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Qatar, a longtime supporter of the armed uprising against former Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, had been lobbying Washington to issue a sanctions exemption allowing it to provide funding through official channels, the U.S. official and diplomat said.

Syria's de facto leader Ahmed al-Sharaa was declared president for a transitional phase on Wednesday, and was also empowered to form a temporary legislative council.

Earlier in January, Qatar's Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani visited Damascus.

Qatar will supply Syria with 200 megawatts of electricity, and plans to gradually increase supply, Thani said in a press conference in Damascus on Thursday.

In December, Qatar said it would reopen its embassy in Damascus after more than 13 years, a week after Assad was removed from power

Qatar shut its embassy in July 2011 after withdrawing its ambassador in protest against Assad's deadly crackdown on demonstrators, violence that spiraled into a 13-year-long civil war.