa is said to have insisted on helping Gaddafi. Hamad bin Khalifa even reportedly flew directly to Libya and met Gaddafi to convince him that Qatar was ready to help what Gaddafi wanted. This also became one of the reasons for terminating diplomatic relations (Suastha, Saudi Tuding Qatar Terlibat Upaya Pembunuhan Raja Abdullah, 2018).

This decision was certainly not King Salman's personal will, but this decision was a mature consideration which had been deliberated with the royal family and gained support so that the King took the policy.

4.2 Saudi Arabia perceived Qatar's economy is a threat

a. Economic Development of the State of Qatar

Qatar's economic growth began with the transformation of Qatar's political economy in 1995 during Emir Hamad's leadership. During his leadership, Emir made various collaborations to improve Qatar's economy. Emir Hamad has stepped up cooperation between the two Iranian and Israeli countries in processing natural gas owned by Qatar.

This situation put Qatar in a fairly unusual and difficult position in relations between Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

In the early 1990s it became the initial stage of the state of Qatar to develop gas sourced in the north field. The development was initially only to meet the needs of his own country. However, Qatar's ownership of vast resources has made this country exploit to export these resources to several countries. Gulf countries became the initial plan for Qatar to supply these sources through a pipeline. Qatar needs more than a decade to be able to control what is the export barrier of Liquefied natural gas (LNG). Until the late 1990s, the country saw an opportunity to expand the market by transforming lean gas into gas fuel to liquid (GTL) (Ibrahim and Frank Harrigan, 2011)

Then, for the first time in 1997 Qatar managed to deliver LNG products to Japan. This happened thanks to the commitment of leadership and perseverance, the creation of vital infrastructure, the opening of reliable gas supplies in the Middle East, and successful partner relations with international oil companies so as to enable Qatar to sell its liquefied natural gas (Ibrahim and Frank Harrigan, 2012).

In 2003 Qatar began building the first GTL factory in the world; the goal of the state of Qatar was to market the product. And sure enough, in 2007 the plant began operating, which was later produced in 2011. At that time Qatar became the largest LNG and GTL exporter in the world, where the results contributed significantly to the fiscal income of the country of Qatar. Qatar is able to occupy the highest ranking country in terms of per capita income. This growth has occurred since 2000, where Qatar's economy grew faster than before (Ibrahim and Frank Harrigan, 2012).

Besides that Qatar is not only fixated on the oil resources they have, Qatar also thinks about their future generations. Therefore the Qatar government provides health and education service funding for its citizens to build quality human resources. Not only that, another business that is owned by this country is the ownership of Qatar Airways airline which began in 1994. In addition, in 1996 the country had a network of Al-Jazeera television stations which until now continue to grow globally. In the field of technology also did not miss, in 2004 the country established the Qatar Science Technology Park, the goal of which was made for technological innovation and commercialization. In the same year, in 2004, this country also founded ICT Qatar; it was formed because of its awareness of the importance of technology and communication to lead a prosperous future. Then in 2005 Qatar established the Qatar Financial Center Authority, this was a government program to promote the development of the financial services industry. But regardless of the success of the country of Qatar from 2000 to 2007 it brought pressure on the country itself. Where Qataris are a minority in their own country and face challenges in preserving the traditions and values they value. The increasing population that is growing rapidly has an impact on natural resources and their environment. This made it difficult for the state sector of Qatar to deal with widespread new demands. In fact, for Qatar developing institutions and administrative capacity of a modern country is much more difficult, because it will take a long time compared to building a competitive hydrocarbon industry at international level. So in 2008 the country held a comprehensive public sector reform program to rationalize the government and improve public services (Ibrahim and Frank Harrigan, 2011).

Previously, in 2007 the Qatar government also formed the General Secretariat for Development Planning (GSDP). This formation is the goal of the state of Qatar to present ideas or ideas and strategic leadership related to national development issues. In addition, the establishment of the General Secretariat for Development Planning (GSDP) is nothing but to design what this country will look like and this is part of the vision of Qatar in 2030. In this vision it is explained that the need for constitutional commitment to a just and safe society. The community is required to preserve the inheritance of wealth and leave an unsustainable legacy for future generations. The intention in this continuation is that it is related to the economic, social, human and broad environment, and the community is required to have a sense of interdependence with each other. This strategy was later launched by Qatar in 2011 as a 2011-2016 national development strategy (Ibrahim and Frank Harrigan, 2011).

In 2016 the decline in world oil prices caused by excess supply had an impact on Qatar's economic growth. Where the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is slow, which ranges from 2.2% compared to the previous year, which was around 3.6% in 2015. However, because this country does not only rely on their produce, the country's economic growth continues to grow, which is derived from non-hydrocarbon yields of 5.6%. The non-hydrocarbon sector is related to construction supported by infrastructure projects, increasing population which leads to the creation of demand for financial, government and real estate services (Bank, 2017).

After the termination of diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries in 2017, the economy of Saudi Arabia is disrupted. However, the Qatari Government, which is quite capable of

controlling economic problems in its country, can restore Qatar's economy, which was once a crisis stabilized as before the termination of diplomatic relations occurred.

The things that have been explained above about Qatar's economic growth which is considered a significant cause of Saudi Arabia as the richest country in its era feel threatened by the current economy of Qatar. The current economic growth experienced by Qatar as a trigger for the breakup of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Qatar is also a form of concern experienced by Gulf countries, seeing that Qatar is a threat that has strategic potential and Qatar indirectly as a country whose territory is small compared to the Gulf State others, but Qatar has appeal in terms of geography, geology and demography. Qatar's economic independence is what makes Qatar successful in prospering the State and citizens. The strategic potential in question is in terms of income, education and natural resources it has. This is the result of Qatar's innovation which is now considered to have rapid development. Berly explained that Qatar does not only rely on their natural resources, but from the aviation and tourism sectors that they have built and are now leading sectors. This style of Qatar is precisely the value that is a threat to Saudi Arabia and a number of Gulf countries (Rahayu, 2017).

The different views that occurred between the two countries became another trigger for termination of diplomatic relations. Differences in views occurred when Qatar did not agree to the invasion of the United States to Iraq in 2003. In addition, another cause was the desire of Qatar as a super power country in the Middle East. Furthermore, there is the power of Qatar to support the occurrence of internal political changes that result in differences when compared to other Gulf

countries. The final cause is the openness of Qatar making it the State of Qatar easily accepted by European countries compared to other Gulf countries. The cause or trigger that has been described above is considered a threat to the Middle East by Saudi Arabia due to economic growth and independence of Qatar which will reduce dependence on other Gulf countries, therefore the termination of diplomatic relations is done to hamper the economic growth of the State of Qatar.

The implication of the Qatar's economy rises towards the Saudi Arabia's economy. The economy of Saudi Arabia has been dependent on oil revenues and loans. The income earned by Saudi from this oil has declined in recent years due to the drop in world oil prices and this is more due to Riyadh's own policies. In fact, the five main causes that eroded Saudi oil revenues, namely high military budgets, the cost of war, support for terrorists and increased economic instability due to the arrest of princes, have resulted in Saudi economic indicators showing a decline. Economic indicators show the Saudi economy is having problems after enjoying significant growth when world oil prices skyrocketed more than 120 dollars per barrel between 2010 and 2011. How come, in 2011, Saudi economic growth broke through 10 percent. But now it dropped to only 1.2 percent. Gross domestic product growth in 2011 was 12.2 percent. But then it fell to 0.6 percent in 2016. Saudi fiscal balance slipped from 11.2 percent in 2011 to minus 13 percent in 2016. In other words, the Saudi State Budget from 2011 to 2016 fell by 24 percent. One of the most important effects of the decline in economic growth in Saudi Arabia is the increasing economic pressure on the people of the Arab country. In fact, based on the IMF report, Saudi Arabia's inflation in 2016 broke through 4 percent. The main trigger for inflation is the increase in the price of fuel oil and water set by the Riyadh government. According to the IMF report, the growth of Gross Domestic Product, Saudi GDP in 2018 reached around 19 percent. Some reports also reported

that Saudi had stopped selling Aramco shares for security and economic reasons. Whereas some people consider the sale of Aramco shares to be an important part of Saudi's 2030 vision and is one of Mohammed bin Salman's big ambitions.

In fact, the five main causes that eroded Saudi oil revenues, namely high military budgets, the cost of war, support for terrorists and increased economic instability due to the arrest of princes, have resulted in Saudi economic indicators showing a decline. Regardless of what factors triggered the main fall in Saudi economic growth, policies during the last year of the Al Saud regime, including increased fuel and water prices, and Prince Sultan bin Salman's latest statement contradicted the rentier state economic system adopted by Saudi Arabia. In the system of rentier countries, government revenues are generated from the sale of natural resources, including oil. In addition, the people do not pay high taxes to the state.

Countries that do not implement the State Rentier have adequate infrastructure for interaction between the government and the people, because people have high civil and political rights. Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia does not have the infrastructure, and the people of this country do not have enough political and civil rights. Therefore, the Al Saud regime cannot get out of the Rentier State system which has been implemented for years. The new policy of the Riyadh government to carry out economic reforms will complicate the lives of the people of Saudi Arabia, and will slowly or quickly have a big impact backfiring on Al Saud's own regime.

4.3 Saudi Arabia suspicion against Qatar's supports the radical movement

In 2014, the first time Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries severed diplomatic relations with Qatar due to the same problem, Saudi Arabia supported a radical movement by funding their weapons.

Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister, Adel Al-Jubeir, as reported by Reuters on Wednesday (06/07/2017), mentions

(Christiastuti, Saudi: Qatar Harus Berhenti Dukung Hamas dan Ikhwanul Muslimin, 2017):

"Qatar knows exactly what needs to be done to restore relations with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries. We want to see Qatar implement the promises it made in the past few years, related to its support for extremist groups, related to hostile media and interfering with the affairs of other countries, No one wants to hurt Qatar. Qatar must choose whether they will continue to move in one direction or the other."

It was concluded that Saudi Arabia, through the foreign minister, wanted to make it clear if what Qatar had done so far in supporting the radical movement was a wrong step and had to be immediately dismissed. As well as Qatar must keep the promises that has been made between Qatar and Saudi Arabia in 2014.

The documents containing the agreement were first published exclusively by CNN on Monday (10/7) local time. CNN called it obtained from a source in the Gulf Arab region that has access to the document. The same document was later released to social media by Saudi officials. The 2013 and 2014 agreement documents show indications of long-standing tensions between Gulf member states (Christiastuti, Qatar dan Arab Saudi Cs Pernah Tandatangani Perjanjian Rahasia, 2017).

The first handwritten document and dated November 23, 2013 signed by the King of Saudi Arabia, the Emir of Qatar and the Emir of Kuwait. The document outlines a commitment to avoid any interventions in other countries' internal affairs, including prohibiting financial and political support for 'deviant' groups. The agreement referred to as the 'Riyadh Agreement' specifically calls for a ban on supporting the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and opposition groups in Yemen that threaten the region. In the first document, the countries that signed it also vowed not to support the 'media antagonist', which is believed to refer to Qatar-based Al

Jazeera. Al Jazeera has been accused of supporting many opposition groups in the Gulf region, including in Egypt and Bahrain (Christiastuti, Qatar dan Arab Saudi Cs Pernah Tandatangani Perjanjian Rahasia, 2017).

The second document, which was given a 'top secret' header and dated November 16, 2014, was signed by the first three countries plus the King of Bahrain, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates. The second document specifically states the commitment of the signatories to support Egypt's stability, including preventing Al Jazeera from being a platform for groups or leaders who oppose Egyptian authority. An additional document attached to the 2013 document was signed by the Gulf Ministers of Foreign Affairs who discussed the implementation of the points of the agreement. The agreement document does not mention Qatar directly, because it applies to all member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) that signed it. GCC consists of 6 countries, namely Saudi, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar and United Arab Emirates (Christiastuti, Qatar dan Arab Saudi Cs Pernah Tandatangani Perjanjian Rahasia, 2017).

In a joint statement released after the document was published by CNN, the Saudis, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates and Egypt called the agreement documents aimed at resolving disputes between Qatar and neighboring countries. On the other hand, Saudi Bahrain, United Arab Emirates and Egypt called the document increasingly showing Qatar's failure in carrying out its commitments (Christiastuti, Qatar dan Arab Saudi Cs Pernah Tandatangani Perjanjian Rahasia, 2017).

Gulf countries accuse Qatar of supporting al Qaeda and ISIS in the Middle East, from Syria to the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt. Experts, as quoted by the Associated Press, said Qatar's financial system indirectly funded militant groups. Actually the same accusation was also directed at Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries at the beginning of the Syrian uprising in 2011. But when ISIS emerged in 2014, they withdrew and amending financial laws. Hassan Hassan, a Syrian expert at

the Tahrir Institute for Middle East Policy, said Qatar had never supported ISIS or Al-Qaeda directly. But Qatar supports Ahrar al-Sham, whose founder is affiliated with al-Qaeda (Armandhanu, 2017).

Then, Qatar also supports the Muslim brotherhood. The Muslim Brotherhood is a group that is praised and criticized in the Middle East. Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt consider it a terrorist and a security threat, while in Jordan and Tunisia this group is free to develop. The Muslim Brotherhood government came to power in Egypt after the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak in 2011. At that time, Qatar contributed up to billions of dollars in funds to the government of Mohamed Morsi under the Muslim Brotherhood bureau. Morsi was later overthrown by the military in 2013. The Qatari government says their assistance is not intended for the Muslim Brotherhood, but for the Egyptian government as a whole. Besides being accused of supporting the Muslim Brotherhood's funds, Qatar is also called a hiding place and gives citizenship to Muslim Brotherhood figures that fled Egypt (Armandhanu, 2017).

Then, Qatar also supports Hamas. Hamas is the party that controls the Gaza Strip, Palestine. This group is considered a terrorist by Israel and its allies in the West. Three wars have broken out between Israel and Hamas in Gaza. Saudi Arabia urged Qatar to cut ties with Hamas for security stability in the region. Qatar is one of the biggest contributors in Gaza, an area blocked by Israel. Construction of roads, housing and hospitals in Gaza was built with millions of dollars from Qatar. The Qatari government says their assistance is purely for humanitarian purposes and communication with Hamas only in the context of support for peace negotiations mediated by the international community (Armandhanu, 2017).

Saudi Arabia and Bahrain accuse Qatar of supporting Shia militants in several conflict countries backed by Iran. One of them is Houthi militants in Yemen. Though Qatar is a member of the Saudi air combat coalition to eradicate the

Houthis in Yemen. Experts say Saudi allegations have no strong evidence. It is suspected that Saudi and Qatar disputes over pro-Iran issues regarding the disagreement between the two countries over the transfer of power in Yemen in 2012. At that time, the Saudi accused Qatar of cooperating with Houthis who were supported by Iran to sabotage Yemen's peace talks. Qatar's Ambassador to the United States, Meshal bin Hamad Al Thani acknowledged that his country had relations with Iran, including the cooperation of underwater natural gas, but they had the same attitude as the Gulf countries in the case of the Yemeni conflict (Armandhanu, 2017).

Not only have those mentioned above also reported if Qatar supports Hizbullah (Studies A. J., 2018). Hizbullah is a terrorist organization set by the Arab League when holding a meeting in Egypt. The meeting was carried out on Saudi Arabia's plan. Determination of Hezbollah as a terrorist organization is based on the views of Saudi Arabia and a number of members of countries belonging to the Arab League related to ballistic missile attacks that occurred on November 4, 2017 at Riyadh International Airport conducted by Hezbollah and Iran (Michaela, 2017).

Apart from the circulation of news related to Qatar's support for extremist and Iranian groups, the termination of Saudi Arabia's diplomatic relations with Qatar in 2017 was caused by Qatar's support for Iran regarding uranium enrichment in Iran. The act was criticized by Arab countries because this is a form of Iran's ambition towards its nuclear program which could endanger security in the Arab region. The closeness of Qatar to Iran actually aroused emotion for Saudi Arabia, giving rise to a diplomatic crisis in Saudi Arabia to Qatar. This statement was explained by the chair of Research and Publications from the Center for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at the University of Indonesia, Yon Machmudi (Suastha, Krisis Diplomati Qatar Bentuk Obsesi Saudi Kalahkan Iran, 2017).

4.4 The closeness of Qatar with Iran

Qatar has good relations with Iran; both countries are members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Russia, Qatar and Iran are able to control around 50% of the world's oil reserves (Fulton, 2010). The three countries agreed to improve economic relations between the three countries, especially within OPEC. Both countries have the Pars / North Dome South Gas-Condensate field, the largest gas field in the world, having a major influence on Iran-Qatar relations. On January 11, 2009, representatives from three countries (Qatar, Iran and Russia) met in Tehran, approving their gas reserves (TV, Iran to swap gas with Russia, Qatar, 2009). The largest natural gas field in the world, called North Field (Qatar) and South Pars (Iran) is located between the boundaries of Qatar and Iran. The gas field covers 97,000 square kilometers with the majority (around two thirds) spread over in Qatari waters.

In December 2010, military cooperation between Qatar and Iran was an officer in the Iranian Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) meeting with the commander of the Qatar army, stating that

"The IRGC and the Qatar navy can have close cooperation in the fields of intelligence, security and training."

Hamad bin Ali Al Attiyah, Qatar's Defense Minister, met with Iranian naval forces and stated that Qatar was ready to carry out military exercises along with Iran (Fulton, 2010).

In January 2014, Qatar provided Iranian assistance by taking gas. Qatar gave Iran to help extract its side from South Spars, the largest gas field in the world. This will not only maximize Iranian prizes but also from Qatar. Iran requested direct assistance from Qatar, and they responded voluntarily, fearing careless work by Iranian companies would damage gas fields and affect Qatar's income as well.

During Qatar's diplomatic crisis, Iran provided support in diplomatic and economic form to Qatar (Marzooq, 2017). On June 5, the day the crisis erupted; Iran asked Arab countries to resolve their dispute through dialogue (Hafezi, 2017). After Saudi Arabia and its Persian Gulf allies economically blocked Qatar, Iran sent food supplies, totaling 1,100 tons of fruit and vegetables and 66 tons of beef, to Qatar every day (Firouz, 2017). On June 25, Iranian President Rouhani condemned the "siege" in Qatar, and in a telephone call with Sheikh Tamim, said that Tehran would stand by the Qatari government and Sheikh Tamim also noted that Iranian airspace was open for Qatari aircraft (AGENCIES, 2017).

On August 23, 2017, it was announced that Qatar would return its ambassador to Iran. In a press statement released by the foreign ministries of Qatar and Iran, they expressed their willingness to improve bilateral relations with Iran (Aboudi, 2017).

On August 26, 2018, during a telephone conversation between the Emir of Qatar and Iranian President Rouhani, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani stated that "Thanks to the integrity and solidarity of the Qatari people and cooperation and assistance from friendly countries, especially Iran, we have overcome problems an unjust and cruel siege and we will never forget the Iranian attitude in this matter (Agency, 2018)."

4.5 Conclusion

In chapter IV, it is explained the considerations in terminating Saudi Arabia's diplomatic relations with Qatar. The first consideration is domestic politics in Saudi Arabia. The royal family has a strong influence in government decision-making, giving its support in terminating Saudi Arabia's diplomatic relations with Qatar. The second consideration is Saudi Arabia thinks that Qatar's Economy is a threat that makes Saudi Arabian policy makers not hesitant in terminating diplomatic relations with Qatar. The final

consideration is Saudi Arabia suspects Qatar supporting the Radical Movement which also made Saudi Arabia terminate diplomatic relations with Qatar. These three considerations affect Saudi Arabian policy makers in terminating diplomatic relations with Qatar.