

## THE ROLE OF MEDIATION MISSIONS IN QATAR'S FOREIGN POLICY

### ՄԻՋՆՈՐԴԱԿԱՆ ԱՌԱՔԵԼՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ ԴԵՐԸ ԿԱՏԱՐԻ ԱՐՏԱՔԻՆ ՔԱՂԱՔԱԿԱՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՄԵՋ

### РОЛЬ ПОСРЕДНИЧЕСКИХ МИССИЙ ВО ВНЕШНЕЙ ПОЛИТИКЕ КАТАРА

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**Abstract** – Qatar's foreign policy has undergone significant changes since its independence. This country, which had little influence in the world arena not so long ago, has managed to become one of the most active mediators in the international arena in recent decades. By adopting a flexible and pragmatic foreign policy, Qatar has successfully mediated in the settlement of several conflicts, demonstrating its commitment to international peace. Mediation has become a key component of Qatar's "soft power" foreign policy, serving the country's national objectives. In fact, Qatar has managed to compete with leading Arab countries, strengthening its influence and position in the region. This article assesses Qatar's success in utilizing mediation as a core component of its foreign policy strategy. It aims to explore the motivations, modalities, and tools employed in Qatar's mediation efforts in regional and international contexts. The task of this study is to show how this small state managed to establish itself as one of the leading mediators in the Middle East region and beyond. The article examines three main narratives, using the examples of Lebanon, Sudan, and Yemen, which demonstrate the successes and failures of Qatar's mediation efforts.

**Ամփոփում** – Կատարի արտաքին քաղաքականությունը զգալի փոփոխությունների է ենթարկվել անկախությունից ի վեր: Դեռևս ոչ վաղ անցյալում համաշխարհային ասպարեզում աննշան ազդեցություն ունեցող այս երկրին հաջողվեց վերջին տասնամյակների ընթացքում միջազգային հարթակում դառնալ ամենաակտիվ միջնորդներից մեկը: Վարելով ճկուն և պրագմատիկ արտաքին քաղաքականություն՝ Կատարը հաջողությամբ

միջնորդել է մի շարք հակամարտությունների կարգավորմանը: Միջնորդական առաքելությունը դարձել է Կատարի արտաքին քաղաքականության «փափուկ ուժի» հիմնական բաղադրիչ՝ ծառայելով երկրի ազգային նպատակներին: Փաստացիորեն, Կատարին հաջողվել է մրցակցել արաբական առաջատար երկրների հետ՝ ամրապնդելով իր ազդեցությունն ու դիրքը տարածաշրջանում: Հոդվածը գնահատում է, թե որքանով են հաջողել Կատարի միջնորդական առաքելությունները՝ օգտագործվելով որպես արտաքին քաղաքականության ռազմավարության հիմնական բաղադրիչ: Այն նպատակ ունի բացահայտելու տարածաշրջանային և միջազգային հարթակներում Կատարի միջնորդական ջանքերի դրդապատճառները, դրսևորման ձևերն և գործիքակազմը: Հետազոտության խնդիրն է վեր հանել, թե ինչպես Կատարի նման փոքր պետությանը հաջողվեց դառնալ Մերձավոր Արևելքում և նրա սահմաններից դուրս ամենաակտիվ միջնորդ դերակատարներից մեկը, և որքանով է Կատարի միջնորդական առաքելությունը հաջողված: Հոդվածում դիտարկվում են երեք հիմնական պատումներ՝ Լիբանանի, Սուդանի և Եմենի օրինակով, որոնցում արտացոլվում են Կատարի միջնորդական ջանքերի հաջողություններն ու ձախողումները:

*Аннотация* – Внешняя политика Катара претерпела значительные изменения с момента обретения независимости. За последние десятилетия эта страна, имевшая незначительное влияние на мировой арене, сумела стать одним из самых активных посредников в политической сфере. Проводя гибкую и прагматичную внешнюю политику, Катар успешно выступал посредником в урегулировании ряда конфликтов, способствуя достижению международного мира. Посредническая миссия стала ключевым компонентом «мягкой силы» Катара, служащей национальным интересам страны. Фактически, Катар сумел составить конкуренцию ведущим арабским странам, укрепив своё влияние и позиции в регионе. В статье оценивается степень успешности посреднических миссий Катара, являющихся важной составляющей его внешнеполитической стратегии. Целью исследования является выявление причин, форм проявления и инструментов посреднической деятельности Катара на региональных и международных площадках. Цель исследования – выявить, как такому небольшому государству, как Катар, удалось стать одним из самых активных посредников на Ближнем Востоке и за его пределами, и насколько успешной оказалась посредническая миссия Катара. В статье рассматриваются три основных нарратива на примере Ливана, Судана и Йемена, которые отражают успехи и неудачи посреднических усилий Катара.

**Keywords** – Qatar, conflict, toolkit, mediation, status.

Հիմնաբառեր – Կատար, հակամարտություն, գործիքակազմ, միջնորդություն, կարգավիճակ:

Ключевые слова – Катар, конфликт, инструментарий, посредничество, статус.

## Introduction

This article examines the extent to which Qatar has successfully employed mediation as a strategic instrument of its foreign policy. It examines the underlying motivations, modalities, and mechanisms that guide its mediation initiatives in regional and international contexts. The goal of this study is to examine how a small state like Qatar has emerged as one of the most active and visible mediators in the Middle East and beyond, to understand why Qatar invests heavily in soft power diplomacy,

and to explore how Qatar presents itself through its mediation efforts. The study's conceptual framework is based on the theories of soft power and role. Joseph Nye conceptualises soft power as a state's capacity to shape the preferences or behaviour of others in order to achieve desired outcomes. He argues that influence in international relations can be exercised through three primary means: "threats of coercion (sticks), inducements and payments (carrots), and attraction that makes others want what you want" (Nye 2008, 94).

Role theory helps to understand how small states perceive themselves and how they are perceived by others, which is central to any constructivist analysis of international relations. Role theory examines how states play roles in international politics, such as "mediator," "protector", or "regional leader", based on their self-conception and expectations of others. K.J. Holsti argues that "foreign policy behaviour is shaped by both internal identity and external recognition" (Holsti 1970).

The research methodology is based on content and discourse analysis. The research contributions of M. Kamrava, S. Barakat and other esteemed authors have been pivotal in studying the role of mediation missions in Qatar's foreign policy. The article analyses three main cases, Lebanon, Sudan, and Yemen, which are presented in separate chapters.

Since the mid-2000s, Qatar has emerged as one of the most active diplomatic mediators in resolving regional and internal conflicts in the Middle East and Africa. For the warring parties, Doha was perceived as a neutral mediator, ready to provide substantial financial resources to support the success of the mediation mission. Qatar offered various investments to the warring parties in exchange for reaching an agreement between them (Bukin 2014, 96). Doha has gained a reputation as a reliable mediator and peacemaker on the international stage thanks to its competent foreign policy. In the initial period of mediation in the Arab direction, Qatar's aspirations sparked reluctance from the region's leading players, such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt, which were traditionally perceived as countries pursuing multiple agendas and interests in the region (Kamrava 2011, 540). Sudan, which was previously considered a priority of Egypt's foreign policy, has become a field of confrontation between Egypt and Qatar. The emergence of a new player was not part of Saudi Arabia's and Egypt's plans. Cairo was categorically against Qatar's intervention in the Sudanese conflict. However, with the support of the United States, Qatar managed to strengthen its position in Sudan as a mediator (Wikileaks: Egypt determined...). Qatar also faced resistance from Saudi Arabia on the issue of Yemen, but again managed to assert its influence. Doha was able to gain the trust of Saudi Arabia and Egypt, who carried out their mediation mission through the Arab League (AL). In the case of Qatar, what was new and different was that one of the smallest countries in the Middle East, which until the mid-1990s was considered a vassal of Saudi Arabia, was able to create the image of an impartial and effective mediator. This state presented itself as a supporter of regional peace and stability (Kamrava 2011, 541).

As we have noted, Qatar's mediation mission has been characterised by providing compensation, investments, and material rewards to the conflicting parties in exchange for resolving the conflict. This policy has come to be known as "business diplomacy", where diplomacy relies on significant investments to advance the conflict resolution process. Qatar has made significant investments in all the countries where it has conducted mediation missions. Qatar has assessed its chances of success in advance and carefully selected the conflicts it has entered into (Kamrava 2011, 544).

### **Qatar's Strategic Mediation in the Sudan Conflict**

In 2008, when Qatar intervened in the Sudanese conflict, the situation in Sudan was already volatile. Qatar's active involvement in Sudan was driven by Doha's military and political interests, which were also influenced by Qatar's close ties with the government of Omar al-Bashir and the presence of the Sudanese community in Qatar (Barakat 2014, 18). Before openly acting as a mediator, the Qatari government took several deliberate steps to gain the approval of the conflicting parties to the mediation mission. In addition, Qatar sought to ensure that interested parties in the international community accepted Doha as a mediator and supported its efforts. The second step involved a fact-finding mission, which was carried out by sending the country's foreign minister and several officials to places where representatives of previous mediators, including the African Union (AU), the Arab League, France, Libya, and the United States, had not been before (Bukin 2014, 97). Qatari Foreign Minister Ahmed bin Abdullah Al Mahmoud, along with several teams of diplomats from the ministry, held numerous meetings with the parties to the conflict and those involved in the conflict resolution process, including representatives of the UN, the Arab League, France, Libya, the AU and the US. The purpose of the meetings was to gather the necessary information on current events and obtain approval to participate in them as a mediator. Foreign Minister Al Mahmoud personally undertook a fact-finding mission to Khartoum and the Darfur region, as well as to neighboring countries. His trip to Chad, where a refugee camp affected by the conflict was located, was particularly telling (Kamrava 2011, 545).

The Arab League and the AU agreed to work together to resolve the Darfur conflict; an agreement was reached to identify Doha as the host for the talks. Qatar, along with the UN and AU chief mediator Jibril Bassolé, was heavily involved in the negotiation process (Karamalla-Gaiballa 2017, 5–6). Rebel leaders initially compared Qatar's intervention to the efforts of Egypt and the Arab League, which had also previously attempted to resolve the conflict in Sudan. A series of declarations were signed in Addis Ababa in 2004 and in Abuja in 2004 and 2005, but they failed to produce lasting results (Shinn 2004, 246).

Egypt, which historically considered Sudan to be its sphere of influence, opposed the Qatari mediation mission in Sudan. When it became known that Doha was conducting negotiations between the Justice and Equality Movement and the official

Khartoum, Egypt rushed to invite the conflicting parties to Cairo. At the same time, Egypt was cautious in pursuing its mediation policy. Over time, it became clear that cooperation with the Justice and Equality Movement was a formality. Cairo hosted them to demonstrate its dissatisfaction with the Qatari mediation mission. While Egypt and the AL were perceived as supporters of the Sudanese government, Qatar positioned itself as a neutral party. Doha was able to capitalise on the sometimes contradictory, biased, and indecisive behaviour of its regional rivals and emerged as the primary actor in conflict resolution. Doha has successfully organised various meetings involving the conflicting parties, international observers, mediators, and envoys to achieve peace in Sudan. In 2008, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the parties, which recognized Qatar as the "chief mediator" in the Sudanese conflict resolution process. Only after Doha was recognized as the chief mediator in the Sudanese conflict resolution process did Qatar begin to actively invite representatives of the conflicting parties to the city of Doha (Bukin 2014, 98). As a result of the negotiations, an agreement was signed in Doha on February 17, 2009 between the Sudanese government and representatives of the Justice and Equality Movement, the largest rebel group in Darfur, in which the parties committed to "demonstrating goodwill and trust" in the process of resolving the Darfur conflict. The parties agreed to recognize Doha as the venue for the negotiations, under the auspices of Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, and Doha became the primary venue for meetings between representatives of the Sudanese government and various Darfur rebel groups (Sudan Tribune 2009).

It should be noted that the negotiations were complex, frequently interrupted by disagreements, and sometimes lasted for extended periods. On numerous occasions, when the talks reached an impasse, the Qatari mediators surprised the parties with their determination and patience in bringing the negotiations to a successful conclusion. On the other hand, Doha was generous to both sides of the conflict, especially to the rebel groups, who were allowed to live in luxury hotels in Doha for months. As a result of the conference held in Doha, Qatar, in May 2011, attended by all parties concerned with the conflict, the "Doha Document for Peace in Darfur" was finalized, which the conflicting parties signed on July 14 of the same year (United Nations 2011). The document addressed the causes and consequences of the conflict, human rights and fundamental freedoms, the status of Darfur, power-sharing, reconciliation, reparations, refugee return and internal dialogue. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon welcomed the Doha Peace Document as a basis for resolving the conflict in Western Sudan (United Nations).

On the other hand, the Qatar National Bank began opening its branches in Khartoum just as Doha began to intervene in the Darfur conflict. Through the Islamic Development Company, the Qatar Islamic Bank and other Qatari banks also began to operate in Sudan. In addition, Doha has provided extensive humanitarian aid

to the Darfur population, and has made significant investments in Sudan, particularly in the agricultural sector, contributing to its development (Gulbrandsen 2010, 64).

Qatar's mission in Sudan was Doha's first attempt to enter the international arena, where the importance and recorded success of "business diplomacy" were evident.

### **Qatar's mediation diplomacy during the Lebanese crisis**

Another step for Qatar to realize its political ambitions was to establish itself as a mediator in the 2007 Lebanese crisis resolution process. The political crisis in Lebanon began in November 2007 due to disagreements over the candidate for president. The government's attempts to reduce the powers of the Shiite religious and political movement Hezbollah brought the crisis to a peak. On May 6, 2008, a strike organized by the Lebanese Workers' Confederation escalated into armed clashes between government supporters and opposition forces, mainly Hezbollah fighters. The clashes broke out in West Beirut, then spread to North Lebanon, the Bekaa Valley, and Mount Lebanon. The opposition quickly established control over West Beirut and some areas of Mount Lebanon. Hezbollah militants also closed Beirut's international airport and highways leading to the port. The country's government has handed over security to army units at state, private and public institutions (Harutyunyan 2012, 9).

Among the regional players, Qatar was the most willing to host the warring parties and initiate negotiations. Saudi Arabia's long-standing ties with several Lebanese political forces, its hostility towards Hezbollah and Iran, and some other factors made it difficult for Saudi Arabia to act as an impartial mediator in the current situation. In contrast to Saudi Arabia, Qatar was a relatively new player, with close ties to Syria, Iran, and Hezbollah. Emir Hamad was the only Arab leader to visit both Hezbollah-controlled areas of Beirut and the conflict-stricken south of Lebanon, donating about \$300 million as part of Qatar's reconstruction programs to repair and rebuild damaged buildings, regardless of the political affiliations of their owners (Barakat 2014, 16–17). This is where a key element of Qatar's mediation and foreign policy, in general, came into play: Al Jazeera, which extensively covered the events in Lebanon, also contributed to achieving the desired results (Kamrava 2011, 549).

To prevent the escalation of armed conflicts in Lebanon and the potential outbreak of civil war, a committee was established at a meeting of the Arab League Foreign Ministers' Council in Cairo on May 11, headed by Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Hamad bin Jassem bin Jaber Al Thani. The warring parties agreed to cease all armed conflicts (Harutyunyan 2012, 11–12).

Under the auspices of the Arab League, on May 17, 2008, 14 representatives of Lebanon's political forces held talks in Doha on two main issues: a unified presidential candidate and electoral code reforms ahead of the next parliamentary elections (Bakri, Cowell 2008). Although the talks were held under the auspices of the Arab League, Qatar was seen as the primary force that facilitated progress in the

process. During the negotiations, Syria and Iran supported Hezbollah, while Egypt and Saudi Arabia supported the ruling forces. Although representatives of various Lebanese factions were present at the talks, the main struggle was between Hezbollah and the March 14 Movement, led by Prime Minister Fouad Siniora (Blanford 2008). Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Hamad bin Jassem played a key role in the negotiations, creating a friendly atmosphere and reducing tensions between the warring parties. During the negotiations, each side was given two minutes to speak and two minutes to respond to any issue, ensuring the impartiality and effectiveness of the discussions (Barakat 2014, 17).

On May 21, the successful conclusion of the Lebanese national dialogue under the auspices of the AL was announced in Doha. As a result, the parties adopted the "Doha Agreement", the first point of which was that the speaker of parliament should convene a session within the coming week at which the agreed candidate for the election of the president of Lebanon would be the commander-in-chief of the Lebanese army, General Michel Suleiman (Harutyunyan, 2012, 14). Additionally, several amendments to the electoral code were adopted, and Hezbollah secured 11 of the 30 parliamentary seats and three ministerial positions in the government. The two sides reached an agreement on the 2009 parliamentary elections (Schenker 2008).

The agreement marked a breakthrough in Qatari diplomacy. By serving as a platform for national dialogue, Qatar achieved a diplomatic victory in the challenging Lebanese context, thanks to its balanced policy, which contributed to an increase in Doha's international prestige.

### **Qatari mediation in Yemen**

The Yemeni conflict, between Yemeni government forces and the Houthis, also became entangled in Qatari political interests. The Houthi rebellion began in 2004 under the leadership of Hussein Al-Houthi. Hussein Al-Houthi was a respected mujtahid among the local population and had a following of 3,000 to 4,000 Zaydi students (BBC News 2023). Combining anti-American sentiments in society with the revival of Zaydiism, Hussein Al-Houthi took a stand against the government forces. Despite Hussein Al-Houthi's assassination in 2004, the movement he led did not fade away. The Yemeni press often referred to the clashes as wars, especially after the bloody events in Saada (Kamrava 2011, 549).

Qatar intervened in the Yemeni conflict in May 2007, when tensions were at their peak. Following an invitation from Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh, Emir Hamad travelled to Sana'a on an official visit (Barakat 2014, 15). Emir Hamad assumed the role of mediator between Yemeni government forces and the rebels, sending a team of Foreign Ministry officials to Saada Governorate to negotiate with the rebels. In the case of Yemen, the mechanisms of Qatar's mediation mission were also linked to the vast financial resources that Qatar had allocated to rebuild the country's destroyed infrastructure, especially in Saada Governorate. Emir Hamad

announced his readiness to provide financial resources for the reconstruction of Saada Governorate if an agreement were reached between the parties (Kamrava 2011, 549). The Qatari government organized regular meetings with the warring parties in both Yemen and Qatar. During these meetings, a set of common principles was developed, which became the basis for the ceasefire agreement of June 17, 2007 (Barakat 2014, 17).

On June 17, 2007, the warring parties enthusiastically accepted Qatar's proposals and signed a ceasefire agreement, after which they began negotiating with each other on the next steps. This agreement, brokered by Qatar, provided for a ceasefire, the restoration and reconstruction of rebel-held areas, the end of the exile of rebel leaders, and several other important steps (Sudam 2007).

As a result of Qatar's mediation efforts, a peace agreement was signed in Doha on February 1, 2008. The Doha Agreement was initially welcomed with great enthusiasm and anticipation, and both sides soon began implementing the main provisions of the agreement. The agreement was based on Qatar's financial support for the reconstruction of infrastructure, which amounted to \$300–500 million (Palik, Rustad 2019, 2–3). The points of the agreement concerned the cessation of hostilities, the loyalty of the rebels to the state system, the return of refugees to their territories, where their everyday lives would be ensured, freedom of speech and the right to act freely, the creation of political parties in accordance with the constitution, and several other issues. Both agreements included provisions on the government releasing rebel prisoners, applying amnesty, and restoring war-torn territories (Badanjak 2023, 15–16).

The results of Qatar's mediation efforts, however, did not last long. The ceasefire remained on paper: bloodshed continued on the streets of Yemen. Several Houthi leaders refused to participate in the Doha talks. Fierce fighting broke out in the northern regions of the rebel-held areas, which continued intermittently until 2009. Houthi strongholds. The Yemeni government increasingly disagreed with Qatari diplomats. Qatar had provided political asylum to several rebel leaders, which also contributed to the emergence of distrust within the Yemeni government. Opposition forces accused the government of failing to implement the terms of the peace agreement, resulting in the freezing of the peace process. Qatar was rejected as a mediator and was forced to suspend its mediation mission by 2010 (International Crisis Group 2009, 21–22).

Saudi Arabia, which has historically had interests in Yemen, could not stay away from these processes. The conflict in Yemen had raised a wave of concerns in Saudi Arabia, which forced Riyadh to side with the Yemeni government. Saudi Arabia, taking advantage of Qatar's diplomatic failure, took all measures to resist Qatari "soft power", providing substantial financial assistance to Yemen. Saudi Arabia promised to invest \$1 billion in the war-torn country (Kamrava 2011, 551). Later, Saudi Arabia's entire anti-imperialist policy was based on financial investments. Saudi



Arabia tried to completely expel Qatar from Yemen and impose favorable agreements on the conflicting parties.

Comparing the mediation policies of Qatar and Saudi Arabia during that period reveals several key points that demonstrate the differences in the approaches of the parties. First, it is essential to consider the position of the two countries in international relations, particularly within the Middle East system at that time. Qatar had established friendly relations with all the conflicting parties and made great efforts to maintain these relations without giving preference to any of the parties. Saudi Arabia's position was clear, as it usually supported the ruling wing. Meanwhile, in its efforts to maintain warm relations with all parties, Qatar often found it difficult to exert pressure on any of them to achieve and maintain the desired result; in other words, Qatar did not have the necessary leverage in this case. Unlike Qatar, Saudi Arabia had leveraged over both the allied and opposing sides, which allowed it to extract concessions to achieve its desired result. Unlike Qatar, Saudi Arabia's mediation policy was more institutional in nature, a result of its greater involvement in the system of international relations and experienced diplomacy. In addition, Saudi Arabia's foreign policy was not always accurately represented in the coverage of the Al Arabiya news network, whereas in the case of Qatar, its foreign policy was closely linked to the coverage of Al Jazeera. Another difference was that the Qataris preferred to publicise their mediation activities, as evidenced by the high-profile summits in luxury hotels and their coverage by Al Jazeera and other media outlets.

Meanwhile, the Saudis generally preferred behind-the-scenes diplomacy, a tactic also favoured by many of the conflicting parties. Not everyone immediately accepted Qatar's rapidly publicised diplomacy. On the other hand, Riyadh pursued a cautious policy, avoiding the potential pitfalls of getting involved in the actual conflicts. Saudi Arabia did not have a problem with increasing its international reputation or branding; its primary concern was ensuring the security of the state and regime, as well as maintaining its role as a leader in the region.

In fact, Qatar demonstrated demonic flexibility and was able to return to the field of conflict resolution in Yemen. Qatar resumed its mediation mission in Yemen in the summer of 2010, when the Emir of Qatar visited Sanaa in July, followed by meetings in Doha in August between the Yemeni government and Houthis. As a result of these meetings, another agreement was signed in Doha on August 26. According to it, the Houthis were obliged to hand over to the Qatari side the ammunition that had been seized during the clashes and to liberate strategically important positions located in the Saada Mountains near the Saudi border. The Yemeni government, in turn, was obliged to release rebel prisoners in return. The agreement stipulated that the rebel leader, Abdel-Malik Al-Houthi, and his two brothers would live in exile, to be received by Qatar. However, the provisions of this agreement were also not respected and fighting resumed. In February 2010, a ceasefire was

declared between the Yemeni government and the Houthis, excluding the Qatari side (The political scene: Qatar tries...).

Doha managed to create a positive image in Yemen, but the efforts made were insufficient to resolve the conflict; moreover, the clashes in Yemen gained new momentum in 2011.

### **Conclusion**

Mediation, a strategic cornerstone of Qatar's foreign policy, is a key instrument of its "soft power", positioning Doha as a decisive player in international relations. Qatar's motivation to act as a mediator in regional conflicts stems from its pursuit of prestige and status within a highly competitive regional environment. This soft power, therefore, is not just a concept but a tangible force that shapes Qatar's national strategy, serving both the country's political and strategic interests.

The success of Doha's mediation efforts has notably enhanced its international standing. These efforts also reflect Qatar's ambition to challenge the long-standing regional dominance of Saudi Arabia and Egypt, particularly Riyadh's role in Yemen and Cairo's in Sudan. A crucial factor in the effectiveness of Qatari mediation has been the personal involvement of Emir Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, whose direct participation in negotiations fostered trust among conflicting parties. However, this personalized approach also revealed Qatar's limited institutional experience in mediation, relying primarily on personal networks and substantial financial leverage.

Timing has been another critical element of Qatar's mediation approach. Doha often intervened when conflicts reached a peak and warring factions were eager to de-escalate, allowing it to play the role of a credible and pragmatic broker. Backed by vast material resources, Qatar combined diplomacy with significant financial investments, which can be termed "business diplomacy", to attract parties to negotiations, expand its channels of public diplomacy, and promote peace-oriented narratives across the region. These resources enabled Qatar to supplant traditional patrons such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia in certain conflict zones, thereby deepening its regional influence.

While Qatar's mediation initiatives have not always led to the full resolution of conflicts, they have consistently contributed to easing tensions and reducing violence in the aforementioned conflicts. Even in cases where it was impossible to maintain lasting peace, the mediation mission managed to achieve a ceasefire. In this sense, Qatar's mediation mission can be considered successful.

Ultimately, Doha's involvement in conflicts such as those in Yemen, Sudan, and Lebanon marked the beginning of a broader strategic trajectory that matured during the Arab Spring. These mediation experiences laid the foundation for Qatar's redefined foreign policy, which actively projects its "soft power" across the Arab world. Qatar's mediation diplomacy exemplifies the interplay between soft power and role theories in shaping the foreign policy of small states. Qatar's foreign policy

demonstrates how small states can use soft power and role performance to achieve disproportionate status in a competitive international hierarchy.

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