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## Saudis to Qatar: Close al-Jazeera or Face Blockade

By Jason Ditz

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Saudi Arabia and Qatar are normally on good terms, but following a broad new “anti-terrorist” edict by the Saudi King Abdullah the two nations are at loggerheads, with the Saudis threatening air, land, and sea blockades of Qatar.

Though couched as targeting terrorism, the Saudi demands are targeted at Qatar’s international politics, with the primary demand a full closure of popular TV news channel al-Jazeera.

The Saudis also want Qatar to sever ties with the Muslim Brotherhood, Egypt's elected government ousted in last summer's coup, and to expel two US think tanks, the Brookings Institute and the RAND Corporation.

The Qatari Foreign Minister Khalid Attiya insisted that his government's policy will not change, and that despite Saudi threats they remain committed to retaining an independent foreign policy.