The online news publication The Intercept referred to their sources in diplomatic circles in its reports that Arabic countries lobbied to have Rex Tillerson removed from his post as the US Secretary of State because they were not happy with his work. According to information leaked to the press, the US Secretary of State irritated Riyadh and Abu Dhabi by interfering with their plans to attack and occupy Qatar in the summer of last year, when a crisis was contrived around this small state. Incidentally, experts note that the American society has not, for some reason, reacted with indignation towards open attempts to interfere in its internal politics, despite the fact that these particular Arabic nations forced Rex Tillerson from his post, while, at the same time, the topic of Russia’s alleged involvement in the 2016 elections is still front page news.

It is worth noting at this stage that during the political crisis that started a year ago and pitted Doha against its Arabic neighbors in the Persian Gulf, Tillerson went to great lengths to de-escalate the situation in the region, and prevent the attack against Qatar and its occupation. According to reports by the US media, he made numerous phone calls to convince Saudi Arabia and the UAE to abstain from deploying their military against Qatar. In addition, Rex Tillerson, as the US Secretary of State, actively encouraged the US Secretary of Defense James Mattis to engage in negotiations with his Saudi Arabian counterpart in order to convince the Saudis to reconsider their military operation against Doha, and to demonstrate Washington’s displeasure at their actions.

However, the Saudi King, his Crown Prince, and emirs who had already started to view Qatar and its vast financial riches as their property, which could help them improve their economic situation quickly, and turn their budget deficit into surplus, were not able to stop in time.
They had had experience in similar affairs, as witnessed during an echo of the Arab Spring in the neighboring Bahrain, dubbed the Pearl revolution. At the time, the Shiite population, which accounts for 80% of all of the Kingdom’s residents, decided to change the balance of power in their favor. But they did not stand a chance, Saudi and other Arabic forces quickly took control over territories in Bahrain and kept the Sunni King in power.

During the Qatari crisis, the neighboring Arabic nations decided to follow suit and occupied the state, but Rex Tillerson confronted them. He probably believes that only the US has a legitimate right to redraw political maps of the world and by extension the Persian Gulf.

Besides, unlike residents of Bahrain, the Qatari population, who were far from poor and, in fact, fairly rich, also took other measures in order to cool Saudi’s zeal. First of all, the fairly rich Qatari lobby in the US was mobilized. The US media, radio, television, and many politicians, including senators, suddenly became concerned with Qatar’s fate. Secondly, announcements about new, fairly large purchases of US weaponry were immediately made, although Doha certainly does not need these supplies as it has already accumulated three times as much weaponry, which is now rusting and collecting dust in warehouses, as its relatively small army could actually use. Plus, who can honestly doubt that the “democratic Secretary of State” received a fairly generous “tip” for his efforts to protect Qatar. Apparently, Tillerson’s only task at the time was to staunchly defend the small Qatari state, which he could not even find on a map with ease. And his electorate couldn’t care less about the fate of some, as US media put it, obscure Bedouin camel shepherds.

In addition, the current ruler of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, turned out to be quite a forward-looking, prescient and astute ruler, and immediately approached Turkey and Iran for military aid. The President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, had always remembered that Qatar was once a part of the Ottoman Empire, and it is his sacred duty to defend his former subjects. Turks of the Ottoman Empire and Ibn Saud, the founder of the Saudi Arabian Kingdom who had always enjoyed support from Great Britain, were, on the other hand, enemies, which is why Erdogan immediately proposed to establish a military base in Qatar and base some Turkish forces there. The words of the energetic Turkish leader were immediately followed by actions, with selected Turkish units arriving at the Al Udeid and Tariq bin Ziyad military bases in Qatar and taking up defensive positions. Tehran also actively supported Doha. The Iranian leadership stated that they would not tolerate acts of aggression from Riyadh. The prospect of going into battle against well-trained and disciplined Turkish forces fighting side by side with Qataris defending their homeland, instead of doing a victory lap on a white camel, did not appeal to the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman Al Saud, who created this mess in the first place. Hence, he, together with his friend from the UAE, temporarily retreated.

But he harbored a grudge and soon announced that sanctions against Qatar would remain till the victory, i.e. until the small nation, its rulers and residents beg him for mercy.

This episode is straight from the Middle Ages. Where is the United Nations; the famous “White Helmets”, who, in Syria, came after the official administration in Damascus; other international organizations, and the tiresome Americans with their human rights? Why are all of them missing? Why is Qatar alone in its struggle against forces that outnumber its own, and the illegitimate sanctions imposed on it by the “brotherly” Arabic nations? So who will emerge as the winner? And will international rule of law or brute force prevail?

The region is full of similar events. The previously prosperous Iraq is one such example, which, at present, after the US occupation, lies in ruins and can hardly be labelled a nation-state. Another example is poor Afghanistan, which has been torn apart by NATO and American forces for years, thus preventing the nation from developing in peace. From a bird’s-eye view Syria appears to be a giant graveyard with millions of refugees searching for sustenance. Imagine that it used to be a prosperous nation where people took advantage of all the benefits offered by peaceful development and growth! Due to aggressive policies employed by the US and Arabic monarchies of the Persian Gulf, the destitute residents of the Syrian Arab Republic will need many decades to recover by building new factories and manufacturing plants, revitalizing agriculture, and reviving art, science as well as education.

What has peaceful Libya done to deserve such treatment from Europe and the US, who attacked this nation like a swarm of locusts; killed its leader thus causing jubilation among the leaders of the EU and America, and robbed and pocketed the riches of the Libyan people? All of this can be characterized as crimes against humanity, which are punishable by death according to international laws. We only have to remember the Nuremberg trials and the fate of the Nazi leaders, who, just as the current Western politicians, attempted to appropriate the right to decide the fate of other nations.
Besides, the episode involving Rex Tillerson has clearly demonstrated the hypocrisy at its most extreme of policies adopted by Donald Trump’s administration. It is well known that the President concluded his foreign tour in Saudi Arabia, where his loyalty was immediately purchased with a giant gold chain and a medal. They also signed contracts worth 100 billion US dollars to purchase US weapons long kept in storage. Afterwards, the Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman Al Saud decided that he could do as he pleased and began implementing his fairly awkward policies in the region.

But the Qatari leader Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani was not an easy target, and outbid the Saudis in Washington for the time being. He also purchased Ankara’s loyalty, and became Tehran’s ally on a temporary basis (it is well known that there is nothing permanent in the Middle East).

In other words, an outline of new Qatari ties in the Persian Gulf region are beginning to appear right before our eye: Turkey, Iran. For now, this alliance is military in nature, but it may turn into a political and economic one in the future. Only time will tell.

_Viktor Mikhin, a corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences, exclusively for the online magazine “New Eastern Outlook.”_