

Central and South Asian
Troops Train to Defend Borders

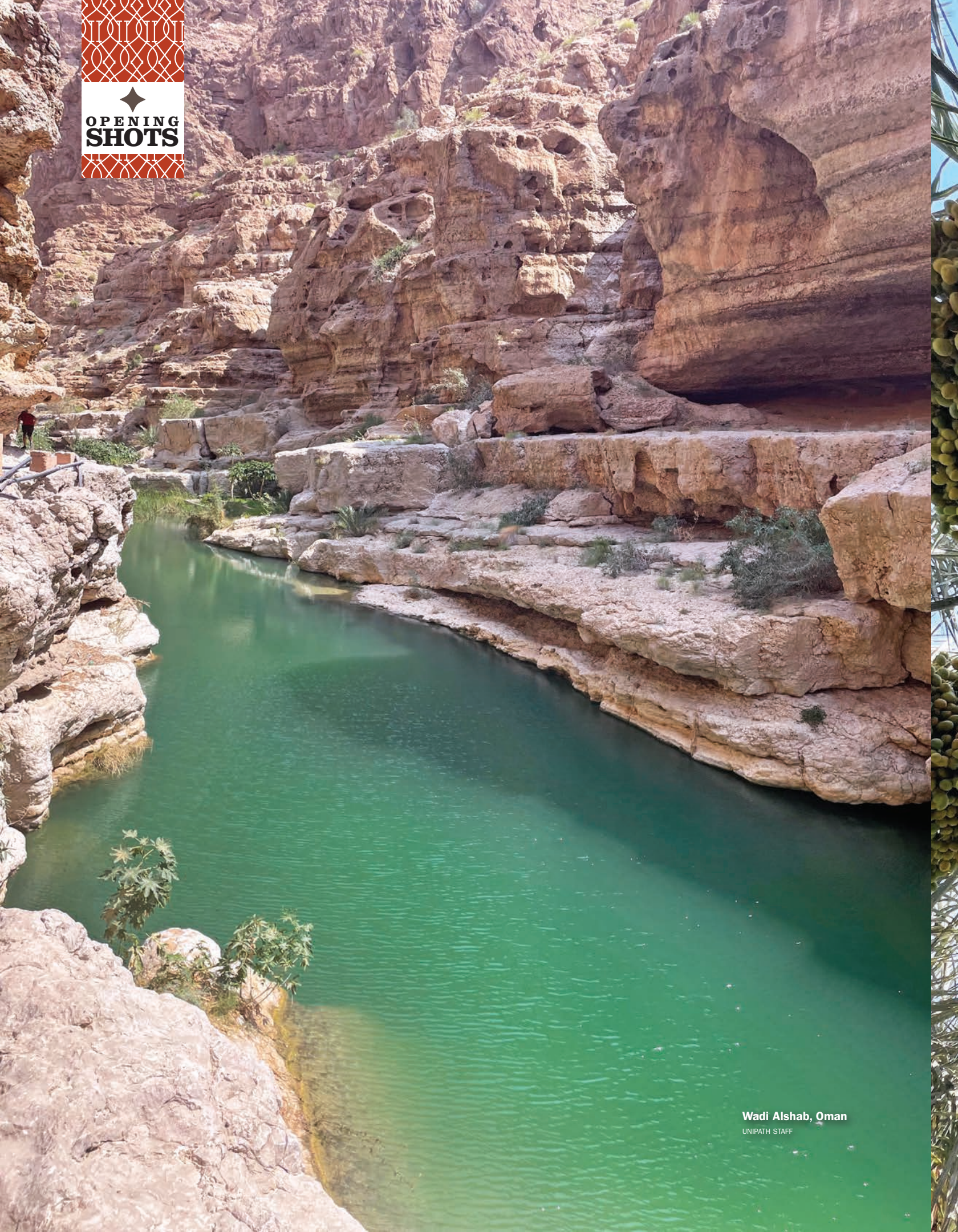
Saudi Military Strengthens
Regional Security

Jordanian War College Partners
With Regional Militaries

UNIPATH

Regional Military COOPERATION





Wadi Alshab, Oman
UNIPATH STAFF



An Iraqi farmer tends his ripening dates in Basra in July 2023. REUTERS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

6 Partners in Training

The Bright Star military exercise returns to Egypt with 7,600 multinational participants engaged in land, sea and air operations

14 Operation Breaking Barriers

Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Service
Iraq's Counter-Terrorism Service leads the fight against sectarian division

18 Acting Together in the Arabian Gulf

Dr. Nayef Al Hajraf, then-Secretary-General, Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf
The Gulf Cooperation Council is a force for security and stability in the world

20 Historic First: UAE Company Conducts Combat Training in U.S.

24 Saudi Hospitals Provide Medical Support to Yemenis

26 A Jordanian-U.S. Naval Partnership

Jordan Armed Forces
Security in Red Sea benefits from successful multinational training

30 A Multinational Mission for Peace

Troops from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan train together to resist cross-border threats

34 Building Peace Through Better Policing

Iraq's community policing program racks up successes countering terrorism and crime

38 Securing Energy Supplies

Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al Jaber Al Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kuwait
Countries must strike a balance between providing plentiful energy and protecting the planet

40 Educator Targets Contemporary Threats

Brig. Gen. Azzam Al-Rawahneh, commander of the Royal Jordanian National Defense College, stresses global outreach to produce well-rounded officers

46 Women Make Strong Contributions to Saudi Armed Forces

General Directorate of Strategic Communications, Saudi Ministry of Defense

48 Deterring Terrorists

The Jalmood 3 military exercise showcases Bahrain's and United Arab Emirates' counterterrorism forces

52 Saudi Arabia Rehabilitates Yemeni Child Soldiers

General Directorate of Strategic Communications, Saudi Ministry of Defense

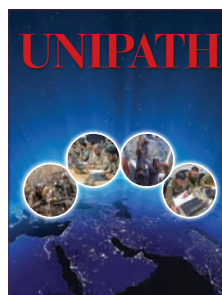
54 Fighting Instability in Yemen

Moammar Al-Eryani, Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism, Republic of Yemen
Iranian misbehavior represents a barrier to peace in the region

56 Senior Leader Profile

Brig. Gen. Azzam Al-Rawahneh, Jordanian Armed Forces

58 Around the Region



ON THE COVER

Multinational cooperation and partnerships are critical to peace and stability in the region.
UNIPATH ILLUSTRATION

UNIPATH

Regional Cooperation and Partnerships

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CENTCOM COMMANDER

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KEY LEADER'S MESSAGE

I would like to thank U.S. Central Command for the kind invitation to write the editorial for this issue of Unipath magazine discussing partnerships and international cooperation. We in Iraq saw the fruits of this as our partners stood beside us during the most dangerous phase in the history of modern Iraq, when Daesh gangs ripped through vast swathes of the country's north and west. Thanks to the courage and steadfastness of our armed forces and the rapid response of coalition air power to halt the advance of the terrorist gangs, severing the enemy's supply lines and command and control centers, our forces began the epic task of rebuilding the Iraqi Armed Forces with the help of trainers and experts from coalition forces. We worked round the clock with coalition forces to train and equip troops before sending them off to battle, reconfigured units after battles and prepared them for the tasks ahead.

Notions of conventional warfare have evolved, and the world is facing a major challenge with hybrid wars, where the enemy hides inside cities and adopts street warfare tactics. This kind of war is problematic for conventional militaries as it limits use of heavy weapons to spare civilians and public property. Nevertheless, terrorist gangs spring up in areas suffering from conflict to build complex cross-border networks, requiring states to focus efforts on intelligence gathering and to enter into stable alliances through which they can expand the scope of monitoring to identify the whereabouts of terrorists, track extremist groups, cut off their funding, and target their leaders.

The Iraqi Air Force possesses experience accumulated by its pilots, engineers and technicians, but it suffered damage to infrastructure and equipment because of the former regime's misadventures. As a result, we found ourselves confronted with a major challenge after the setback in Mosul in 2014 because of a significant shortage of combat aircraft and a lack of necessary infrastructure to carry out combat operations against terrorists. Our heroic pilots were forced to take off from airports that were nowhere near the theater of operations using old aircraft to hit targets, making the task difficult and complicated.

I must acknowledge the honorable role of our partners in the coalition forces who did all they could to expedite the delivery of the first batch of fighters from the F-16 contract. The arrival of these modern fighters in 2015 was a victory in itself for the Iraqi Air Force. The advanced combat capabilities of the F-16s boosted the morale of Iraqi Air Force personnel and made the job easier for pilots and technicians. Within weeks, the Air Hawks were hunting targets with high accuracy and professionalism in areas the enemy did not expect us to reach.

By the end of the coalition forces' combat mission in Iraq,



the Air Force was able to carry out the duties associated with monitoring the border strip, close air support, and hitting targets deep in the desert. We continue to work with our friends in the U.S. Air Force to train pilots and engineers in the United States and with other members of NATO to develop the curricula of the Iraqi Air Force College.

We have not stopped rebuilding or training; indeed we have, for the first time in the history of the Iraqi Air Force, conducted a joint air exercise with our friends in the French Air Force.

In a first step of its kind, French Rafale aircraft landed at Balad Air Base and participated in the exercise, attended by the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, the Minister of Defense and the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. This important exercise is a message to terrorists and all those who doubt the capabilities of Iraqi forces that we are able to defeat terrorism and establish security and stability. We are working with our international partners to take part in the international exercises taking place in the region.

Through frequent visits to air bases in NATO countries and by working closely with the leaders of friendly air forces, we found that Iraq has reached the level of other countries in technology, maintenance and air base modernization. In a recent visit to Air Forces Central Command, we also observed operational headquarters, and aircraft. We also flew advanced F-16 fighters to send a message to the enemies of peace.

Because of the limited number of seats available for training on the F-16 in the United States, we started working with our brothers in the Kingdom of Jordan to train a handful of pilots and engineers. We are also eager to exchange experiences and training with other countries in the region to speed up our ability to fill shortcomings.

Building an integrated air force is done not necessarily to prepare for wars, but to sustain peace and save lives. The Iraqi Air Force played a major role in transporting humanitarian supplies to Syria and Turkey during the horrific earthquake that struck the region in February 2023. Our squadron of C-130s opened an air bridge between Iraq, Syria and Turkey over about 24 days, transporting more than 330 tons of medicine, food and household items. The squadron transported search and rescue teams of the Ministry of Interior and evacuated about 400 Iraqi citizens from affected areas during 62 flights covering a combined distance of 65,100 kilometers. Our planes also evacuated 392 Iraqis and Arab brethren from Sudan in less than two weeks after the outbreak of civil war in April 2023.

Lt. Gen. Shihab Jahid Zankana
Commander of the Iraqi Air Force

PARTNERS IN TRAINING

The Bright Star military exercise returns to Egypt with 7,600 multinational participants engaged in land, sea and air operations

UNIPATH STAFF

The U.S. Air Force KC-10 aerial refueling tanker soars through the clear Egyptian sky above a distant patchwork of Nile Delta farmland.

Matching the speed of the refueling aircraft, an Egyptian fighter pilot guides his F-16 Fighting Falcon beneath the KC-10.

“Hold position,” says the U.S. refueling boom operator observing the link-up through the rear of the KC-10.

“Copy,” the Egyptian pilot’s voice crackles over the radio.

The refueling arm descends to the Egyptian F-16 until it reaches the fighter jet’s refueling port behind the cockpit.

“Contact!” the boom operator announces as the refueling nozzle, capable of dispensing 4,180 liters of aviation fuel per minute, edges into the F-16’s port to complete the aerial maneuver.

Such advanced teamwork — training designed to increase interoperability among partner nations to confront regional

threats — was a major theme of the Bright Star 23 military exercise in Egypt.

Led by a large contingent from host nation Egypt, Bright Star’s 7,600 participants spent two weeks preparing to operate on joint missions should they be called to do so, smoothing out differences in communication, weaponry and military doctrine.

Bright Star is one of the world’s largest multinational exercises involving land, sea and air forces. The exercise, which ran from Aug. 31 to Sept. 14, 2023, was the 18th time Egypt hosted Bright Star since 1980.

“The participation of the forces themselves in carrying out joint exercises in various arenas is a very important thing. These efforts were made in a team spirit with the aim of achieving security and stability throughout the world,” said Mohammed Zaki, Egypt’s defense minister and chief of staff of the armed forces.

Seventeen nations participated in Bright Star and another 10 sent observers. From within the region came troops from Jordan, Kuwait, Pakistan, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Egypt also invited maritime partners from the Eastern Mediterranean — Greece and Cyprus — as well as nations from Sub-Saharan Africa, including Cameroon, Malawi and South Africa. Rounding out the training audience were participants from France, Germany, Great Britain, India and Italy. Tunisia and the United Arab Emirates provided observers.

The collaborative training in the skies over Egypt with the U.S. and Egyptian air forces also happened below on the ground as multinational tank crews, artillery units and helicopters pilots converged for live-fire demonstrations on the desert floor.

It happened on the beaches, where amphibious troops backed by a multinational naval flotilla landed an assault force repulsed by other Bright Star participants at the water’s edge.

And it happened in a mock village in the desert where



An Egyptian Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcon prepares to connect to a U.S. Air Force KC-10 Extender during an aerial refueling operation. STAFF SGT. EMILY FARNSWORTH/U.S. AIR FORCE



Egyptian F-16s fly in formation with U.S. Air Force partners during Bright Star.

STAFF SGT. EMILY FARNSWORTH/U.S. AIR FORCE



Egyptian military nurses and medics receive training on evacuating casualties by air.

SENIOR AIRMAN JACOB CABANERO/U.S. AIR FORCE

multinational special operation forces — many of them paratroopers dropped from Chinook helicopters and C-130 transport planes — eradicated enemy forces in a counterterrorism simulation.

“Bright Star 23 heralds the collaboration of militaries as the most potent instrument for building interoperability and regional and international cohesion,” said Pakistani Brig. Gen. Imran Shahid, head of a Pakistani contingent that numbered over 100 from the Army, Air Force and Navy.

“It gives an opportunity to display professional prowess and capabilities. It acts as a deterrent to common adversaries.”

Aside from well-rehearsed military maneuvers in the field, Bright Star’s successes also occurred among ranks of computers, within classrooms and on shooting ranges. These allowed multinational partners to learn from one another in less structured settings.

U.S. Air Force Aeromedical Evacuation trainers focused on treating and evacuating battlefield casualties to a rapt group of Egyptian military medics and nurses: Staunching bleeding, immobilizing injured limbs, clearing airways, providing oxygen. Learning went both ways. During one session, an Egyptian medic demonstrated what he described as a superior sling-making technique to the appreciative nods of U.S. partners.

Elsewhere, Kuwaiti Armed Forces medics shared their particular medical specialization with multinational partners: Treating casualties suffering from burns.

“Military joint exercises play critical roles in rebuilding and preparing forces on all levels and are considered a fundamental part of combat readiness,” Kuwaiti Brig. Gen. Meshaal Aba Al-Khiel said. “Exercises like Bright Star 23 improve soldiers’ physical and mental fitness. The Kuwaiti military understands the importance of



joint exercises and makes tremendous efforts to participate in them.”

A shooting range in the desert at Mohamed Naguib Military Base drew more than 500 multinational troops for “situation tactical exercises” that covered sniping, border security, countering improvised explosive devices and unmanned aerial systems and saving lives on the battlefield.

A command post exercise, focused mostly on the evacuation of civilians from a combat zone, showed how multinational military officers could overcome cultural differences to coalesce into a joint headquarters staff. To provide authenticity, organizers ensured that some computerized scenarios synchronized with the field training at Bright Star.

A 48-hour cyber security exercise pitting two teams against each other also blended scenarios into the larger exercise. Its 18 participants came from 8 countries: Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar,

Saudi Arabia, Cameroon, India and South Africa. After a three-day “cyber academy” in which they learned concepts of cybersecurity, the trainees split into a red team that tried to penetrate the defenses of computer networks and a blue team that defended those networks.

“The exercises entail group training designed to develop professionalism and teamwork in carrying out duties. They play a major role in improving the capabilities of forces, enhancing their readiness, and advancing professionalism and high skills in performing the tasks assigned to them,” said Col. Abdullah Al-Rashood, the senior Saudi Arabian officer at Bright Star.

For the first time, Egyptians hosted a Bright Star Forum to discuss defense and security topics that included humanitarian consequences of urban warfare, unmanned systems and the use of artificial intelligence by militaries. Some of the 91 multinational students from the

Saudi and U.S. troops get ready before a live fire event at Bright Star.

SGT. AMBER COBENA/U.S. ARMY



Senior officers from participating nations attend the Bright Star opening ceremony at Mohamed Naguib Military Base.

SGT. ANGELA WILCOX/U.S. MARINE CORPS

Egyptian helicopters help repulse a beach landing at Bright Star 23.

STAFF SGT. VICTOR MANCILLA/U.S. MARINE CORPS





seminars presented their conclusions to a panel of senior commanders at the end of Bright Star.

Troops vouched for the value of using artificial intelligence (AI) to improve warfighting abilities. AI does so by improving navigation, flying and drone performance. It helps process huge volumes of data gathered electronically, increases precision and stealth of weapons delivery and helps remove language barriers in multinational environments. On the negative side, some questioned the reliability of AI decision-making in the absence of human oversight and recognized AI systems' vulnerability to cyberattacks.

The variety of events at Bright Star is what attracted many nations to Egypt. For example, Cyprus, which conducts many bilateral training exercises with Egypt, sent a mechanized infantry team for Bright Star's concluding live-fire demonstration, a special operations team for the counterterrorism event and part of an underwater demolition battalion for the maritime portion of the exercise.

The approximately 70 Cypriot participants

planned to share knowledge acquired at Bright Star with their comrades back home, said Maj. Stelios Krashias, who attended the exercise with colleagues from the Cyprus National Guard.

"All of this cooperation has been groundbreaking and allows us to work together with colleagues in a wide range of Army, Air, Naval, Special Forces as well as other kind of exercises and activities that cover almost all military branches and tactics," Maj. Krashias said.

Egyptian commanders expressed the desire that Bright Star continues to grow with a greater variety of events suited to a full range of military specialties. Egypt hosts Bright Star every two years, and the next iteration of the exercise is scheduled for 2025.

"During training, whether command and control topics or tactical topics in performing specific activities at the level of land, air or sea, and thus integrating all these activities together during the exercise, is something that brings happiness. We hope that the volume of participation in future training will be greater by the participating countries." Gen. Zaki said. ♦

Troops from Egypt, the U.S. and other countries prepare breach charges for a demolition event at Bright Star.

LANCE CPL. JUAN DIAZ/
U.S. MARINE CORPS

UNMANNED AND DANGEROUS

Bright Star training focuses on drones
that carry chemical weapons

UNIPATH STAFF | PHOTOS BY CAPT. LUKE JEAN/U.S. ARMY



The unmanned aerial vehicle circled overhead with an ominous hum that suggested potential disaster.

Egyptian troops opened fire with their rifles — forcing the UAV into a crash landing in the desert — but not before the drone sprayed an Egyptian infantry company and their five trucks with an unknown agent.

Investigators approached the smooth white wreckage of the drone with caution. As an Egyptian military truck marked off the crash site with yellow warning flags, a multinational reconnaissance team donned protective suits.

The first step involved dispatching a remote-controlled tracked vehicle equipped with a robotic arm and camera to scan the debris for explosives and cameras. Some UAVs — dubbed “kamikazes” — are booby-trapped to explode when troops approach.

Confident that the debris of the UAV was largely inert, the reconnaissance team approached on foot. They were looking for traces of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) weapons. One Soldier carried a portable X-ray device to peer more deeply inside the wreckage. A Geiger counter scanned for signs of radiation.

The Egyptian infantry company doused by the drone complained of physical symptoms that include sneezing, irritability, skin welts and irregular breathing: all signs of chemical agents exposure.

A decontamination team swept into

action. Dozens of multinational troops formed a staging area to remove the hazardous chemicals from the victims and their equipment. Participants from Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, the U.S. and India formed teams to handle different stages of the decontamination process. All wore protective suits and hoods.

The first line of troops rinsed off the contaminated equipment and Soldiers, who proceeded to a second station for a deep scrub with agents such as chlorine that can neutralize the effects of the chemical agents. After a thorough soak, the trucks and personnel received another rinse, followed by an examination to ensure there were no lingering ill effects.

The CBRN exercise was a critical part of Bright Star 23, overseen by U.S. Central Command’s Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction Division. Before the troops could take the field to counter the simulated drone attack, they absorbed classroom lessons for two days on countering chemical and nuclear agents.

Preparation also included a stretch in a mobile “mask confidence chamber” that reassured troops that their masks and suits wouldn’t leak and subject them to potential harm in the event of an actual attack.

In an era when an increasing number of battlefield threats come in the form of unmanned aerial systems, such counter-UAV and CBRN training will remain a critical part of Bright Star and other multinational exercises. ♦

Egyptian, Jordanian and U.S. troops inspect an unmanned aerial vehicle for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear agents during training at Bright Star.







OPERATION

Breaking Barriers

IRAQ'S COUNTER-TERRORISM SERVICE LEADS THE FIGHT AGAINST SECTARIAN DIVISION

IRAQI COUNTER-TERRORISM SERVICE

Owing to the varying ethnic and racial identities of a country whose boundaries have shifted from one civilization to another since antiquity, Iraq is defined by multiculturalism. Despite being a point of pride for an Iraqi society that has made it part of its own national and historic identity, such diversity can also present a fertile environment for the growth of competing religious, sectarian and political ideas and ideologies. Extremists can exploit these to spread division, transforming sectarian diversity into violent conflicts between ethnic and racial groups that close themselves off from one another to claim sole ownership of the country's culture, beliefs and political fortunes.

Iraq has gone through historical periods of sectarian and ethnic conflict not so dissimilar to those of other nations and peoples in Europe or the Arab and Islamic worlds who themselves have suffered the horrors of societal strife as a result of conflicting narratives and visions of religious scriptures and political stances.

Iraqis from several denominations gather against religious extremism.

Saddam Hussein's domestic policies under the banner of the Baath Party widened the gap among the diverse populations that make up Iraqi society, turning the nation into divided and feuding communities and resulting in the loss of a unifying national identity.

Neighboring countries with malicious intent took advantage of these divisions after the fall of the Saddam regime and paved the way for extremist groups to penetrate the Iraqi landscape. While messages and banners varied, rallying cries began to emanate across Iraq with the aim of establishing groups that would set up transitional forces to impose their ideological and political will on the new regime in Iraq. The most dangerous of these groups was al-Qaida, which had declared war on the people of Iraq by launching a series of terrorist attacks targeting Iraqi Christians, Yazidis and other ethnic minorities, excluding only its own followers from acts of terror. Thus began a new phase of class, sectarian and ethnic strife that plunged Iraqi society into existential crisis by transforming a widening gap of differences into a river of blood spilled among peoples of a single country.

This outline of sectarian history demonstrates the scale and difficulty of any attempt to reconstruct the social fabric of Iraq. Within the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Service (CTS), our strategic vision for countering violent extremism starts with the slogan "Iraq is our Identity," which we use as a launching point to combat the kind of extremism that leads to terrorism.

Since the establishment of the CTS in 2007, its leadership has developed programs to counteract terrorist organizations' various media outlets. We focus on prevention, exposing ideological disinformation and confronting our enemies ideologically and in the field.

We counter attempts to create closed sectarian or ethnic social environments that are easy to control through misleading ideologies and media propaganda — the most effective and influential weapon extremist groups exploit to seize the minds of boys and young men in closed societies.

CTS leadership has focused on breaking the psychological barriers erected by terrorist

organizations after the fall of the previous regime, aware that we got a late start as a state because of the political circumstances of the post-Saddam democratic transformation. Today, state institutions understand their social, economic and security responsibilities better than in past years. Psychological and media capabilities were subsequently introduced into CTS to implement plans to break barriers and bridge psychological and ideological gaps. Initial operations were launched in the Al-Jada camp in southern Nineveh province to communicate openly with displaced families to disrupt recruitment and exploitation by terrorists and other extremists.

CTS counters violent extremism by drawing upon intelligence analysis and studies conducted by researchers based on testimony from arrested terrorists regarding the psychological and ideological motivations that drove them to extremism and violence. It also analyzes the social environments from which they emerged. With this information, the Iraqi Armed Forces can engage formerly isolated communities and build relations with a clear view of the needs, challenges and risks involved. At this point, the process of downplaying religious, sectarian and ethnic sub-identities that hinder Iraqi national unity can begin.

Activities carried out by counterterrorism units covered the majority of Iraq's provinces. Kirkuk — with its churches, mosques, schools and broad societal spectrum — was a key area of focus for an operation called "You Are the Sons of Iraq." From there, activities moved to Mosul in the north, to Nasiriyah, and to Samawah in the south with the message "We the sons of Iraq reject extremism."

CTS leadership also laid careful plans for Iraqi Christians. We visited and communicated with them by holding events during Christian celebrations and holidays attended by CTS leadership, officers and staff who presented gifts and mutual messages of peace as a solid foundation to rebuild national cohesion and provide reassurance to our brothers and sisters from the Christian community in Iraq.

Counterterrorism operations face deep-seated and geographical challenges:





Extremism in Iraqi society varies from region to region as a result of social and economic conditions and the ability of extremists to penetrate a given area or city. Some regions have been exposed to extremist ideology longer and more deeply. This is especially the case with the children and young people subjected to systemic brainwashing at the hands of Daesh in areas under its control. Many were forced to witness the beheadings of their peers falsely accused by terrorists of being apostates or spies. Because these traumas leave scars on the memories of children and young people, psychological professionals provide extensive rehabilitation.

Support from organizations like the United Nations and the International Coalition has buttressed Iraq’s own efforts to counter violent extremism. They have provided resources, equipment and specialized training to monitor and impede the messages of extremism and hate speech broadcast by Daesh media. After years of combating terrorism, Iraqis have proved themselves capable of defeating Daesh on the ground and in the digital space.

Today, signs of a unified Iraqi identity embracing Sunnis, Shia, Arabs, Kurds, Muslims, Christians and Yazidis under the flag of a single democratic Iraq, proud of its common history and bright future, abound throughout the country. ♦

Iraqi girls hold placards distributed by ICTS saying “We stand united against extremism.” Besides lethal operations against terrorism, ICTS conducts nonlethal operations to fight extremism.

ACTING TOGETHER IN THE ARABIAN GULF

DR. NAYEF AL HAJRAF, THEN-SECRETARY-GENERAL, COOPERATION COUNCIL FOR THE ARAB STATES OF THE GULF



The Gulf Cooperation Council is a force for security and stability in the world



Dr. Nayef al Hajraf, then-Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, addresses colleagues at a conference about Yemen held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in 2022. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Throughout history, the Middle East has been a region with great initiatives, yet with major and ongoing conflicts. I would like to focus on one great initiative that was introduced and implemented more than 42 years ago, the establishment of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, known as the GCC.

On May 25, 1981, the GCC was established by its six member states — the United Arab Emirates, Kingdom of Bahrain, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, State of Oman, State of Qatar and State of Kuwait. They formed a cooperative framework to address mutual security and prosperity and to enhance brotherly relations among member states and their people.

Over the last 42 years, the GCC has shown a great ability to deal with challenges and threats as well as maintain a stabilizing role in the region and the world. This has extended from the Islamic Revolution in Iran to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, from the Afghan war to the so-called Arab Spring. Despite these challenges and more, the GCC remains resilient and maintains its constructive role with the international community for maximum cooperation and advocates for peace, dialogue and prosperity.

Over these decades, the GCC contributed greatly to the world economy, not only by maintaining undisrupted supply of energy, but also by stabilizing the world energy market.

Regarding the Iranian nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) of 2015, the GCC demanded that any new regional security architecture should consider the interests of all to meet the desire for stability in the region.

It is extremely important that Iranian behavior to destabilize the region — the Iranian nuclear program, ballistic missiles and Iran's support to the Houthis and other regional militias — should be addressed. The Vienna talks should not be limited to the JCPOA, but should address all of the above.

In this regard, I would like to quote President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen from her keynote speech at the Manama Dialogue security conference of 2022:

“Several Gulf countries have been warning for years about the risk that Iran feeds drones to rogue groups around the world. It took us too long to understand a very simple fact: That while we work to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons, we must also focus on other forms of weapons proliferation, from drones to ballistic missiles. It is a security risk not just for the Middle East but for all of us.”

When it comes to great initiatives, the GCC will always be part of the solution. A platform like the Manama Dialogue is what the world needs. We need to share ideas and thoughts. We need to identify common challenges and create better understanding. We need to commit to collective effort. We need to fulfill our moral and social obligations toward future generations. So let us wait no more; there is no better time than now. ♦

HISTORIC FIRST:

UAE COMPANY CONDUCTS COMBAT TRAINING IN U.S.

UNIPATH STAFF

PHOTOS BY MAJ. JASON WELCH/U.S. ARMY CENTRAL

“Yalla, yalla!” The cry goes out to the team of U.S. and United Arab Emirates combat engineers. “Let’s go!”

Gunfire rips through the forest. Automatic weapons fire suppresses enemy fighters. The engineers confront a string of concertina wire blocking the infantry company’s advance.

The soldiers rush through a cloud of green smoke, emplace Bangalore torpedoes and race back to safety. A fireball from the detonation blasts a 20-foot gap in the obstacle. The military engineers dash forward, marking a safe path for dozens of Emirati and U.S. troops to advance through the breach.

This is the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Johnson, Louisiana, in the southern United States. For two weeks in 2023, it was a proving ground for UAE and U.S. military cooperation.

From February 18 to March 5, Soldiers from the United Arab Emirates 11th Mountain Battalion trained alongside American troops from the 1st Battalion, 3rd Security Force Assistance Brigade (SFAB), and the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division.

“This historic first JRTC rotation demonstrated the proficiency of the UAE Land Forces and strength of our partnership,” said Lt. Gen. Patrick D. Frank, U.S. Army Central Commanding General.

The UAE’s 11th Mountain Battalion earned the honor of being the first company from the Middle East and South and Central Asia to conduct training at a combat training center in the U.S.

Each rotation includes a live fire exercise and simulated force-on-force combat that requires a brigade combat team to coordinate among its subordinate battalions and companies. For the purposes of the exercise, UAE troops embedded as

United Arab Emirates Soldiers from the 11th Mountain Battalion train at the Joint Readiness Training Center in Louisiana.





a company within a U.S. brigade, conducting defensive and offensive operations, including two air assaults. Another U.S. Army unit role-played the enemy forces.

The mission of the JRTC has endured for 30 years — to train brigade combat teams and prepare soldiers to survive the rigors of war. Its unique combination of training areas, role-players and opposition forces — and the ability to digitally track them all — provides a realistic sense of combat.

The UAE military runs three combat training centers of its own staffed with a professional opposition force battalion. They are focused on command post exercises, field training exercises and military operations in urban terrain.

The 150 Emirati mountain Soldiers arrived in the U.S. with their equipment aboard United Arab Emirates Air Force C-17s. They spent a week adjusting to the forested terrain of Louisiana, a dramatic change from the deserts and mountains of their home country.

Halfway through the combat training rotation, observers provided a review with feedback to improve performance. An important topic of discussion was the quality of communication as orders moved along the chain of command.

For troops in individual units, it can be difficult to comprehend how they fit into the larger battle plan. The feedback gave the 11th Mountain Battalion troops a better understanding of how their actions at the company level supported the battalion's and brigade's overall efforts.

Language was the obvious challenge for both UAE and U.S. forces, but the Emirati troops also had to deal with cool, wet forests with which “enemy” forces were intimately familiar. To sustain their mission in the field, UAE forces had to limit water consumption, battery use and ammunition expenditure. Role-playing civilian bystanders caused additional complications as troops were forced to distinguish them from hostile fighters.



Emirati troops train in Louisiana.



United Arab Emirates Soldiers from the 11th Mountain Battalion engage in a live-fire drill.

United Arab Emirates Col. Badr Al Hamadi, 11th Mountain Battalion Commander, congratulates an Emirati lieutenant following the successful completion of the exercise.



The ability to synchronize with and carry out a mission in support of a U.S. battalion showcased the level of interoperability between UAE and U.S. forces, a priority for U.S. forces in the Middle East. The UAE troops did not arrive unprepared: A team of 12 U.S. trainers from the 3rd SFAB began preparing Emirati soldiers for the U.S. visit as early as 2022.

“The UAE Land Forces showed their mettle and competence during this impressive bilateral JRTC rotation,” said Col. Zachary Miller, 3rd Security Force Assistance Brigade commander. “From live-fire to force-on-force engagements, this was the proving ground after months of productive collective exercises with our UAE Land Forces partners.”

After two years simultaneously advising combat forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, the 3rd SFAB transitioned to its current model of partnering with land forces across the Middle East, establishing mutually beneficial partnerships in

Jordan, the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

Any deficiencies noted during the exercise — and Miller said there were few — were addressed once the 11th Mountain Battalion troops returned to the UAE.

“To say that I am proud of all involved would be an understatement,” Miller said. “Our team was excited to return to the UAE with them and share the many lessons they learned.”

Gen. Frank expressed hope that the success of the 2023 Emirati training mission encourages other countries to send forces to U.S.-based training centers. ♦

SAUDI HOSPITALS PROVIDE MEDICAL SUPPORT TO YEMENIS

UNIPATH STAFF | PHOTOS BY GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS, SAUDI MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

Health and medical care for veterans is a pressing demand. This is even more true in post-crisis scenarios. In response to these demands and represented by coalition forces, the Saudi government has built nine hospitals inside Yemen to support the Yemeni Ministry of Health and Population in its role to unconditionally treat the victims of war and any other civilians capable of accessing its services without regard to race, color or creed.

The locations of these hospitals were chosen based on the existing operational profile and an assessment of needs at each site. Hospital sites were chosen and mapped in accordance with the requirements of international and humanitarian law and given the necessary markings as stipulated by the Geneva Conventions and Protocols to facilitate access to the sites. Based on bed capacity, two types of hospitals were chosen: Type A hospitals with a 50-bed capacity and Type B hospitals with a 30-bed capacity.

Overseen by the Saudi Medical Support Center and Joint Forces Command (JFC), these nine hospitals are staffed by 355 personnel from various medical specialties, enabling them to provide humanitarian assistance to Yemenis across various geographic regions.

Physicians provide care in diverse specialties such as surgery, maternity, gastroenterology, emergency pediatrics, anesthesiology, and family and community medicine. They are supported by nurses who focus on general cases, emergencies and intensive care. Dental care is provided at integrated outpatient clinics. They are all supported by auxiliary staff and technicians who perform laboratory



work and assist physicians with radiology, physiotherapy, anesthesiology, surgical technology and childbirth.

To ensure high-quality care for our Yemeni patients, the Medical Support Center and JFC ensured these specializations employ certified and accredited staff.

The program has succeeded in improving Yemeni health care. The Saudi field hospitals in Yemen have served an average of 36,000 outpatients per month. Another 90 patients are admitted to the hospitals each month.

The Houthis' assault on state sectors has caused an acute shortage of health services in most regions of Yemen, along with a brain drain from areas of conflict. Saudi Arabia, represented by Joint Forces Command and the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre, has provided hospitals and prosthetics centers in addition to medical supplies distributed free of charge to hospitals and medical centers.

Saudi Arabia is also providing treatment grants to send certain cases to medically advanced countries or specialized treatment centers in the kingdom. This included a case of conjoined twins that required the combined efforts of King Abdullah Medical City and National Guard personnel to coordinate, transfer and perform delicate surgery.

The Medical Support Center participates in a handful of volunteer medical activities by hosting volunteer medical teams from the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre throughout Yemen. For example, the Medical Support Center, along with the JFC, organized campaigns

for cosmetic surgery and medicine, in addition to campaigns for cardiac and ocular health and related surgeries.

Planning is underway to host volunteer campaigns to raise the general level of health of members of Yemeni society and to promote a good sanitary culture alongside various domestic and foreign partners who will contribute to treatment, prevention and education in the health field, benefit individuals and society, and lead to an improved quality of life.

When we began these health care efforts, Yemenis reacted cautiously at first from a lack of understanding about the objectives of our mission and what we would be providing. But once it became clear that our intentions were good and the services we provided were high quality, Yemenis flocked to our hospitals across the country.

Nevertheless, these round-the-clock medical efforts are insufficient. Yemen requires the generosity and solidarity of the international community to rebuild its health system and ensure justice and equality for all members of the Yemeni social fabric.

The international community also needs to pressure those forces causing the humanitarian disaster and health crisis: the Houthis. These rebels have failed to respect patient rights and robbed Yemeni citizens of the essential requirements of life. The most productive way to help Yemenis is to support health sectors approved or operated by the legitimate government in Yemen. Ensuring the well-being and prosperity of the Yemeni people can only be achieved through credible and reliable channels. ♦

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Defense contributed information for this article.

Saudi hospital staff treat Yemeni patients.

PROJECT SECTOR	NO. OF PROJECTS	COST (U.S. \$)
Food Security	132	1,433,294,806
Health	399	857,811,380
Humanitarian Emergency Relief Coordination	30	686,711,977
Water, Sanitation & Hygiene	37	222,375,314
Protection	40	199,523,058
Camp Coordination	53	191,332,470
Nutrition	16	162,932,702
Multiple Sectors	24	134,010,800
Education	29	132,031,778
Early Recovery	27	121,899,311
Logistics	8	45,427,383
Emergency Telecommunication	1	16,000,000
Charitable Assistance	1	6,737
TOTAL	797	4,203,357,717

Source: King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre



— A JORDANIAN-U.S. NAVAL —
PARTNERSHIP



UNIPATH ILLUSTRATION

SECURITY IN RED SEA BENEFITS FROM SUCCESSFUL MULTINATIONAL TRAINING

JORDAN ARMED FORCES

The closeness of the U.S.-Jordanian maritime partnership that links the two sides in training and preparation is a result of the experience of the U.S. Navy in the maritime space internationally, the U.S. 5th Fleet's regional presence, and the faith entrusted to the Royal Jordanian Navy through regional partnerships to lead Combined Task Force 151 from December 2021 to April 2022.

This partnership was nurtured through regular joint naval military exercises. Key among these is the annual Infinite Defender exercise in which the Royal Jordanian Navy and its U.S. counterparts share experiences in planning, leadership and control, and work to unify military concepts to overcome current and future maritime security challenges. The goal is to develop defensive capabilities and professional naval forces capable of effectively carrying out duties assigned to them.

From February 26 to March 14, 2023, the Royal Jordanian Navy also participated in the International Maritime Exercise (IMX 23) alongside the U.S. 5th Fleet and 43 other nations and 15 representatives from commercial and other nonmilitary organizations. The Jordanian Navy assumed leadership of the exercise's activities in the Red Sea, dubbed the Western Command.

IMX 23 objectives focused on strengthening maritime security by employing unmanned systems in tactical operations, particularly to assist visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) teams. They also focused on unifying the

differing naval military concepts and the maritime communication systems of participating nations with an emphasis on underwater drone activity headed by the recently opened Jordanian Center for Unmanned Systems (J-ROC). Then-U.S. Task Force 59 Commander Capt. Michael Brassuer and Jordanian Royal Navy Commander



A maritime drone is launched in the Red Sea during IMX 23. JORDAN ARMED FORCES

Col. Hisham Al-Jarrah of Naval Force Command attended the center's opening. The center features advanced AI monitoring devices for marine drone systems. It also tracks maritime traffic, produces weather forecasts, and collects and employs high-precision data and information to ensure security within Jordanian territorial waters.



**Jordanian and U.S. military divers
conduct explosive ordnance
disposal training during Infinite
Defender 23 in Aqaba, Jordan.**

U.S. NAVAL FORCES CENTRAL COMMAND



Medical troops perform lifesaving training at International Maritime Exercise 23. SPC. AARON TROUTMAN/U.S. ARMY

As part of efforts to develop the capabilities of IMX 23 participants, Royal Naval Command carried out a series of joint naval exercises in Jordan's territorial waters. These exercises featured several themes including use of Saildrones, unmanned aerial vehicles, and ROV underwater drones controlled by J-ROC at Royal Naval Command, along with search and rescue methods, operational diving, and anti-piracy and port protection operations carried out by the VBSS team in coordination with the Maritime Operations Center. Also featured were Tactical Combat Casualty Care, sharing experiences through operating modern naval vessels and drones, and training VBSS teams with specialized staff.



Activities on the final day of IMX included a tactical naval drill within Jordan's territorial waters in the presence of the Commander of the Southern Military Region Brig. Gen. Al Zaboun and Royal Naval Commander Al-Jarrah. Troops fended off a simulated attack and conducted unmanned demining

operations, anti-piracy efforts, VBSS ship inspections, and seaborne medical evacuations in coordination with the Maritime Operations Center, reflecting a high degree of professionalism among exercise participants.

The Jordanian-American maritime partnership continues to progress steadily with an approach based on modernization and continuous development across all fields, reinforced with joint maritime training exercises and regional and international partnerships. The most important of these is the presence of the Royal Jordanian Navy in Combined Maritime Forces, the 34-nation coalition based in Bahrain that confronts common challenges. Its efficiency, not only in terms of equipment but also its manpower, has contributed to its growing role in international partnership policies aimed at confronting renewed maritime threats regionally and internationally, earning Jordan an extended partnership and special friendship with the United States. ♦



A MULTINATIONAL MISSION FOR PEACE

Multinational participants gather at the end of Regional Cooperation 23 in Helena, Montana.

Troops from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan Train Together to Resist Cross-Border Threats

UNIPATH STAFF | PHOTOS BY SGT. 1ST CLASS TERRA GATTI/U.S. ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

The nation of Donovia, determined to destabilize its neighbor Gorgas and reassert regional control, embarks on a campaign of irregular warfare: conducting assassinations, cutting gas pipelines, financing proxy forces, fomenting refugee crises.

But in the midst of the Donovian-engineered instability — which culminates with armed incursions across a river — seven nations coordinate forces to reestablish peace on the troubled border.

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan and Tajikistan each provide a battalion to form Task Force Patriot under the joint command of their senior officers. Uzbekistan sends an independent task force to preserve peace along the same border. Air power, if needed, is provided by the United States.

Regional Cooperation 23, a command post exercise organized by U.S. Central Command in August 2023 for its Central and South Asian military partners, represented role-playing with a serious purpose.

Border stabilization scenarios involving military, political and humanitarian crises required the cooperation of multinational staff officers overcoming differences in language, military culture and national outlook.

Nearly 200 Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Mongolian, Pakistani, Tajik, U.S. and Uzbek troops synchronized planning, operations and intelligence gathering at a training center in Helena, Montana, equipped with a shared server and interlinked computers to represent a military headquarters.

Rather than let troops separate by nationality, officials urged all participants

to sit beside counterparts from other countries in the interest of team building.

“We interact with all our neighbors in Central Asia and also the United States and by doing so learn a lot. To the very last Soldier, everyone has a specific task” said Tajik Col. Nurzoda Nurail, one of his country’s highest ranking officers at the exercise.



Senior officers from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Pakistan and Tajikistan attend a briefing at Region Cooperation 23.

Regional Cooperation has occurred nearly every year since 2001, growing more refined with each iteration. Though the storylines of the exercises are fictional, real-world crises are often reflected in the content.

“It’s evolved over time from an exercise focused on peacekeeping to one focused on regional issues that include counterterrorism, stability operations, humanitarian assistance and displaced persons,” said Guy Zero, U.S. Central Command’s deputy director of exercises.

Regional Cooperation 23 provided an escalating series of provocations to improve how multinational Soldiers react as a team to different scenarios. A criminal syndicate murdered a regional mayor and smuggled drugs across the border. A displaced people's camp became a potential recruiting ground for terrorists. A captured stolen truck contained potential biological weapons. Enemy insurgents flouted international law by erecting pontoon bridges over a river.

Missions to eliminate or capture a wanted criminal or terrorist often entailed reaching out to special operation forces operating under their own command separate from the main task forces.

As in the real world, staff officers briefing their commanders each day had to answer for operational deficiencies. For example, the task force commander questioned his subordinates about lack of communication with the Uzbek task force to plug a gap in the border defenses.

"The exercise gives opportunities to defend against enemies using not just our own assets but those of participating countries," Uzbek Col. Takhir Djabarov said. "We enlist the power of everyone in Central Asia

to work together to oppose aggression."

Regional Cooperation also provided an opportunity for Central Asian militaries to train beside their U.S. counterparts with whom they are paired as part of the U.S. National Guard State Partnership Program.

Kyrgyzstan is paired with the Montana National Guard, Uzbekistan with the Mississippi National Guard, Kazakhstan with the Arizona National Guard and Tajikistan with the Virginia National Guard. Turkmenistan, which sent observers to the exercise, also affiliates with the Montana National Guard.

Anthony Lieto of the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute of the U.S. Army War College played a large role in designing the Regional Cooperation scenarios.

Because protecting civilians from harm during armed conflict is a U.S. strategic priority, Lieto ensured it was reflected in exercise scenarios tailored to reflect realities in places like Central Asia, such as a disease outbreak in a refugee camp.

"We learn from them as they learn from us," Lieto said of his partners from Central Asia, Pakistan and Mongolia.

Officers from Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan look over a map during a border protection exercise at Region Cooperation 23.





Learning from partners was also a prime motivation of Kyrgyz Col. Daniar Isakov, a deputy commander of the multinational task force at the exercise. Although Kyrgyzstan conducts its own command post exercises, Col. Isakov was keen to discover how other militaries manage them.

The colonel staffed his 16-man delegation largely with junior officers in the hope they would benefit from first-hand experiences within the domains of intelligence gathering and military planning.

“Here in the U.S. every participant from senior commander to junior officer knows exactly what he’s doing to perform his duties,” Col. Isakov said.

Kazakh Col. Kanatbek Assemov spent most of the exercise as part of a team of senior officers helping guide the 200 participants through training scenarios. Regional Cooperation provided an ideal forum to engage face to face with officers from the six other participating countries, he said. The camaraderie began even earlier when multinational teams gathered to develop plans for Regional Cooperation.

“It’s well organized and well prepared,” Col. Assemov said of Regional Cooperation 23.

“We hope this exercise will help us improve security in our own country.”

Brig. Gen. Hammad Raza, director of joint warfare at Pakistan’s Joint Staff Headquarters, was head of the 15-officer Pakistani delegation at Regional Cooperation. He praised the execution of the exercise as “flawless.”


“This two-week multinational joint exercise brought us closer to partners with an excellent opportunity to understand the latest security challenges,” Brig. Gen. Raza said.

“This exercise has furthered the common understanding of the evolving nature of threats, direct and indirect effects on the civilian population, international laws governing the security and sovereignty of nations, and the significance of joint planning and the military decision-making process.”

One highlight of the exercise was an inspection by the commanders of the U.S. National Guard units who partner with troops from Central Asia. Brig. Gen. James Ring, head of the Virginia National Guard, warmly greeted familiar faces from his partner country of Tajikistan.

“We can’t overemphasize the importance of such exercises,” Brig. Gen. Ring said. ♦

Training at Regional Cooperation dealt with a simulated security crisis that tested troops’ ability to work together as a headquarters staff.



**BUILDING
PEACE**
THROUGH
**BETTER
POLICING**

UNIPATH ILLUSTRATION

الله أكبر

Iraq's community policing program racks up successes countering terrorism and crime

UNIPATH STAFF

Iraq's community policing program has demonstrated great success in prosecuting criminals, countering rumors, immunizing young people against the dangers of extremism and terrorism, and rehabilitating victims of drug addiction. Community police connect with citizens in their homes, in educational and health institutions, and in other state institutions to address issues at the ground level. Unipath met with Maj. Gen. Dr. Saad Maan, security advisor for the Iraqi Ministry of Interior (MOI), to discuss the role of community police.

Unipath: *What differentiates community police from local police?*

Maj. Gen. Saad: Community Police are a security organization within the MOI meant to strengthen relations between the security establishment and the community by way of community police members' intervention in issues that threaten civil peace in the country. These interventions can take many forms, which are based on providing advice, advocacy and education, as well as promoting cooperation among members of society to preempt crimes and mistakes. Local police work is based on preliminary investigations and the execution of arrest warrants issued by judicial authorities in addition to the many other tasks. The similarity between the two, however, lies in everyone's concern for the rule of law and boosting societal stability.



IRAQI MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

Unipath: *How many members and sections does the Community Police Department have?*

Maj. Gen. Saad: Staffing exceeds 1,000 men and women and includes officers of all ranks and civil servants distributed throughout the various governorates of the country. The Community Police Department includes 24 divisions, including 16 divisions in Baghdad and the provinces, and six specialized technical divisions, the administration division, and the monitoring division.

The Ministry of the Interior believes that security and stability cannot be achieved in any part of the world, let alone Iraq, without the concerted efforts of its people and their great support for the work of security institutions.

Unipath: *What accounts for the success of community policing in Iraq?*

Maj. Gen. Saad: The reason for the success of the Community Police in Iraq is officers' closeness to the community and its activities. Community Police are different from other formations in its relative simplicity: providing advice, counseling, advocacy and education without the rough touch of some traditional policing methods. Additionally, success can be attributed to the attention of the Ministry of Interior embodied by the Minister of Interior himself and his continuous and great support for community policing, providing both technical and logistical support. These are important factors in the success of community policing, which is also supported by the United Nations because of the humanitarian nature of its work.



Unipath: Could you describe the duties of these officers in more detail?

Maj. Gen. Saad: The work of the Community Police cannot be summarized in a few short lines but we can speak generally about the most important tasks entrusted to it, namely, its devotion to strengthening the partnership between the security establishment in the Ministry of the Interior and the community with its individuals, organizations, and all its details based on a common desire to improve security and stability and to fight crime in all its forms. The Ministry of the Interior believes that security and stability cannot be achieved in any part of the world, let alone Iraq, without the concerted efforts of its people and their great support for the work of security institutions.

Community Police undertake visits to schools and universities and give talks on public safety and the dangers of falling victim to criminals, as well as carrying out many other tasks and functions.

From this standpoint, the Community Police mandate is multifaceted. It includes strengthening family bonds and combating crimes that threaten its structure, such as cybercrime and extortion, and combating unhealthy customs and traditions for fear they might spread in society. This is in addition to supporting all police institutions by combating crimes before they take place through advocacy, education, advice and counseling, and engaging all citizens in activities, events and constructive communication, and attending religious events for all religions.

Community Police are also responsible for another important function, ensuring the rehabilitation of members of Iraqi society subject to addiction,



displacement or abuse, gradually reintegrating them into society. Community Police undertake visits to schools and universities and give talks on public safety and the dangers of falling victim to criminals, as well as carrying out many other tasks and functions.

Unipath: Why do the Community Police focus on social media outreach?

Maj. Gen. Saad: To keep up with technological advancements and the ease with which various segments of society and age groups have come to acquire, use, and rely on smart devices and social networking sites, Community Police have developed a number of channels for communicating with the public on platforms like Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Content includes news updates, outreach, interactive posts, and communication via messaging apps as well as live stream programs that include educational segments about negative phenomena, societal problems, and recurring crimes, without losing sight of its role in the field, which is the crux of its work.

Unipath: How do the Community Police prosecute perpetrators of cybercrime?

Maj. Gen. Saad: The most prominent cybercrime monitored by the community police is cyber extortion. The Community Police “497” hotline receives daily calls in this regard, and more than a thousand calls during the past year were dealt with. The Community Police has taken upon itself to address this in two ways: First, we respond to the appeals of those citizens subjected to blackmail. For those who want to avoid judicial proceedings, provided that the blackmailer is known to them (his address or place of work along with any details that can be obtained), community police will go to his residence and speak to him using the force of law, destroy the blackmailing tool, and get a written pledge that he will not repeat the act. Second, in cases where the blackmailer has no known address or place of work, we direct victims to the competent authorities for further help.



Unipath: What is the role of the Community Police in combating drugs?

Maj. Gen. Saad: There is no doubt that the threat of drugs is no different than the threat of terrorism, both of which work to destroy society. Drugs are also a major source of terror financing. For that reason, the war on drugs has become a priority of the Iraqi Security Forces. From that standpoint, the Community Police's handling of this important and dangerous issue takes on great dimensions, foremost of which is the deployment of community police detachments in the places where young people, adolescents and students are located as these are groups most at risk from drugs. The Community Police also work to spread a culture of awareness, provide advice, guidance and counseling, and show these groups the consequences of following the path of drugs while alerting everyone of the drug delivery methods used by dealers. From there the role of the Community Police takes another turn as it relates to drug users and addicts, i.e., working to reintegrate them into everyday life via coordination with academic, psychological and social institutions, giving talks in their places of detention, delivering in-kind aid to needy families and other practical measures. Because of our ongoing community outreach, we receive accurate information about drug gang hideouts, the names of drug dealers, and methods for transporting drugs between cities. We communicate this information to the relevant authorities. We have achieved great success carrying out targeted operations against drug dens and arresting hardened criminals.

Unipath: How many educational talks do the Community Police give and what are the available means and types of these talks?

Maj. Gen. Saad: We have specialized teams for communicating with academic and educational institutions, and we work with them to immunize young people against negative phenomena and protect them from bullying and despair that may lead to suicide or delinquency.



We have given 124 talks on the causes and treatment of suicide, more than half of them at schools. Nearly 1,900 lectures have dealt with bullying and student violence, violence against teachers or dropping out of school. Another 235 talks related to domestic violence. This type of visit takes place inside the victim's home. Another 117 talks consisted of educating the public on respecting medical institutions. In some circles of society we've had a rash of attacks on medical personnel and vandalization of hospitals and clinics by relatives of a deceased person.

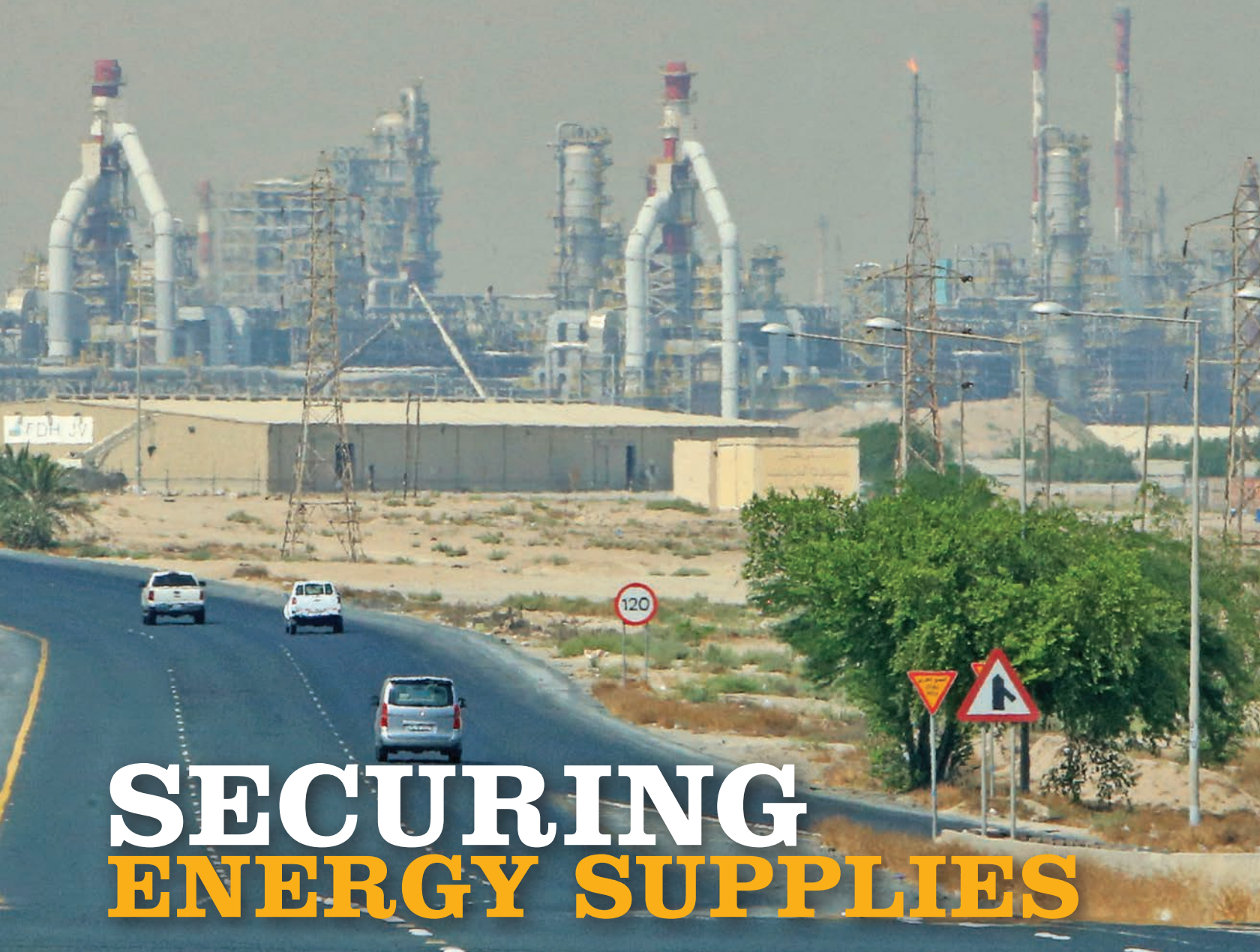
Community police officers participate in acts of community service including children's education and public works projects.
IRAQI MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

Unipath: Do you have statistics on the calls you respond to via the 497 hotline and what is the most common subject of calls?

Maj. Gen. Saad: There were 21,906 calls, and the most common topic was requests for psychological support and humanitarian aid (2,178 calls). The next most common calls were for domestic violence (1,514).

Unipath: How can Community Police track extremism and take necessary security measures?

Maj. Gen. Saad: We can safely say that Iraqi society has left the rhetoric of extremism behind, except for a very few people who our officers address through specialized departments. That being said, the Community Police address this issue by spreading an atmosphere of love, peace and peaceful coexistence among members of society. Our response to this issue is indirect through the refutation of lies and rumors that disturb the peace of Iraqi society. Because of our direct contact with the community, we monitor some cases ourselves, or citizens may inform our detachments of suspicious activities in the community. We, in turn, communicate this information to the relevant security authorities so that they can take action. ♦



SECURING ENERGY SUPPLIES

Countries Must Strike a Balance Between Providing Plentiful Energy and Protecting the Planet

SHEIKH SALEM ABDULLAH AL JABER AL SABAH
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, KUWAIT

The state of Kuwait is nestled in the very heart of a vital, resource-rich region that has seen its fair share of instability. In this turbulent region and beyond, the state of Kuwait has long played its role in safeguarding regional and global political and energy stability.

We have borne witness to the interconnectivity of markets and the collective nature of security. Ripples in Crimea lead to tsunamis in Cambridge and Massachusetts. No region is immune to the consequences of conflict. And energy prices,

unfortunately, march forward to the beat of war drums.

It is precisely for this reason that de-escalation and dialogue are vital. It is then incumbent on us to foster further dialogue that serves to abate the challenges we face together.

The state of Kuwait will continue to play its role in resolving crises through peaceful means.

In addition to the geopolitical events, we need to also consider two fundamental factors that complicate the energy-security outlook. First, a potential recession. Our experts and yours share similar assessments, which is what prompted collective action by oil-producing nations to prepare ourselves for a recession, and also to prepare investors and consuming nations for what the markets will bear in 2023. Decisions of this nature are not political; they are existential.

And secondly, aggravated energy supply chains. There needs to be greater investment in both upstream and downstream operations by all of us. Aging and retired oil refineries will only limit our ability to install the economic guardrails that protect both producing and consuming nations.



On the issue of energy security, one cannot overlook its implications for the climate. I quote a leader who has long championed this cause, His Majesty King Charles III of the United Kingdom: ‘Climate change poses an even greater existential threat to the extent that we have to put ourselves on what might be called a war-like footing.’

There should be no doubt about this. Climate change is a cross-border intergenerational threat. Critical commitments were secured at the Paris Agreement and United Nations climate change conferences. They include Kuwait’s goal for carbon neutrality in our oil and gas sectors by 2050, with the aim of complete carbon neutrality by 2060. As recently pledged at the U.N. climate change conference in Cairo, we will honor our commitments.

We meet at the nexus of climate change, security and prosperity. As our brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia persistently warned many years back, we cannot simply focus on climate alone without considering both energy security and economic prosperity. Both of these factors rest on delicately balanced scales.

LEFT: Kuwait’s Al-Ahmadi oil refinery is the country’s largest and a major supplier of fuel. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Sheikh Salem Abdullah Al Jaber Al Sabah, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kuwait, speaks at a United Nations climate summit in Egypt in November 2022. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The question was starkly posed as this: Do we freeze in the dark today or burn under the sun in the future? When addressing this conundrum, one should emphasize the fragility of energy markets and the energy transition, their effects on the global economy and geostrategic threats and their implications on less affluent nations and peoples.

As energy markets brace for what is to come, as conflicts intensify and a global recession looms, as families gather seeking warmth and comfort, let us unite. For it is through our friendship that we flourish and through our partnership that we prosper. ♦

Educator Targets

CONTEMPORARY THREATS



A view of the Royal Jordanian National Defense College in Amman. JORDAN ARMED FORCES



Brig. Gen. Azzam Al-Rawahneh, commander of the Royal Jordanian National Defense College, stresses global outreach to produce well-rounded officers

UNIPATH STAFF

To keep pace with regional threats, Jordan focuses on developing security and defense-related strategies. The Jordan Armed Forces is considered one of the militaries that honed sophisticated capabilities and accumulated expertise. It is from this very experience, which Jordan is keen to share with its brothers and friends for the sake of a stable and secure region, that the Royal Jordanian National Defense College (RJNDC) emerged to become an edifice that prepares leaders of the future. Unipath met with Brig. Gen. Azzam Al-Rawahneh, commander of the National Defense College where, as is his custom, he welcomed Unipath with hospitality and talked about the college's achievements and his vision to advance it.

Unipath: What is the mission of the Royal Jordanian National Defense College?

Brig. Gen. Azzam: First, I would like to talk about the origin of the college. The Jordanian Armed Forces are a component of the Jordanian state, and as a dynamic force they evolve as regional security challenges evolved. For this reason, the college from the outset was founded with the strategic outlook of the Hashemite leadership. Training and producing leaders who are capable of leading and

complementing the state and of addressing its challenges necessarily required the establishment of a college that could achieve this. We therefore began with the establishment of the Royal War College, which was principally focused on strategic military planning. This lasted until 2002, when the strategic vision of Hashemite political and military leadership necessitated a shift in the Armed Forces toward an advanced level that would achieve harmony and integration of the state's civil and military institutions. Its primary objective was to train leaders

capable of managing the state at the military and civilian levels and to achieve the goals and interests of the state in a way that provides qualified human resources and skills capable of moving the military establishment and the other state institutions forward, in parallel, to confront diverse emerging threats. From there, a move toward the concept of the Royal Jordanian National Defense College took place. The notion of comprehensive defense called for expertise within state institutions to achieve experience sharing. With that, the National Defense College was launched in 2003. The RJNDC started with joint courses for defense and wartime training. The college has continued down this path and has prepared 22 regiments of commanders. The work of the college is not limited to the preparation of leaders for the Jordanian side, but also involves preparing leaders from countries across the region and around the world.

Brig. Gen. Azzam: I don't consider my philosophy to be my own personal philosophy; rather, it is derived from the philosophy of the state in general and from the philosophy of the Hashemite leadership, which was primarily based on the idea of improving human capabilities to improve the state. During the past 20 years, the philosophy of the Hashemite leadership has been to focus on preparing and building young leaders who are capable of understanding the requirements of the times and of dealing with modern technologies. This came about under the guidance of the commander-in-chief and has been spearheaded by His Highness the Crown Prince Hussein ibn Abdullah, a young man possessing vision and a robust energy for work. I believe that investment in the future is an investment in young leaders in both the civil and military dimensions. This is the prevailing approach in the Hashemite

Kingdom of Jordan, and the RJNDC is one of our tools for implementing this philosophy. We are committed to following this approach and focusing on developments in military and strategic studies, whether that relates to modern wars and their patterns, the

environment of emerging threats and hardware, or to the tools used in the administration of the state. I firmly believe that the modern state cannot be managed by the tools of the past.

Unipath: Who are your students and what positions do they occupy in the Armed Forces?

Brig. Gen. Azzam: In past years, our students have been at the more advanced ranks of brigadier general and above. As for the civilian sector, there are clear conditions for the level of qualification and the level of certificates they must possess before joining the college and in their degree of classification and job grade in the government service. Militarily, we used to begin with the rank of brigadier general, but in keeping with the philosophy of investing in our young people, we now have students with the rank of colonel and lieutenant colonel in the Jordan Armed Forces to build and train young leaders who will be capable in the future of assuming leadership positions at the operational and strategic level so we are better suited to building a generation capable of decision-making and strategic planning.

“Training and producing leaders who are capable of leading and complementing the state and of addressing its challenges necessarily required the establishment of a college that could achieve this.”

Unipath: Most conventional wartime strategies have changed. How does the curriculum cover hybrid and fifth-generation warfare?

Brig. Gen. Azzam: The Defense College stays up to date with major trends. The first way we do this is through ongoing relationships with our friends in Europe and the United States. We also keep abreast of new developments in the operational environment in particular, and through scholarship and research. Additionally, we have a committee for developing and updating curriculum so that we can keep pace with the rest of the world. From here, I assure you that the precepts of operations and leadership training include modern warfare concepts in accordance with the highest international standards, whether that is hybrid or cyberwarfare, or fourth- and fifth-generation warfare. We are therefore very keen that we don't fall behind, even for a moment, in any of our research in this field since we are considered a role model in this field for the region.

Unipath: What is your philosophy on building the capabilities of young people to be the standard-bearers of the future?

“The precepts of operations and leadership training include modern warfare concepts in accordance with the highest international standards, whether that is hybrid or cyberwarfare, or fourth- and fifth-generation warfare.”

Unipath: What are your plans for developing the National Defense College?

Brig. Gen. Azzam: Our vision is derived from the leaders who preceded me and who set solid foundations on which we can build. From there we must take steps consistent with the requirements of the times and with the existing evolution of military theories and state interests. This institution has a wealth of experience providing capable leadership to the Armed Forces and government bodies. My vision is based on two main approaches. The first is the need to build bridges of cooperation and communication with all major world universities similar to the RJNDC — those that specialize

in defense, strategic theory and the doctrines of modern warfare — to transition at the regional and international levels through the exchange of experiences and lectures and by holding seminars and joint studies. In doing so, we will achieve very important results at both levels. First, we will serve Jordan by expanding the intellectual faculties of our students and building leaders that are more informed about the world. Second, we will export Jordan’s philosophy and strategic vision to the world so that we can promote and build international partnerships that serve the interests of all. As for the second half of our vision, we must promote the substantive and technical aspect of technology. This is critical to the development of the college,



Brig. Gen. Azzam, right, presides over an international conference at the defense college. JORDAN ARMED FORCES

“All leaders must be familiar with cybersecurity and with cyber operations and their requirements because they have become a key part of the defense system of any country.”

its affiliates and students. Greater emphasis should also be placed on practical training and workshops that entrench concepts and enable us to help the state address crises, especially since we are in an environment immersed in crises.

Unipath: Do you have courses that address modern technologies like drones and cyber defense?

Brig. Gen. Azzam: When we talk about an academic institution that prepares future leaders, we must have tools that contribute to the development of the academic side. By this, I mean developing the institution's capabilities and infrastructure to provide all the technologies that help students conduct research and access required information. And yes, all leaders must

be familiar with cybersecurity and with cyber operations and their requirements because they have become a key part of the defense system of any country. When we talk about defense tools, cybersecurity is one of the main pillars because cyberattacks threaten information security and could threaten the lives of citizens if networks are hacked. We also use drones in practical exercises that simulate reality. This gives students a big picture understanding of how to face these modern threats. I believe we must think seriously about how to transition to an advanced technical level that can overcome crises and enhance the efficiency and capability of decision-makers. I stress that any statesman or strategist must be familiar with all modern technologies and the ways in which terror groups and state sponsors of terrorism exploit them.



Staff and faculty of the Royal Jordanian National Defense College JORDAN ARMED FORCES

Unipath: You have a relationship with the American National Defense University and the Center for Middle Eastern Studies. Do you also have relationships with military academies in neighboring countries and other countries of the world?

Brig. Gen. Azzam: The Kingdom of Jordan is a well-established nation in the region and enjoys good relations with brotherly countries and countries of the world. We enjoy regional and international respect, and these relationships have resulted in cooperation at all levels, including academic and military. If we are talking about the U.S. National Defense University, this is an established institution that enjoys a prestigious worldwide reputation and produces leaders at all levels. This is in addition to the tremendous potential and accumulated experience available, which we are keen to build on and develop through relations with international academies. At the same time, we have a network of relationships with similar institutes through cooperation with our brothers in the region from the Gulf states, Egypt, Sudan and Iraq, including student exchanges. Similarly, we have helped many countries in the region establish similar colleges and I think we have a good balance of relations with our friends in the West as we have relations with most military academies. This network of relationships is a key part of our development strategy. At the same time, building a common understanding between these institutions is in everyone's interest.

Unipath: What countries have students and professors at the college?

Brig. Gen. Azzam: We have students from the United States, Pakistan, Taiwan, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Kuwait, Sudan and Lebanon. As for professors, there are no foreign professors in our faculty, but we do invite professors and researchers to join us as visiting guests, whether from the U.S. or European side, or from NATO or Arab countries. We have regular visits from the ambassadors of friendly and brotherly nations present in Jordan. We also have relationships with established universities, drawing on their expertise, such as Harvard University and the Geneva Center for Strategic Studies, where we offer annual joint courses in strategic leadership. So, training and development are not limited to Jordanian expertise; instead, we seek to benefit from

the experiences of our friends and brothers. Also, we have some retired professors and officers working in military academies in the Gulf countries. Most of the military academies in that region were built with Jordanian expertise, and our fingerprints are still present in their achievements.

Unipath: How does an affiliation with the RJNDC benefit other national defense colleges?

Brig. Gen. Azzam: The college's history and vision, along with the direct interest of His Majesty the Commander-in-Chief — His Majesty regularly visits the RJNDC and closely follows its development and curriculum — has provided all state institutions with an interest in assisting its development and sets it apart at the regional and international level, making it capable of being an active and positive partner for finding solutions related to the security and stability of the region and the world. We are a magnet within

“We enjoy regional and international respect, and these relationships have resulted in cooperation at all levels, including academic and military.”

the region, especially when speaking from a strategic and operational perspective. Diversity is necessary for leadership training, and even though we have a national defense college that boasts all the components of defense colleges in developed nations, we still send students to Europe, the United States and Pakistan, among other countries. At the RJNDC, we also have professors who hold degrees from several international academies and colleges. This diversity is a source of excellence and strength. Additionally, our accumulated experience, high degree of credibility, continued development, and the moderate climate and geographical nature of Jordan aids in the reception of visitors, especially since Jordanian society is a tolerant one that welcomes guests. The mutual trust between us and our friends along with the leaders who have graduated from our college over the years has proven that those who graduate from Jordanian institutes and the defense college are highly skilled and qualified to carry out their leadership duties. We have different standards. We build on our historical capital and experience and on our high credibility when training leaders. This is our capital and reputation, and with that there can be no compromise. ♦



WOMEN

Make Strong Contributions To Saudi Armed Forces

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS, SAUDI MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

Two years after Saudi Arabia integrated women into its Armed Forces, the Saudi Ministry of Defense highlighted several of these pioneers in a promotional video for International Women's Day.

The March 2023 celebrations, titled "A Promising Present/A Bright Future," illustrated how the ministry is pursuing women's empowerment in line with the Saudi Vision 2030 national modernization plan.

Among the stars of the video was Maha Al-Muhaya, head of the Department of Therapeutic Medicine in Health Services at the Ministry of Defense. A graduate of Harvard University in the United States and certified by the American Board of Oral Medicine, Al-Muhaya, the first Saudi physician to obtain such a degree, helped establish the Saudi Board Program in Oral Medicine and Diseases.

Three other women from the Ministry of Defense also recounted their stories. Pvt. Ahlam Al-Shehri expressed pride in joining the Military Police.

Pvt. Ahlam Al-Shehri works as a military police officer

Entisar Al-Subaia — a graduate of the ministry's Fakhour training program — describes her career in the General Directorate of Strategic Communications.

Nouf Al-Mutairi, from Prince Sultan Military Medical City in Riyadh, discusses completing postgraduate studies and becoming the first female military nurse specialist.

The ministry has expanded women's roles in the military by opening a portal for recruitment so that women and men can apply together for admissions and military jobs. The program encompasses the Navy, Air Force, Land Forces,



International Women's Day celebration at the Ministry of Defense

Air Defense and Health Services in line with international standards that meet the needs of the Armed Forces and achieve the goals of the ministry.

Since it opened several years ago, the Armed Forces Women's Cadre Training Centre has graduated 885 women who now occupy positions throughout the military. The center has conducted 13 courses that include a noncommissioned officer management foundational course, an advanced noncommissioned officer management course and a military police qualification course.

But the contributions of the Ministry of Defense to female empowerment are not limited to military fields. Fakhour, for example, focuses on nonmilitary administrative jobs, providing candidates with a chance to earn bachelor's and master's degrees. So successful was Fakhour at attracting women, they constituted 66% of the training program's initial graduates.

In the health services of the Ministry of Defense, Saudi women have strengthened this vital and important sector and have contributed to upgrading the overall health system in the kingdom. They have achieved advanced positions globally in the medical sector, with numerous medals being awarded to employees of the Ministry of Defense who contributed medical services to the Yemeni operations Decisive Storm and Restoring Hope. ♦

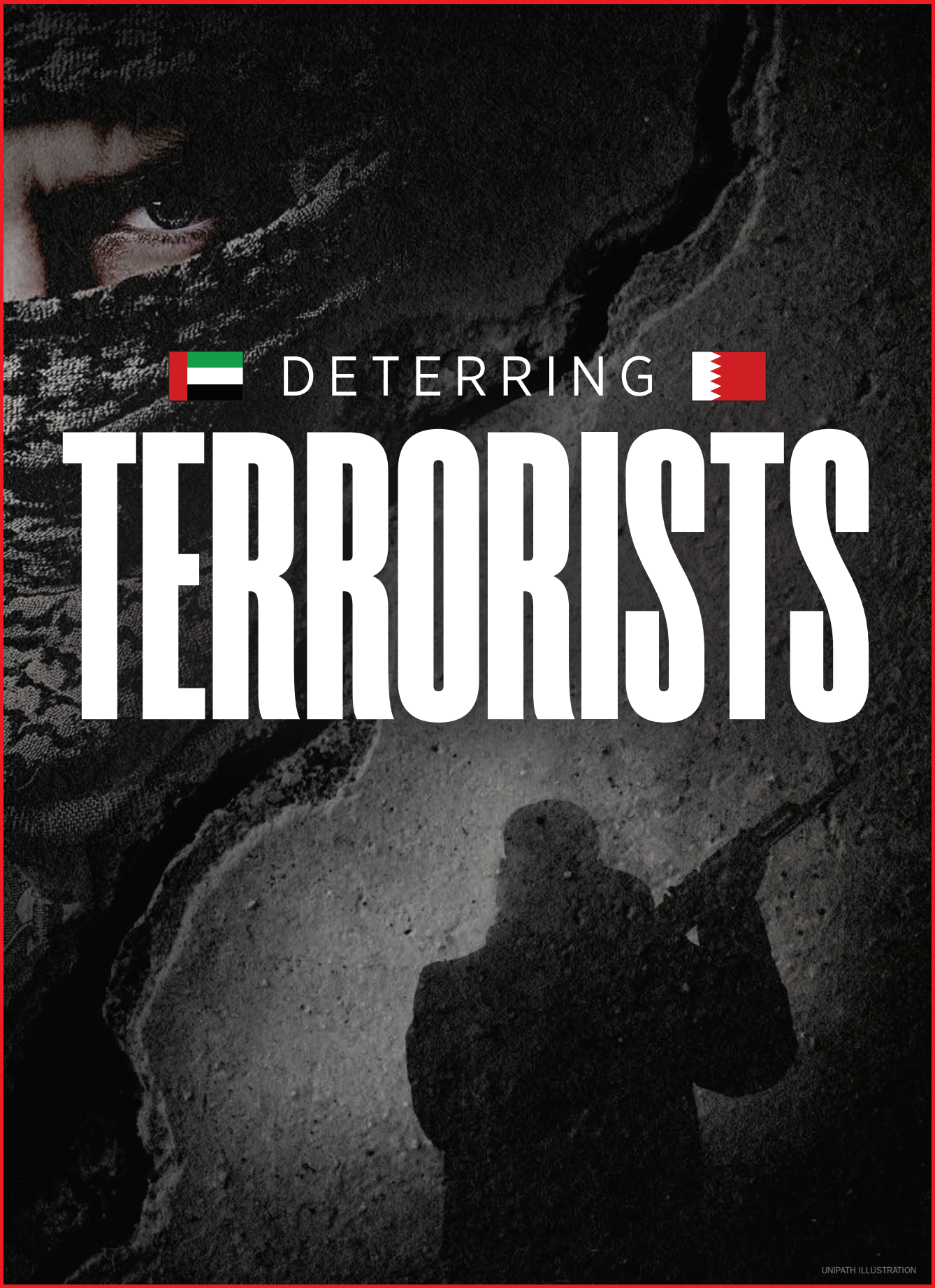
IN THE HEALTH SERVICES OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, SAUDI WOMEN HAVE STRENGTHENED THIS VITAL AND IMPORTANT SECTOR AND HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO UPGRADING THE OVERALL HEALTH SYSTEM IN THE KINGDOM.



Entisar Al-Subaie, a graduate of Fakhour training program, General Directorate of Strategic Communications



Dr. Maha Al-Muhaya, head of the Department of Therapeutic Medicine in Health Services at the Ministry of Defense



 DETERRING 

TERRORISTS

UNIPATH ILLUSTRATION



THE JALMOOD 3 MILITARY EXERCISE SHOWCASES BAHRAIN'S AND UNITED ARAB EMIRATES' COUNTERTERRORISM FORCES

UNIPATH STAFF

Counterterrorism relies on accurate intelligence work and the timely exchange of information between security services and friendly nations. Because terrorist groups hide among the local populace and use civilians as human shields, countries must emphasize rapid response efforts and high-level coordination between security services to protect the lives of citizens, preserve public property and prevent terrorist groups from implementing their plans. It was for these reasons that Jalmood 3 — the joint Bahraini-Emirati counterterrorism exercise — took place in November 2022.

The final stage of the exercise was completed in the presence of Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and United Arab Emirates President and Commander-in-Chief His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. In a spirit of close cooperation forged over decades, the Royal Guard of Bahrain and several other units from the Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), Ministry of Interior and National Intelligence Agency units participated in the exercise alongside their brothers of the United Arab Emirates Armed Forces.

The Kingdom of Bahrain and the UAE objectives included timely communication at the strategic level, prompt exchange of intelligence reports related to terrorist activities that threaten the security of regional states, a rapid response to terrorist threats and coordination in an operations environment.

The Kingdom of Bahrain also focused on quick response times and building operational cohesion among the Ministry of Interior, the BDF and other state institutions, and placing all participating security services and emergency teams under a unified field command with a single commander.

The UAE emphasized flexibility and swiftly transported special counterterror units and their equipment by air, and

participated in counter-terrorism mission beyond the nation's borders. Military observers expressed appreciation for the speed the Emiratis achieved in deploying an integrated tactical force to the theater of operations along with their Bahraini brothers.



Troops receive a briefing during the military exercise between Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. BAHRAINI MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

Among its objectives, Jalmood 3 promoted military cooperation through exercises for a number of agencies and tested the tactical capabilities as well as strategic, operational and tactical communication systems. It trained forces in logistics related to managing a counterterrorism operation and standardized the functioning of specialized units to ensure their ability to work together professionally. It also sought to achieve the maximum benefit from the capabilities and expertise available to both parties and to lay the foundation for further security cooperation.



JALMOOD 3
ALLOWED SECURITY
FORCES TO
GAIN TACTICAL
AND STRATEGIC
EXPERTISE AND
BUILT BRIDGES
OF TRUST WITH
PEERS FROM
NEARBY BROTHERLY
COUNTRIES.
COMMANDERS
HOPE TO IDENTIFY
GAPS AND ERRORS
ON THE TRAINING
FIELD SO THAT THEY
DON'T OCCUR ON
THE BATTLEFIELD.



In the interest of developing this relationship, His Highness Lt. Gen. Sheikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the National Security Advisor and Commander of the Royal Guard in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and Lt. Gen. Eng. Issa Saif bin Ablan Al Mazrouei, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the United Arab Emirates (since promoted to Chief of Staff), signed a memorandum of understanding on cooperation for operations to combat terrorism.

Participants in the exercise carried out their duties with high combat efficiency and with a field performance that reflected a readiness and ability to work within realistic scenarios developed from an analysis of regional circumstances, risks and challenges.

The success of the exercise in achieving its objectives came as a result of careful planning and preparation at every stage. The Supreme Committee that designed the exercise and oversaw its preparations met often to ensure high efficiency and proficiency.

The exercise's main training scenario was premised on the danger to a stable country that is infiltrated by trained terrorists who seek to inflict the largest possible number of casualties among civilians and government institutions, and also to manipulate the news via social media to spread terror in society and other countries in the region.

The scenario unfolded with Bahraini security services monitoring the visit of an agent working on behalf of a country supporting terror activities in the region by recruiting terrorist groups. Bahraini security services discovered a clandestine meeting between the agent and a member of a domestic terrorist group wanted by the law. To spring their trap, security services let the foreign agent depart and used a routine traffic stop to arrest the local terrorist without arousing suspicions among the local terrorist group.

An investigation revealed a terror plot against the interests of the UAE in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and based on

Joint counterterrorism forces storm a building during a simulated raid at Jalmoood 3.

BAHRAINI MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



Bahraini and Emirati commanders sign a memorandum of understanding on cooperation to combat terrorism. BAHRAINI MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



Bahraini and Emirati commanders inspect forces participating in Jalmood 3. BAHRAINI MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

this finding both nations communicated strategically and the intelligence services began tracking and analyzing. Because the terrorist operation was already under way, the UAE dispatched counterterrorism forces to Bahrain by C-17 transport aircraft. The troops, along with helicopters and armored vehicles, quickly arrived at a Bahraini military base.

The terrorist group planned to attack a diplomatic post, a school, and nearby apartments to spread terror among citizens and to confuse security services. But the swift arrival of the Bahraini Ministry of Interior's first response team cut them off. Police assessed the situation and discovered terrorists had managed to take hostages when their plans were foiled. The anti-terrorism unit of the Ministry of Interior was brought in. Given the seriousness of the situation and available information about the intentions of the terrorist group, the Bahraini National Defense Council tasked the Royal Guard Special Force with taking command of the operation in the field. Field command asked for assistance from various units of the BDF, Ministry of Interior and a hostage negotiating team to secure the release of the hostages.

Equipped with advanced communication technology and monitoring via a dashboard control system, the mission commander met with the leaders of the participating teams. In a display of precision and speed, the bus carrying civilian hostages was stormed by special forces, a booby-trapped boat intended to attack vital targets was hit, and the UAE counterterrorism forces seize a diplomatic building occupied by terrorists, catching them by surprise.

The training simulation included treating the injured in a field hospital staffed by Bahraini doctors and nurses, in addition to a forward surgical team that arrived from the UAE. Medical personnel stabilized the critically wounded, stopped bleeding and administered blood transfusions before transporting patients to specialized hospitals. The physicians in the field forwarded patients' medical charts to their colleagues waiting at the hospitals so that treatment could proceed without interruption.

Exercise planners emphasized the role of human rights by providing first aid to terrorists wounded in the operation. The Public Prosecutor's office collected evidence and conducted field investigations. More than 26 international observers with various specializations, including military, security and human rights activists from Bahrain, the UAE, the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia, assessed the performance of security forces in dealing with detained terrorists so that they conformed to international human rights agreements.

Jalmood 3 allowed security forces to gain tactical and strategic expertise and built bridges of trust with peers from nearby brotherly countries. Commanders hope to identify gaps and errors on the training field so that they don't occur on the battlefield. ♦



Saudi Arabia Rehabilitates Yemeni Child Soldiers

GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS, SAUDI MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



Committed to Islamic principles and the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen (CSLY) has been rehabilitating Yemeni children recruited by the Houthi rebels.

When child soldiers are fully rehabilitated physically and psychologically in Saudi Arabia, CSLY, through its Children Protection Unit, coordinates with international organizations to reunite them with their families in Yemen. Children receive physical and mental care in a rehabilitation program at centers prepared for this purpose.

The table (right) shows 147 child soldiers who had been recruited by Houthis but were rehabilitated in Saudi Arabia and repatriated to Yemen in a span of five years.

CSLY established a special unit to protect children in 2020 and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

In August 2022, CSLY's Child Protection Unit, in cooperation with the Saudi Red Crescent Authority, organized a three-day symposium in Riyadh on protecting children during conflicts.

Among topics discussed in the symposium were the rights of children in Islam and according to international humanitarian law and human rights laws, the general principles of the United Nations Children's Charter, measures to prevent injuries among children during military operations, protection of children's rights during arrest and investigation, efforts to reintegrate children affected by armed conflicts, rights of children while being detained, the strategy of restoring familial bonds for children during a armed conflicts, awareness of

Group	No. of children	Repatriation date
1	52	06/06/2016
2	27	01/23/2018
3	1	05/19/2018
4	7	08/11/2018
5	15	11/27/2018
6	9	01/19/2019
7	2	05/17/2019
8	7	04/09/2019
9	12	02/11/2019
10	13	08/12/2019
11	1	01/11/2021
12	1	05/24/2021

Parties involved in the repatriation process

- The Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen (CSLY)
- Yemen's legitimate government
- The Saudi Red Crescent Authority
- Representative of Human Rights Watch
- The International Committee of the Red Cross
- The Children Protection Unit of the CSLY

the importance of children's rights and the necessity to raise them in a supportive environment.

However, the one-sided Saudi effort to protect Yemeni children from the impact of the ongoing war in Yemen will not suffice without the Houthis' collaboration.

Until recently, the Houthis have not honored an agreement they made in April 2022 with the United Nations to stop recruiting children.

Using schools and other educational facilities for training, where lectures are given to promote violence and Houthi militant ideology, Houthis continued to recruit and deploy child soldiers to frontlines as part of a force buildup during U.N.-brokered armistice. ♦

Sources: Al Ayyam, Al Jazeera

A Yemeni boy holds a Kalashnikov assault rifle during a gathering of newly recruited Houthi fighters in the capital Sanaa in 2017. AFP/GETTYIMAGES



Fighting Instability in YEMEN

Iranian Misbehavior Represents a Barrier to Peace in the Region

MOAMMAR AL-ERYANI, MINISTER OF INFORMATION, CULTURE AND TOURISM, REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

On July 5, 2023, U.S. Central Command reported it had thwarted an Iranian attempt to seize Bahamas- and Marshall Islands-flagged oil tankers near the Strait of Hormuz. A day later, the U.S. 5th Fleet announced that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Navy (IRGC-N) had seized a merchant vessel in international waters near the Arabian Gulf and that the U.S. Navy had deployed ships in response.

These incidents by the IRGC-N in international waters are not the first. Since 2021, Iran has targeted 20 commercial vessels in continuation of a pattern that Iran and its proxies have practiced since the 1979 revolution that created the Islamic Republic.

The escalation came months after the March 1 announcement that the Saudi and Iranian sides had agreed to restore diplomatic relations within two months after a seven-year pause. This agreement was part of relentless efforts made by the leadership of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to settle crises, heal the rift, solve outstanding problems among the countries of the region, curb interference in the affairs of Arab countries, and establish healthy relations based on the principle of non-interference, respect for national sovereignty and the pursuit of common interests.

That moment presented an opportunity for the Iranian regime to review its malign behavior, respect the principles of the United Nations Charter and international laws and treaties, and refrain from sponsoring militias and using them to implement destructive policies.

However, after the agreement's signing, Iran's conduct remained unchanged. It continued to support militias that spread chaos and terrorism and threaten international interests. Tehran's actions pose a persistent danger not just to the region, but also to the international community, as it seeks to alter the region's political, cultural and ideological balance through force.

Iran is determined to export its revolutionary model. It does so by expanding its geographic and cultural influence through support to militias like the Houthis in Yemen to consolidate power internally and externally.

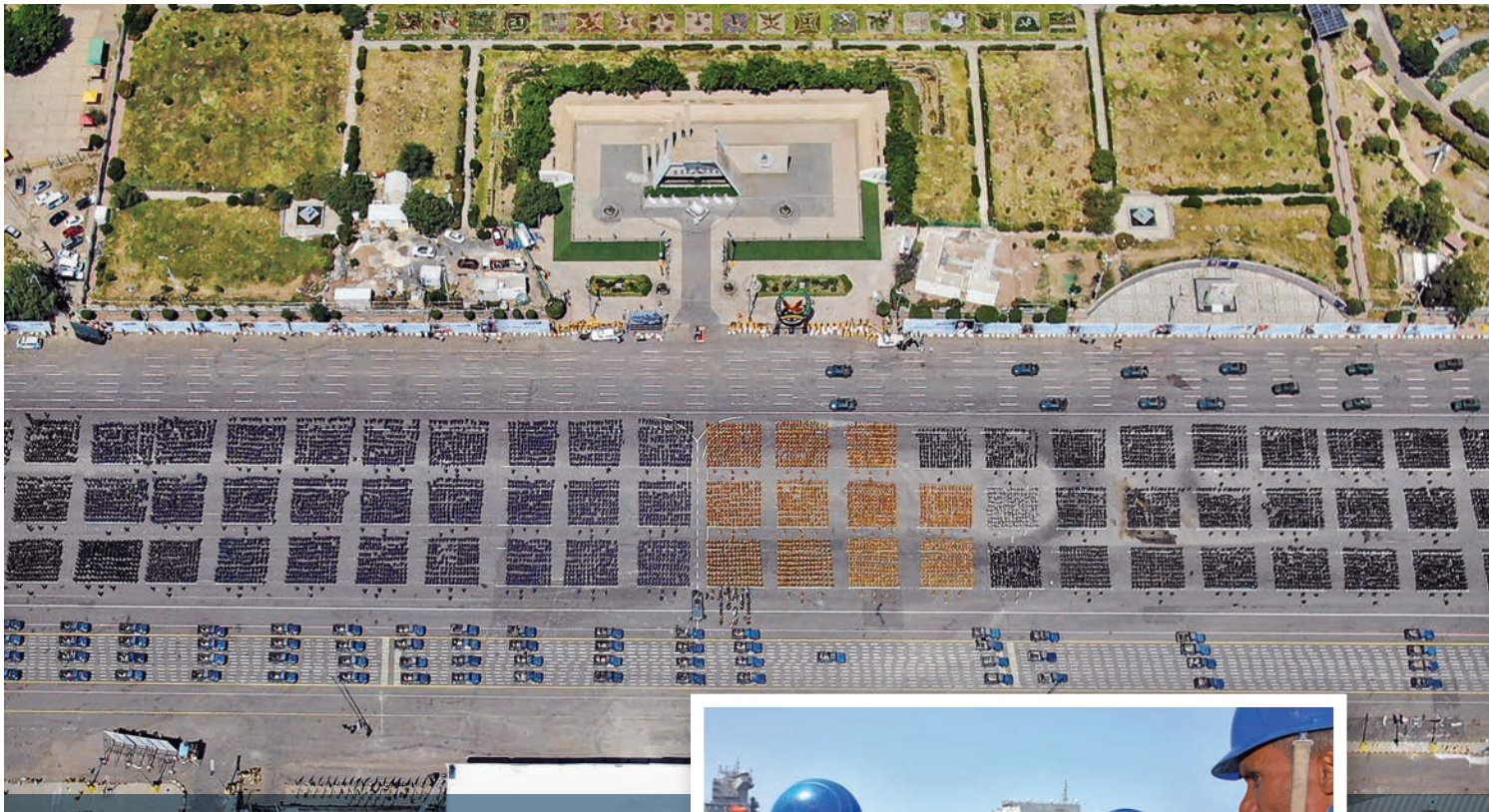
The Islamic Republic, which spends generously on militias loyal to it and finances their malign activities, provides them with money, weapons and combat training. Tehran considers its militias, including the Houthis, closer to it than the average Iranian citizen, who does not believe in its ideology.

Herein lies the danger: Iran works to undermine the stability and independence of regional states while empowering its militias, even if that means doing so atop the ruin and destruction it has caused. This is most evident in Yemen, where a bloody conflict has exacerbated one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

In Yemen, people are still paying the price for the Iranian regime's policy. Its expansionist ambitions and blatant interference in Yemen's internal affairs reached a climax with

The strategic shipping channel Bab al Mandeb remains exposed to Houthi aggression.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES



The Houthi stage a military parade in September 2022, a show of aggression that flouted U.N. attempts to maintain a cease-fire and establish peace in Yemen. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

the Houthi militia's coup against the state in 2014, aided by Iranian support, financing and planning.

Iran continues to play a major role in the continued smuggling of weapons and drugs to the Houthis in violation of U.N. Security Council Resolution 2216, disrupting initiatives and efforts made by neighboring countries led by Saudi Arabia and the international community to de-escalate and restore the U.N.-sponsored truce, and standing as a stumbling block to efforts to end the war and bring about a comprehensive, just and sustainable peace. Additionally, Iran disregards the heavy toll of losses and the economic and humanitarian suffering Yemenis experience in the war triggered by the coup.

Yemen's experience of Iranian influence since the emergence of the Houthis as an armed militia in 2003 is strong evidence of the damage wrought by four decades of Iranian expansionist policies and hegemonic ambitions in the region.

Anyone who visited Sanaa, the capital of Yemen, before it fell into the hands of the Houthis and compares that to the city of today will understand the meaning of "exporting the Iranian revolution." Today, the capital displays billboards in homage to Iranian leaders.

Furthermore, while preparations are being made for the closure of the Yemen-American Language Institute, which specializes in teaching English, universities and institutes have been pressured to specialize in Persian language education.



Yemeni Coast Guard members engage in visit, board, search and seizure training on ships in the Arabian Gulf. Behind them is the USS Lewis B. Puller, from which they disembarked. SPC. BRYAN CLAY/U.S. ARMY

Houthis have also canceled the commemoration of patriotic events in deference to Iran.

With that in mind, the international community, led by the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council, should not permit the malign behavior of the Iranian regime to go unchecked. In addition, the Yemeni Coast Guard requires support to improve its capability to protect Yemeni waters and join multinational maritime missions to protect international waters near Yemen.

It is time for the international community to move decisively to maintain international peace and security. This must be done to confront the threat posed by Tehran and its militias — foremost among them the Houthis — and the systematic instability that it promotes, for which countries and peoples of the region pay a heavy price. ♦



Service to the State

Brig. Gen. Azzam Al-Rawahneh runs the Royal Jordanian National Defense College with experience gained as head of military intelligence

UNIPATH STAFF

Born into a household filled with love of soldiering and patriotic sacrifice, Brig. Gen. Azzam Irshed Al-Rawahneh's military personality was inherited from his father, a Soldier who died fighting to defend the sovereignty of his homeland. Brig. Gen. Al-Rawahneh, commander of the Royal Jordanian National Defense

College in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, received his early education in schools affiliated with military culture, where students receive an education in the noble and patriotic principles of the Armed Forces. With his great knowledge of history, politics and literature, he is a distinguished presence at official and social events and adds a special flavor to any gathering in which he takes part.

He has occupied several sensitive positions in the Jordan Armed Forces, through which he gained considerable experience and transferred these successes to later posts. Al-Rawahneh considers this one of the keys to the success of his military career.

"I have been very fortunate to have served in multiple positions to keep pace with military qualifications from an operational, tactical and strategic perspective. At the same time, I have obtained academic qualifications by studying and participating in a large number of workshops, seminars and conferences at the global and regional levels. I was keen to transfer my field and academic experience managing daily operations. The art of leadership is applying successful experiences to improve capabilities," he said.



He enrolled at the Royal Jordanian National Defense College, where his leadership skills were shaped by the parameters of Jordanian society and the culture of the Jordan Armed Forces. After graduation, he never ceased acquiring knowledge of military science: He holds a master's degree in strategic defense studies from

Malaysia, in addition to advanced studies at the U.S. Army Staff College, and encourages leaders never to stop learning.

"A leader must pursue military culture and science by reading specialized literature and attending military and security conferences and seminars," Al-Rawahneh said. "The exchange of experiences and successes in these forums is beneficial to all participants. Studying military science at various academies and universities also causes a leader to think multidimensionally. A leader must study the defense strategies of friendly and unfriendly nations."

He spent most of his career at the Directorate of Military Intelligence, where he worked after graduating as a second lieutenant in 1989. He rose to become the director of Military Intelligence where, with a high degree of professionalism, he achieved great success during a difficult period — an indication of his acumen for leadership and crisis management.

"I assumed management of the Intelligence Directorate at a very sensitive and decisive time full of internal and external tensions, challenges, and threats, in addition to the emergence of the COVID-19 crisis, in which the Jordan Armed Forces bore a great responsibility. Terrorist organizations

were moving along the kingdom's northern and eastern borders, which makes the role of intelligence in dismantling and destroying these groups before they infiltrate the country's borders an important matter."

"We were successful in staving off the threat of terrorist gangs sneaking across our borders through diligent intelligence work and the sharing of intelligence information with other state institutions and friendly nations. We have also been keen to develop our capabilities and employ modern technologies in border control and the monitoring of terrorist activities, whether on social media pages or via lines of transport."

Al-Rawahneh has drawn his command reasoning from the leadership philosophy of the Hashemites, which mixes firmness and decisiveness with mercy by dealing with issues humanely and in a way that does not violate military values.

"A leader must be close to his Soldiers and listen to them. Before directing punishment toward those who fall short, a leader must understand the reasons that prompted the shortcoming," he said. "Some simple mistakes can be addressed via correction and by accepting a Soldier's promise that it will not be repeated. Amnesty strengthens the respect and loyalty of the Soldier toward his commander, but at the same time there must be zero tolerance in matters that contradict national and military regulations."

The brigadier general believes that a leader exists to serve his country, his commanding officers, and his Army. This is the maxim of the Jordan Armed Forces on which he was raised, and the example followed by all the leaders of the Arab Army throughout history.

"The Army's confidence in the abilities of its commander qualifies him for the position he occupies and is tantamount to commissioning him to serve the homeland from his position. That is, the position is a temporary station for a commander who must leave behind a positive impression. It is a trust granted by the state to the commander, and he must maintain this trust and serve his country to the best of his abilities, shaped by his field and academic experiences."

Al-Rawahneh professes the importance of maintaining alliances to counter terrorist threats. Modern asymmetric warfare requires international and regional alliances and intelligence sharing at all levels. The three-front concept of conventional warfare is obsolete. New fronts have emerged in cyberspace, outer space and from drones.

"Our experience as Jordan Armed Forces in the war on terror is an important one that many countries have benefited from. Similarly, our participation in Afghanistan was enriching and important, contributing to enhanced stability there," he said.

"Our philosophy is based on the idea that we are part of the world and have a significant role in promoting stability, whether regional or international. That's especially true as terrorist gangs use low-cost drones to hit vital targets. The cyber threat no longer disrupts only communication networks, but may cause human catastrophes if attackers can open dam gates or change formulas at oil refineries or petrochemical installations. We must, therefore, be prepared to combat these changes."

"A leader must pursue military culture and science by reading specialized literature and attending military and security conferences and seminars. The exchange of experiences and successes in these forums is beneficial to all participants. Studying military science at various academies and universities also causes a leader to think multidimensionally. A leader must study the defense strategies of friendly and unfriendly nations."

~ Brig. Gen. Al-Rawahneh

Al-Rawahneh believes that each military commander develops his leadership philosophy based on foundations and values taken from the history and culture of the institution in which he works, while maintaining the flexibility to adapt to developments and changes in the world. He applied that very philosophy when he transitioned to be commander of the Royal Jordanian National Defense College.

"The field of intelligence greatly benefits the academic side of the National Defense College through the experience that I have developed on the intelligence side as it serves the concept of defense. The intelligence and academic side of this college can be aligned. We as military personnel are trained to adapt to any location in which we work," he said.

"In the end, the military establishment remains the institution most prominent in its ability to produce leaders who have the experience and courage to make decisions and support the efforts of the state in moving toward the growth in which we absolutely believe, by reducing the impact on our country of regional conflicts and crises."



BAHRAIN MODERNIZES AIR FORCE

UNIPATH STAFF

Bahrain is equipping itself with sophisticated U.S.-made fighter jets to ensure the security of the Arabian Gulf.

In March 2023, Bahraini officials celebrated the upcoming delivery of the first of 16 F-16 Block 70 fighter jets. The ceremony took place at manufacturer Lockheed Martin's plant in South Carolina in the United States.

Bahrain will receive the first batch of the latest F-16s in 2024 with the remainder to follow in 2025. Bahrainis first piloted the jet in January 2023 at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

The Block 70/72 features advanced avionics, an active electronically scanned array radar, conformal fuel tanks, a modernized cockpit with new safety features, extended structural service life of 12,000 hours, advanced weapons, and improved engine performance. Among its capabilities is tracking and shooting down drones.

"This advanced capability will enhance Bahrain's involvement in the international coalition playing a vital role in preserving peace and stability, said Commander of the Royal Bahraini Air Force Maj. Gen. Sheikh Hamad bin Abdullah

Maj. Gen. Sheikh Hamad bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, Royal Bahraini Air Force Commander, speaks at the F-16 Block 70 delivery ceremony in South Carolina in March 2023. TECH. SGT. JAVIER CRUZ/U.S. AIR FORCE

Al Khalifa. "The Royal Air Force is proud to be first Air Force to own Block 70 fighters."

Bahrain will be the first country in the region to acquire the sophisticated aircraft. Jordan recently placed an order for 12 of these F-16s.

"Our focus is on partnership in the region ... there is no better way to secure partnership than with the rollout of the Block 70 F-16. It is not just a deliberate capability for Bahrain; it is now an investment with a long-term relationship. We will be able to cooperate and be interoperable with them for decades to come because of this purchase," said Lt. Gen. Alexis Grynkeiwich, commander of the U.S. 9th Air Force and Air Forces Central.

Housing the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet headquarters and the 38-nation Combined Maritime Forces, Bahrain enjoys a special relationship with the U.S. Sources: Al Watan, U.S. Air Forces Central



Kyrgyzstan Reaches Hydroelectric Plant Deal with Neighbors

UNIPATH STAFF

Securing energy supplies for its population, Kyrgyzstan plans to build its Kambar-Ata 1 hydropower plant along the Naryn River with the help of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.

In January 2023, the energy ministers of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan signed a deal forming a joint venture to build and manage the Kambar-Ata-1 hydroelectric plant in Kyrgyzstan.

The project has been stalled for decades due to lack of investment. It would be the largest power plant on the Naryn River, with a capacity of 2,000 megawatts. It may take 10 years to build.

The Kyrgyz government insists the plant will boost energy security for its country, but also benefit Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, which can import electricity from the plant. Furthermore, the plant could improve water management in the region. Because the plant will be built upstream in Kyrgyzstan, downstream countries, such as Uzbekistan, could benefit from the coordinated release of water from the Kambar-Ata Dam for irrigation.

According to Kyrgyzstan, building the hydroelectric complex will cost near \$2 billion, requiring construction to occur in six stages.

“The road map spells out how we will work ... If the feasibility study is completed in 2024, we will start the plant’s construction ... A joint venture owned by Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan will be registered in Kyrgyzstan; everything will be under our control,” Kyrgyzstan’s Deputy Minister of Energy Mirlan Zhakypov said.

Kambar-Ata-1 is just one of several Kyrgyzstan hydroelectric plant initiatives projected for the Naryn River.

Sources: Azattyk, KTRK

A view of the Naryn River, on which Kyrgyzstan would like to build a hydroelectric plant.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF KYRGYZSTAN

Following in Daesh’s Footsteps, Houthis Persecute Women

UNIPATH STAFF

In a flagrant violation of human rights and the values of the Yemeni people, the Iranian-backed Houthi militia issued a directive to its militiamen in December 2022 to ban women from traveling without being accompanied by a male relative.

The Houthi encroachment on women rights was not confined to travel. The militia in December 2022 went further and directed restaurant managers in Sanaa to require a marriage license for families wishing to eat at their restaurants.

Gender segregation was imposed in college campuses, and study times in universities were split into two shifts: Morning shift for women and evening shift for men. Several beauty salons, swimming pools and gyms for women were closed in Sanaa in August 2022. In October 2022, the Houthis banned photography shops from taking photos of women except for their faces when necessary.

Following in the steps of Daesh and Taliban groups, the Houthis are trying to squeeze the space in which women can operate freely, outlining women’s roles according to Houthi theological priorities.

Yemen’s civil war broke out in September 2014, when the Iranian-backed Houthi militia seized Yemen’s capital of Sanaa and demanded a new government. The rebels then seized Yemen’s presidential palace in January 2015, forcing then President Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi and his government to resign.

Rescinding his resignation, Hadi returned to Aden in September 2015 to lead a resistance supported by the Saudi-led Coalition to Restore Legitimacy in Yemen.

The war has claimed the lives of over 150,000 since 2014, including over 14,500 civilians, 3,774 of whom have been children.

Sources: Global Conflict Tracker, Al Hurra, Amnesty International



U.S. Ambassador to Tajikistan Stresses Security Ties

UNIPATH STAFF

New U.S. Ambassador to Tajikistan Manuel Micaller introduced himself in Dushanbe in April 2023 by stressing regional security cooperation between the two countries.

Micaller presented his credentials to Tajik President Emomali Rahmon on March 10, 2023, and followed that with a news conference a month later in which he described the Tajik-U.S. partnership.

“In the field of security, the priority for the two countries is the fight against extremism and terrorism, as well as the strengthening of the Tajik-Afghan border,” he said.

A priority for Tajikistan is stopping drug and weapons trafficking from Afghanistan. For example, in April 2023, criminals got into a shootout with Tajik troops while trying to

smuggle drugs, weapons and ammunition. The firefight ended with the smugglers fleeing back into Afghanistan’s northeastern Badakhshan region.

Tajik authorities have promoted creating a regional “security belt” around Afghanistan to stop criminal, terrorist and extremist groups from infiltrating Tajikistan and its Central Asian neighbors. The Tajik-Afghan border stretches for more than 1,300 kilometers, much of the terrain mountainous and isolated.

Recognizing the importance of strengthening Tajikistan’s border, Micaller recounted that the U.S. has spent more than \$25 million to build and renovate 27 border facilities in Tajikistan. The work has encompassed 13 border outposts, nine border checkpoints, two border guard detachment



U.S. Ambassador to Tajikistan Manuel Micaller visits the Koni Angisht border post near Afghanistan to observe mine clearing. U.S. EMBASSY DUSHANBE

buildings and three training centers.

The ambassador expressed confidence that Tajik-U.S. cooperation would benefit the Tajik people.

Sources: Avesta, U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan, Ozodi

U.S. RENEWS COMMITMENT TO JORDAN’S SECURITY

UNIPATH STAFF

To discuss security cooperation and bilateral relations, U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin visited the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as part of a trip to the Middle East and met with His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein in March 2023.

Among shared concerns and challenges discussed by the two leaders were helping sustain security and stability in Iraq, arriving at a just political solution to Syria’s conflict, and countering destabilizing activities in the Middle East.

Austin expressed appreciation for Jordan’s efforts to



Jordan’s King Abdullah II meets with U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin in Amman in March 2023.

THE ROYAL HASHEMITE COURT OF JORDAN

facilitate integrated maritime, air, and missile defense cooperation with its allies. The U.S. is working with Jordan to deepen cooperation on arms transfers, cybersecurity, counterterrorism and border and maritime security.

Reaffirming the U.S.’s commitment to Jordanian stability and prosperity, Austin highlight the \$10.15 billion in assistance pledged to support Jordan’s water infrastructure and public sector, under the U.S.-Jordan Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Partnership signed by the two parties in September 2022.

The two countries carry out joint and bilateral military exercises regularly to maintain military-to-military relationships. Jordan hosts the largest of them — Eager Lion — every two years.

Sources: The Jordan Times, U.S. Department of Defense



LEBANESE ARMED FORCES SUSTAINS MISSION

UNIPATH STAFF

To mitigate financial hardship experienced by Lebanese security forces, the United States and United Nations implemented a temporary support program in April 2023 to help sustain the country's military institutions.

Valued at \$72 million, the financial support is intended for members of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and Lebanese Internal Security Forces (ISF).

The U.S. Embassy in Beirut issued a statement explaining the need for the money: "This program will help alleviate some of the economic hardship faced by ISF personnel who are exerting tremendous efforts to serve their country, its people and

the residents on its lands, ultimately contributing to the overall security and stability of the country."

Lebanon's economic downturn — exacerbated by COVID-19, the August 2020 Beirut Port explosion and the Russian invasion of Ukraine — has stressed the country's military and security institutions.

LAF commander Gen. Joseph Aoun praised multinational security partnerships, including the presence of United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in the south of the country.

"The fact that the international community is keen on preserving the military institutions proves that it

Lebanese Soldiers patrol streets during parliamentary elections in Beirut in May 2022. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

will not allow Lebanon's collapse on the security front," Gen. Aoun said.

In addition to its mission of maintaining Lebanon's border against incursions from terrorists and criminals, the Lebanese military preserves unity in the ethnically, religiously and ideologically diverse country.

As a result, the international community views the LAF as a reliable partner to help uphold regional security.

Sources: [thenationalnews.com](https://www.thenationalnews.com), USAID, United Nations Development Programme



UAE PLAYS LEADING ROLE IN SPACE EXPLORATION

UNIPATH STAFF

Built by Mohammed bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) and dubbed Rashid, the first Arab-built lunar spacecraft reached the moon’s orbit courtesy of the United Arab Emirates.

The small and lightweight rover was carried into space by a Space X Falcon 9 rocket launched from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida in the United States in December 2022.

The rover’s mission was to conduct scientific experiments on the moon and transmit data and images to MBRSC.

UAE Vice President and Prime Minister His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum called Rashid part of an ambitious UAE space program that includes investigations of Mars and Venus for the benefit of all humanity. Although the probe crash landed in a lunar crater, the knowledge gained for future missions was invaluable.

“The UAE launched Rashid probe with the aim of landing on the surface of the moon to be the fourth nation in the world and the first in the Arab community to land on the surface of the moon,” the prime minister noted on the day of the launch.

United Arab Emirates scientists who developed the country’s first lunar rover appear after the launch of Rashid. REUTERS

To inspire Emiratis, train a generation of engineers and scientists and promote space exploration and research in the region, the United Arab Emirates Space Agency established MBRSC in Dubai in 2006 with a focus on satellite projects, a Mars mission, a lunar mission, and the development of astronauts.

Dr. Sarah Al-Muaini, head of the team of scientists working on the mission, said: “The challenge we faced during the construction of the probe is that there isn’t a recent mission to the surface of the moon on whose scientific data we could rely and build upon for the Emirates project to explore the moon, and to overcome this challenge, we carried out a large number of studies and experiments to understand the nature of the lunar surface and to ensure the effectiveness of the technology on probe Rashid.”

In 2019 MBRSC sent astronaut Hazzaa al-Mansoori to the International Space Station. And in July 2020, the Emirates Mars Mission launched the Hope Probe to orbit that planet. Sources: Al Khaleej, CNN, The New York Times



UNIPATH STAFF

The Qatari National Cybersecurity Agency (NCSA) honored 38 cadets from the Ministry of Defense for their contribution to securing Qatar's cyberspace during FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

"Our prudent leadership realized early on the magnitude of the challenges that would [potentially] face the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, the largest and most important tournament in the world ... one of the most arduous challenges was securing cyberspace for the tournament and for this end the National Agency for Cybersecurity was established," said NCSA Chairman Abdul Rahman bin Ali Al-Farahid Al-Maliki.

NCSA is charged with implementing and overseeing issues associated with national cyber risks and threats, enhancing readiness and resilience against cybercrimes, and protecting vital infrastructure.

NCSA held several training courses for government and private employees as part of its preparations for Qatar's hosting of the FIFA World Cup in late 2022. The courses highlighted risks and challenges facing cybersecurity, studying the most malicious cyberattacks, how they were detected and addressed, and the extent to which national institutions adhere to cybersecurity measures.

Training involved not just NCSA employees. A September 2022 session included participation by 685 trainees from schools and institutions of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. A November 2022 course invited university students to promote cybersecurity.

Sources: Al Raya, Al-Sharq.com

Head of U.S. Central Command visits Turkmenistan

UNIPATH STAFF

Expressing respect for Turkmenistan's "positive neutrality," Gen. Michael E. Kurilla, commander of the U.S. Central Command, visited the country in April 2023 with the goal of strengthening security cooperation.

Gen. Kurilla held meetings in the capital Ashgabat with Turkmen military leaders and senior representatives from the Foreign Ministry. They included Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vepa Hajiyevev, Minister of Defense Lt. Gen. Begench Gundogdyev and Chief of the General Staff Col. Akmurat Anemetov.

As Kurilla engaged with these officials in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan Minister of Foreign Affairs Rasit Meredow arrived in Washington, D.C., for annual bilateral consultations with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Turkmen leaders praised the recently established training and educational partnership between the Armed Forces of Turkmenistan and the Montana National Guard, part of the U.S. National Guard's State Partnership Program.

In a goodwill gesture, Kurilla joined Anemetov to lay a wreath at a monument to honor Turkmen Soldiers who died fighting in World War II.

Kurilla left the visit convinced that Turkmenistan and the U.S. shared visions about the territorial integrity and stability of the Central Asian states.

"Visits like this allow the kind of enduring relationships that cannot be built over the phone or through a video teleconference," the general said.

During his meeting with the U.S. secretary of state in Washington, Turkmenistan's foreign minister addressed security topics that included how to reduce instability in neighboring Afghanistan.

Sources: News Central Asia, U.S. Central Command, DW, Kaspyskiy Vestnik



Iraq Gains Support at International Conference

UNIPATH STAFF

Located on the shores of the Dead Sea, Jordan's King Hussein Bin Talal Convention Centre hosted in December 2022 the Baghdad Conference for Cooperation and Partnership aimed at supporting Iraq and shoring up regional stability.

High-level officials from Jordan, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Turkey, Iran, France, the European Union and Iraq discussed five dossiers: situations in Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria; counterterrorism; food security; energy; and Iran's nuclear deal.

In his opening remarks, Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani highlighted the importance of enhancing ties among nations of the Middle East. "We meet today in Amman full of hope to continue promoting amities among our countries in all levels in a way that contributes to laying down the foundations of stability, prosperity and development in the region," Al-Sudani said.

His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein of Jordan stressed the significance of Iraq's stability to the security of the Middle East, portraying it as "an essential pillar of the region's security." Reinforcing the king's statement, Jordanian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Ayman al-Safady viewed the gathering as a continuation of recent efforts by his country to support Iraq.

"Our gathering today comes as a reaffirmation to the firm stance of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan toward the brotherly Iraq and promotes its security, stability, and sovereignty," al-Safady said. "As you know, Iraq has accomplished a tremendous historic victory over Daesh gangs in the past and has started reconstruction operations in a steady and tangible manner."

French President Emmanuel Macron stressed the necessity to respect Iraq's sovereignty and boost its stability, saying: "Iraq probably is, given the past decades, one of the main victims of regional destabilization." Along the same lines, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan said, "the kingdom



Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein, Jordanian Foreign Minister Ayman al-Safady and French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna speak at a news conference during the second Baghdad Conference for Cooperation and Partnership. REUTERS

affirms its total rejection of any aggression on the territory of Iraq."

Iraq recently arrived at a compromise government after a year of stalemate. Soon after assuming office, al-Sudani embarked on a daunting mission to deliver promises he made to Iraqis to fight corruption, narcotics and terrorism. Other promises include creating jobs, improving essential public services and addressing ethnic grievances that threatened to divide society.

Delivering on the prime minister's promises, in the largest drug disposal operation in years, Iraqi authorities burned about six tons of drugs in Nahrawan District of Baghdad: piles of cannabis, Captagon pills and cocaine.

In November 2022, the country arrested the first suspects in the theft of public money known as "heist of the century." Regarding the plundering of the Iraqi public fund, the prime minister vowed to "bring everyone to account whoever proves to be involved, be it politicians or state officials."

Sources: Al Hurra, Sky News, The Guardian, YouTube



Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan Agree on Border Demarcation

UNIPATH STAFF

Presidents Shavkat Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan and Kassym-Jomart Tokayev of Kazakhstan held a summit in Tashkent that climaxed with both countries agreeing to demarcate their 2,330-kilometer border.

“The agreement fully completes the international legal registration of the state border of Kazakhstan on its southern borders,” President Tokayev said.

The neighbors began negotiations on border delineation in 2003. Peaceful demarcation of the Uzbek-Kazakh border is an important milestone given that unresolved border demarcation in Central Asia, a holdover from the days of the Soviet Union, has led to tensions.

In addition to the border agreement, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan cooperated on a treaty on allied relations. President Mirziyoyev stressed that the treaty on allied relations represented the highest level of interstate cooperation. President Tokayev agreed.

“I think this will not be an exaggeration if we call the treaty a historically significant document,” he said. “This breakthrough document opens up new horizons for us and fully reflects the mutual desire of the two countries for deeper partnership.”

The summit also included the conclusion of 15 more agreements, including those on environmental protection, higher and postgraduate education, cross-border travel, development of electronic commerce, deepening cooperation between a number of regions of the two countries, and creation of the Central Asia International Center for Industrial Cooperation.

Both parties agreed to further develop transportation infrastructure connecting their countries. They are already strong economic partners: Trade and investment between the two countries is estimated at \$8 billion annually.

Sources: Gazeta.uz, Tengrinews.kz



Presidents Shavkat Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan and Kassym-Jomart Tokayev of Kazakhstan attend a conference.



UNIPATH STAFF

Under the banner “Kuwait’s Gate to Space,” the University of Kuwait celebrated launching Kuwait Sat-1, the country’s first satellite. In January 2023, Kuwait Sat-1 was sent into orbit aboard the SpaceX Falcon 9 from the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida in the United States.

The solar-energy-powered satellite reached its orbit, disengaged from the rocket and spread its wings. A few hours later, Kuwait Sat-1 transmitted its first message to the University of Kuwait.

The satellite will circle the Earth and provide high-resolution images to the university for analysis. They will help marine scientists study changes in the Arabian Gulf, including algae blooms, water discoloration and the impact of oil pollution on marine life.

Kuwait Sat-1 Project Director Dr. Yasir Abdul Raheem said the launch was a dream come true after years of painstaking preparations. “Yes, the work started four years ago but the concept was conceived of 10 years ago to arrive at this point,” he said.

Sponsored by Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research, the \$1-million project employs about 67 people in various specialties, many of them women.

The advancement of space science and the attainment of relevant technology in the Arab world began in 1985 with the establishment of the first satellite communications organization in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Known as Arabsat, the organization aimed at delivering satellite-based public and private telecommunications services to 21 Arab member states through continued launching of geostationary satellites.

The United Arab Emirates, on the other hand, has about 13 communications satellites in orbit and sent two spacecraft beyond Earth as part of its investment in space technology. Sources: Al Raya, AlQabas TV, CNN, BBC, Times Aerospace

A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket lifts off from Cape Canaveral Space Force Station carrying a payload that included Kuwait Sat-1. REUTERS



Egypt Takes Turn Leading CTF 153

UNIPATH STAFF

Reaffirming Egypt’s commitment to fight maritime crimes and safeguard international shipping routes, the Egyptian Navy assumed temporary command of Combined Task Force 153 (CTF 153) from December 2022 to June 2023.

U.S. Navy Captain Robert Francis, who helped establish CTF 153 in April 2022, handed command to Egyptian Navy Rear Adm. Mahmoud Abdelsattar in a ceremony in Bahrain in which he commended Egypt’s navy.

“I am incredibly proud of our efforts since launching this new task force only eight months ago ... It is a true honor to hand over command to an incredibly strong regional maritime partner like Egypt. I know the task force will continue to execute as one dynamic team, and I will always be celebrating their accomplishments from afar,” Capt. Francis said.

One of four Combined Maritime Forces (CMF), CTF 153 was established to promote international maritime security and safeguard global shipping routes in the Red Sea, Bab al-Mandeb and Gulf of Aden.

“Egypt assumes command of the force based on its pivotal role and close cooperation with the naval forces of member countries to reaffirm our shared responsibilities in promoting security in all areas and sea lanes and providing safe passage for ships and confronting all shapes and forms of organized crimes detrimental to global trade and the interests of partner nations,” Egyptian Armed Forces spokesman Col. Gharib Abdel Hafez Gharib said.

Co-located at U.S. Naval Support Activity Bahrain, CMF represents a multinational partnership aimed at defeating terrorism, encouraging regional cooperation, preventing piracy, and promoting security over approximately 3.2 million square miles of international waters.

Underscoring its commitment to fight terrorism around the globe, Egypt joined CMF in April 2021 to become its 34th member nation.

Sources: Egyptian Defense Ministry, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, Sky News

Egyptian Navy Rear Adm. Mahmoud Abdelsattar, right, assumes command of newly formed Combined Task Force 153 during a ceremony in Bahrain.

U.S. NAVAL FORCES CENTRAL COMMAND

U.S. Desires Deeper Relations with Kazakhstan

UNIPATH STAFF

Building on years of fertile military cooperation, the U.S. and Kazakhstan could widen cooperation in the fields of economics, politics and diplomacy.

Derek Chollet, adviser to the U.S. Department of State, described improving relations between the two countries in an interview with the Kazakh media.

“Kazakhstan has been our partner for quite a long time in matters of nonproliferation, disarmament, peacekeeping, and repatriation of Kazakhstanis from Syria,” Chollet said.

He added: “We see our cooperation growing beyond military cooperation. This is diplomatic, economic and political cooperation.”

Chollet expressed the U.S. interest in fostering the C5+1 program, which includes all five Central Asian states and the U.S. and serves as a security and diplomatic platform among them.

As the next step toward deepening relations between Kazakhstan and the U.S., Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Donald Lu received a Kazakh diplomatic delegation headed by First Deputy Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Kairat Umarov in Washington D.C. for the yearly U.S.-Kazakhstan Enhanced Strategic Partnership Dialogue.

Lu expressed continued U.S. support for the preservation of Kazakhstan’s independence and President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev’s domestic reforms. Both sides stressed their commitment to holding this annual bilateral dialogue and sustained high-level diplomatic visits in 2023.

Sources: Kaztag.kz, U.S. Department of State



SAUDI ARMED FORCES TEST INTEROPERABILITY

UNIPATH STAFF

To test joint interoperability with other Saudi relevant components, the Royal Saudi Naval Forces conducted in January 2023 the five-day naval exercise Tasaddi 5 at King Abdulaziz Naval Base in Jubail.

Personnel from the Saudi Eastern Naval Fleet, Eastern Province border guard and the Saudi Arabian Oil Co., Aramco, took part in the joint exercise on the Arabian Gulf.

The exercise consisted of classes, hypothetical scenarios, training on naval mines clearance, defending vital installations and oil fields, and handling unmanned surface vehicles and drones.

“The exercise aimed to increase the readiness of participants, strengthen joint operations, raise levels of coordination, improve information sharing, enhance joint leadership and communications, promote security and safety of vital installations and oil fields, and safeguard freedom of navigation in the Arabian Gulf,” exercise director Rear Adm. Khalid Al-Shammari said.

In the realm of air defense, Saudi Arabia also hosted the two-week multinational military exercise Tuwaiq 3 in December 2022 at Prince Sultan Air Base in Al-Kharj. That three-phase exercise

included a variety of scenarios and military operations that simulate the current and potential challenges to air forces.

Tuwaiq 3 aimed to enhance cooperation, exchange expertise, raise the level of training on planning and executing tactical airlift missions, and test operational readiness to carry out tactical airdrop missions.

Air forces from nine countries participated in the exercise: Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Morocco, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States.

“At the outset, I would like, on behalf of the commander of the Air Force, to welcome our brothers from Arab and friendly countries participating in Tuwaiq exercise,” said Staff Maj. Gen. Talal bin Suleiman Al-Ghamdi, deputy commander of the Royal Saudi Air Force. “Prince Sultan Air Base in the central sector has harnessed all capabilities to host participants and help them achieve the objectives of the exercise.” Sources: Saudi Press Agency, arabnews.com. YouTube

An F-15C Eagle refuels at Prince Sultan Air Base in Al Kharj, Saudi Arabia. REUTERS





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