

**Egyptian Military
Hosts Bright Star**

**Curbing the Threat
of Enemy Drones**

**Securing Syrian
Refugee Camps**

UNIPATH

**ENDURING
PARTNERSHIPS**





Fog shrouds high rises in Kuwait City in January 2022.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

**Saudi cameleers and
horsewomen showcase their
animals during the King
Abdulaziz Camel Festival in
Rumayh in January 2022.**
AFP/GETTY IMAGES



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EGYPTIAN ARMED FORCES

UNIPATH

Professionalism and Partnerships

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CENTCOM COMMANDER

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KEY LEADER'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to accept the invitation of U.S. Central Command to write this editorial introducing the important theme of partnerships and peacekeeping.

Qatar firmly believes in peace and coexistence between peoples, whether in one state or among the peoples of multiple countries. Therefore, the State of Qatar, represented by its prudent government, was and is still a pioneer in offering peace initiatives or directly contributing to international efforts aimed at prioritizing diplomatic solutions and rejecting regional and international conflicts.

Qatar's leadership has prided itself on its contributions to global peace through collective, multilateral action. We view such partnerships as the best way to promote stability not just in the Middle East and Central and South Asia, but around the world.

This commitment to global partnerships is exemplified by the celebration in 2021 of Qatar's 50th anniversary of membership in the United Nations, which His Highness Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani marked with a speech before the U.N. General Assembly.

With the recent turmoil in Afghanistan, Qatar has reiterated its support for a comprehensive political settlement in that country that respects human rights and opposes terrorism in all forms.

Afghanistan cannot once again become a haven for violent extremists that export terrorism around the world. Nor can the Afghan people be allowed to sink into isolation and poverty, factors that contribute to despair and radicalization. To that end, Qatar has allowed use of its territory to transport humanitarian aid to Afghanistan.

In August and September 2021, Qatar joined international partners in helping evacuate tens of thousands of Afghan individuals and families who feared for their safety. Among those evacuees were students from a girls school. As His Highness the Emir said in his speech to the U.N.: "It was our humanitarian duty."



When the COVID-19 pandemic struck the world in 2020, Qatar led the way in providing medical supplies to vulnerable populations. It threw its financial support behind the World Health Organization to purchase vaccines for nations in dire need.

Qatar's commitment to multilateral partnerships is also illustrated by our reliance on the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

to create mutual trust through dialogue.

The GCC, together with the U.N., will play an important role in negotiating a future for Yemen that promotes political unity and the territorial integrity of the country. Such collective action will help end the civil war that has destabilized the Middle East.

I can't discuss partnerships and peacekeeping without describing the critical role Qatar's Al Udeid Air Base plays in maintaining peace in the region. The recent expansion of the base showcases the enduring partnership between the United States and Qatar.

Al Udeid was the key staging area for aerial missions to defeat Daesh in Iraq and Syria. Flights from the base ensure the free flow of commerce through critical waterways on which Qatar and its neighbors rely. Al Udeid also served as a conduit for thousands of Afghan refugees fleeing their country. More than 40,000 Afghans passed through the base in August and September 2021.

Qatar's efforts earned the praise of U.S. President Joe Biden, who personally called His Highness the Emir to express appreciation for Qatar's support of the U.S.-led airlift out of Afghanistan.

Inside this edition of Unipath you will find many examples of ways to enhance peace and partnerships to benefit the region, from intelligence sharing to multinational military exercises to support for refugees. Qatar is proud to be a leader in these very endeavors.

Lt. Gen. Salem bin Hamad Al-Nabet
Chief of Staff of the Qatar Armed Forces



Egyptian special operations forces assault a building to demonstrate recapturing a village from terrorists.

STAFF SGT. DEAN GANNON/U.S. ARMY

A SHINING EXAMPLE OF COOPERATION

Joint Exercise Bright Star 21 Prepares Thousands of Troops for Conventional and Unconventional Threats

UNIPATH STAFF

As herders tended their camels and goats on a calm summer morning, armed men in black hoods stormed an Egyptian village in pickup trucks. The terrorists seized villagers as hostages, planted banners atop buildings and placed sentries at a power station, school, water plant and clinic.

It took a multinational team of highly skilled troops — including special operations forces from Egypt, Jordan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the United States, Greece and Cypress — to dislodge the invaders and restore life to normal.

The rumble of two C-130 transport planes signaled the appearance of dozens of airborne troops who maneuvered their parachutes to drop zones beyond the village. Attack helicopters descended on the settlement and disgorged assault troops on rappelling ropes. Soldiers in Humvees joined the fight, merging their strength with advancing columns of tanks and armored cars.



Then-Egyptian Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Mohamed Farid Hegazi, right, hosts then-U.S. Central Command Commander Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, left, during Bright Star.

SPC. AMBER COBENA/U.S. ARMY

The terrorists had little chance: Within a half hour, they were dead or captured and their banners cast in the dust.

This village raid involving 400 multinational troops was among the highlights of Bright Star 21, an Egyptian military exercise centered on Mohamed Naguib Military Base that ran September 2-16, 2021.

More than 4,300 troops from eight nations participated in Bright Star, more than half provided by host nation Egypt. Bright Star is one of the world's largest comprehensive multinational exercises engaging land, sea and air forces.

Although conventional battles featuring amphibious landings and tank and artillery combat played a large role in Bright Star, many activities focused less on set battle pieces and more on irregular and asymmetric conflicts with shifting battlefronts.

"Bright Star is considered one of the most important events in the world that include brotherly and friendly nations, thanks to the size of forces participating, the skill of planning and preparation, the diversity of training and missions, and the employment of cutting edge technologies," Egyptian Armed Forces Director of Training Gen. Rafik Arafat said.

On the review stand at the special forces demonstration, dozens of senior officers from participating nations evaluated the display of military coordination. Brig. Gen. Saad Ibrahim, director of training for Iraqi ground forces, vouched for its

authenticity based on his experiences expelling Daesh fighters from towns in northern Iraq.

"I can say that the special operations exercise that simulated a terrorist gang's invasion of a populated town was accurate and precise," Brig. Gen. Ibrahim said. "It takes professional teams of planners, tacticians and troops to achieve that result."

SENIOR LEADER SEMINAR

Aside from training and exercises in the field, a senior leader seminar at Bright Star attracted top military commanders and security experts to discuss contemporary security challenges. Participants described a world in which threats such as unmanned aerial systems (UAS), pandemics, terrorism, ideological conflict and cyber warfare shape military preparedness.

U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Alexis Grynkeiwich, chief of operations for U.S. Central Command, emphasized the need for countering the long-term and persistent threat of UAS. Such easy-to-acquire drones have proliferated across the region, giving violent extremists many of the capabilities of a low-cost air force.

"If you don't face that threat today, you will, and now is the time to start thinking about it," Maj. Gen. Grynkeiwich told multinational partners at the seminar.

Saudi Arabia's Col. Hamdan Al Anizi agreed. He



Members of the U.S., Egyptian and Saudi Arabian armies demonstrate the use of equipment to counter chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear attacks during Bright Star 21.

CPL. BRIDGET HAUGH/U.S. ARMY

explained how his country had stopped hundreds of drone attacks launched by Houthi militias in Yemen. Some of the drones were produced domestically in garages and other hidden locations, making it hard to pinpoint their origins.

“These militias and terrorist groups own technology and advanced equipment not less than those owned by advanced militaries,” the colonel said. “That indicates they enjoy external support.”

Egypt’s Gen. Rafik was not alone in proposing that militaries create crisis centers staffed with experts to predict, analyze and counter new security challenges.

“These are challenges that face the entire world, whether they be internal or external threats or natural disasters. It is essential for militaries to predict crises before they occur to be able to reduce their impact,” Gen. Rafik said.

UNCONVENTIONAL THREATS

These hybrid threats inevitably shaped the training available to troops at Bright Star. In a combination of classroom and hands-on instruction, they worked to defeat drones, disable improvised explosive devices (IEDs), quarantine chemical weapons and thwart cyberattacks.

In the open desert of the Minqar Al Wahish training area, Egyptian and U.S. drone experts exchanged best practices to identify and defeat UAS. Experts emphasized the importance of collecting information on the enemy’s UAS from the field.

The main objective of the training was to identify the type of drone – whether it is military or commercial – and how to counter the hostile versions. The identification process noted the size, color, speed, altitude, direction and capabilities of the drone.



Multinational armored crews practice maneuvering in the Egyptian desert.

CPL. BRIDGET HAUGH/U.S. ARMY

FENDING OFF CYBERATTACKS

UNIPATH STAFF

In an exercise best known for displays of military muscle, Bright Star 21 introduced a critical new training objective: cybersecurity.

The command post exercise, conducted from a military tent at Mohamed Naguib Military Base, involved 17 Egyptian Army and Navy troops and one Saudi Soldier tasked with defending computer networks against cyber incursions.

Emulating a computer emergency response team, or CERT, the Soldiers and Sailors underwent four days of classroom training before testing their knowledge from computer terminals. U.S. trainers provided over-the-shoulder coaching with English and Arabic interpreters on hand if needed.

The role playing consisted of cyber adversaries attempting to break into computer networks, sometimes using innocent-looking “spearfishing” emails and other techniques based upon real-world tactics used by hackers. Troops needed to detect, contain, remove and report the incidents up the chain of command.

Over 3 1/2 days, the training audience handled at least 20 attempted cyber breaches. To detect, monitor and log cyber incidents, the training audience used advanced intrusion detection systems and network security monitoring software.

Participants included Navy personnel eager to harden their electronic warfare systems against potential cyberattacks.

“We added advanced training for cybersecurity in order to meet national security requirements,” said Gen. Rafik Arafat, director of training for the Egyptian Armed Forces.

Nonstate actors have turned to drones as a low-cost technology to threaten critical infrastructure and troops and equipment in the field. Gathering intelligence on UAS allows militaries to help identify their origin and deter, deactivate and destroy them in the field.

Another feature of counterterrorism operations — IEDs — absorbed the attention of several dozen Egyptian officers who would share what they learned with the troops under their command.

The trainees benefited from the experiences of U.S. Soldiers who fought terrorists in Iraq and Afghanistan and Egyptian forces who fought terrorists in the Sinai. This knowledge included the types of explosives and triggers used in IEDs, their emplacement by the enemy, and how to evade, defuse or destroy them.

Treating battlefield casualties was the focus of more than 100 Egyptian, Saudi and Greek troops with participation from Egyptian military nurses. As with most training at Bright Star, the medical curriculum was more real world than theoretical.

U.S. medical teams shared critical skills gained by evacuating Soldiers wounded during urban combat, but yielded to the knowledge of Egyptian medics when it came to treating injuries in harsh terrain beyond the reach of ambulances and helicopters.

As one U.S. officer said: “Our experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan became outdated when we learned how the Egyptians sustain lives on battlefields.”

COORDINATING FORCES

The climax of Bright Star was a combined live-fire exercise engaging armor, aircraft and artillery led mostly by Egyptian forces fortified by U.S. tanks. Two weeks of multinational training went into its preparation.

The highlight of naval operations was well-coordinated assault on a beach at Sahel Sidi Abdelrahman supported by a multinational flotilla navigating offshore in the southern Mediterranean Sea. The amphibious operation engaged Egyptian, Greek and Cypress forces.

But equally important was day-to-day naval training in the Mediterranean that included air defense, surface gunnery, sailing in formation, and visit, board, search and seizure of suspicious vessels.

The special operations training at Bright Star had an even stronger multinational flavor. Troops from some of the most elite formations in Egypt, Jordan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the U.S., Cypress and Greece attended in force. They jumped from planes, stormed buildings, rappelled from helicopters, rescued hostages and repelled border incursions.

Planners designed scenarios to integrate and coordinate special operation forces with regular infantry, each fulfilling unique roles in complex operations such as the recapture of the Egyptian village from terrorists. For the first time at Bright Star, Egyptian police formations took the field as well.

Brig. Gen. Alamgeer Ayub, an infantry commander from Pakistan, vouched for the value of sending 45 Pakistani



Egyptian troops practice treating a leg wound during training at Bright Star.

SGT. ANDREW MILLER/U.S. ARMY



Egyptian Maj. Gen. Khalid Khairy, left, visits a training site during Bright Star 2021 at Mohamed Naguib Military Base. SGT. 1ST CLASS ANDREW MILLER/U.S. ARMY

Troops attempt to storm a building held by terrorists at a training village.

SPC. AMBER COBENA/U.S. ARMY

troops to Bright Star. It provided a rare opportunity to train in depth with friendly foreign partners.

“We want to participate in multinational exercises to share views and learn various procedures adopted by Egypt, Jordan and other countries,” Brig. Gen. Ayub said.

A contingent from Jordan’s King Abdullah II Special Forces Group also took advantage of the training opportunities in Egypt. They trained side by side with Egyptian and U.S. counterparts.

“Exercise Bright Star 2021 is an opportunity to review how other participating forces perform these tasks as well as a challenge of mental acuity and flexibility at all levels of leadership as we adapt to each other’s tactics and methods to solve the exercise training dilemmas together quickly, flexibly and efficiently,” Lt. Col. Ali Al-Ajarma said.

Egypt is scheduled to host Bright Star again in 2023 with a focus on conventional and unconventional military

threats that continue to evolve throughout the Middle East and South and Central Asia.

“Since the first Bright Star was held in 1980, the exercise has carried a proud and historic tradition of partners working together toward common objectives,” then-U.S. Central Command Commander Gen. Kenneth McKenzie said. “The concepts tested in exercises like this one have led to successes against terrorism and violent extremism across the region.”

Egyptian Gen. Arafat was equal in his praise of Bright Star as a symbol of multinational partnerships.

“The success of Bright Star 21 is a strong message that shows our ability to work shoulder to shoulder in order to achieve peace and stability,” the general said. “And also a message of assurance to our people in which we assure our people that our Armed Forces are capable of protecting the nation.” ♦



Multinational special operations troops defend a position.

STAFF SGT. DEAN GANNON/U.S. ARMY

THE JORDANIAN CONTRIBUTION TO BRIGHT STAR

JORDAN ARMED FORCES DIRECTORATE OF MORAL GUIDANCE AND MEDIA

Jordan's relations with its neighbor Egypt are firmly rooted in the views of His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, supreme commander of the Armed Forces. They are founded on mutual respect and constant commitment to expand the horizons of joint cooperation with fraternal and friendly nations.

This is reflected positively on progress in all fields, particularly with nations in the region, as well as strengthening and developing these relations into strategies and plans that contribute to stability and a dignified existence for the citizens of the world, while supporting international peace and security.

Exercise Bright Star 21, hosted by Egypt in September 2021, increased joint military training cooperation and coordination and strengthened joint relations with fraternal and allied nations to serve the interests of participating armed forces. This is achieved through joint missions of participating units, military sectors, and institutions, focusing on lessons learned from modern warfare and nonconventional threats to international security.

A good example of this is participation from the King Abdullah II Special Forces Group. Bright Star 21 granted these highly skilled troops the opportunity to partake in training that covered airborne operations, small arms marksmanship, combat lifesaving skills, rappelling/fast roping, urban warfare and close quarters combat.

These training subjects are considered fundamental skills that every Jordanian special operations Soldier must have. Bright Star 21 provided an excellent chance to review how other participating forces perform these tasks as well as challenge mental acuity and flexibility at all levels of leadership as we adapt to each other's tactics and methods to solve exercise training dilemmas.

Overall, Bright Star aimed to provide training on how to combat illegal acts such as border infiltration, maritime terrorism and piracy, and any illegal act that threatens and destabilizes the security and stability of a state.

The exercise also prepared commanders and staff to plan and implement joint and unconventional operations, to test all components of the security and administrative system, to implement procedures for inter-unit coordination, and increase the capabilities of the participating forces and entities when conducting tasks and dealing with different objectives. This is done by creating scenarios that replicate real-life operations to counter current and potential threats within the area of responsibility.

The exercise also aimed to collect and analyze information, fine tune command-and-control techniques while forces are mobilized, and plan and conduct offensive operations. It focused on coordinating land, sea, and air forces on the optimum use of weapons and equipment, at the same time as refining their combat skills and testing commanders ability to control battles.

Participation in exercises such as Bright Star are part of a broad effort by the Jordan Armed Forces, in cooperation with various regional nations, to achieve security and stability by confronting challenges related to extremism, terrorism and internal security. These are coordinated constantly to unify ideas and reinforce them at various levels, which leads to a high level of competency, readiness and professionalism to deal with any anticipated scenario.

At the special operations level, Jordan boasts excellent relationships with many regional and international partners. Our relationship with U.S. special operations units is a historic and strategic partnership that has been established over many years of collaboration and trust gained in operations and during training. It has been reinforced over the years by the addition of liaison officers, mobile training teams and joint training and work throughout the diverse spectrum of special operations.

This cooperation has led to a high level of interoperability and unified understanding that has allowed troops from both sides conduct operations in various hot spots and training events, such as Legion Partner and Hashemite Warrior. These training events have been fruitful despite the occasional language barrier.

To conclude, we must extend our thanks to the Egyptian Armed Forces for their hospitality and efforts as well as the rest of the participants for their role in making this exercise a success. We hope to further our relationship with every participant at Bright Star.



Jordanian naval special forces conduct a close quarter battle drill at Mohamed Naguib Military Base. SPC. AMBER COBENA/U.S. ARMY

THE NECESSITY OF PARTNERSHIPS

Twenty years after the 9/11 attacks, multinational coalitions are more indispensable than ever

UNIPATH STAFF

On the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks on the United States, dozens of security experts, including several current and former commanders at U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), attended a two-day conference contemplating the repercussions of that fateful day.

What emerged was a crucial lesson for global security: If counterterrorism coalitions that exist now had existed in the 1990s, they might have prevented the 9/11 attacks and the rise of al-Qaida. In other words, multinational partners working together in their common interests represent a force for peace.

The Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies hosted the Great Power Competition conference in September 2021.

U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. Alexis Grynkeiwich, CENTCOM's chief of operations, spoke about a "dense web of allies" that project power more effectively than any single nation working alone. Many of those alliances were solidified in the post-9/11 environment and played a decisive role in defeating ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

Retired U.S. Army Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster, a former U.S. national security advisor who held several senior positions at CENTCOM, noted that partnerships of intelligence services, special operations, conventional forces and law enforcement across nations multiply the effectiveness of counterterrorism efforts.

In the 20 years since 9/11, the United States has helped build the capacity of its partners to confront violent extremists more effectively, McMaster said.

"For a relatively small amount of investment, we can work through partners to ensure that these jihadist groups don't gain the strength and power," he said during a presentation at the two-day conference in September 2021 in Tampa, Florida, in the U.S.

Evidence of multinational counterterrorism coalitions abound. The Bahrain-based Combined Maritime Forces consists of three task forces made up of dozens of naval powers. The coalition patrols the sea lanes around the

Afghan evacuees prepare to board a U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster at Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar. The operation was an example of a successful multinational partnership that has developed over the past two decades.

AIRMAN 1ST CLASS KYLIE BARROW/
U.S. AIR FORCE





“By advancing our shared interests and coming together to face shared threats, U.S. CENTCOM develops capable regional partners to act as guarantors of their own security and sovereignty, able to secure their own borders and ensure their internal stability.”

*~ Gen. Kenneth McKenzie,
then-commander of U.S. Central Command*

Arabian Peninsula in anti-piracy, countersmuggling and counterterrorism operations.

Saudi Arabia’s Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition and Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen are attempts to suppress violent extremists and their sponsors.

The Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS has existed since 2014 and consists of more than 80 member states dedicated to eliminating the vicious terrorist movement that once occupied parts of northern Iraq.

Qatar has hosted Al Udeid Air Base, the point from which coalition air power launched missions against ISIS. The base was also central to supplying Afghans during the 20-year stabilization campaign in that country and served as an evacuation point and sanctuary for Afghans fleeing Taliban oppression.

“If we had had the coalition of partners and shared senses of purpose when it came to counterterrorism in the years running up to 9/11, I don’t know that 9/11 would have happened. I’m not sure al-Qaida would have happened,” said Gina Bennett, one of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency’s top experts on al-Qaida and a presenter at the conference.

Security experts warned against complacency as the United States focuses more on what it calls “great power competition” with China and Russia and regional competition with Iran. Counterterrorism remains a central focus of a united global security strategy.

Retired U.S. Army Gen. David Petraeus, former commander of CENTCOM and onetime director of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, called for a reinvigoration of military and security partnerships using technology.

Although violent extremists employ technology such as unmanned aerial systems, or drones, to compete with more powerful armed forces, that same technology benefits the U.S. and its partners as well.

He noted that relatively economical drone systems, combined with intelligence sharing, allow U.S. partner

nations to conduct much of the fight against terrorists.

“Host nation forces can do that as long as we do the training and equipping, advising and assisting,” Petraeus explained.

As technology evolves, some of these weapons won’t even require remote guidance. Future breakthroughs will allow systems, once properly programmed, to fight autonomously.

“The opening stage of conflicts in the future could be contested by autonomous systems,” he said.

Retired U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Terry Wolff, director of the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies, criticized the U.S. for overoptimism when engaging in complex missions such as those in Iraq and Afghanistan.

With its historical go-it-alone mentality, the U.S. has paid insufficient attention to pursuing alliances that would aid global peace. The U.S. has mistakenly treated such partnerships as an afterthought, Wolff said.

U.S. Marine Corps Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, then-commander of CENTCOM, described how it was paying greater attention to strengthening partners. He cited examples such as the Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund that has distributed more than \$700 million in the Middle East.

“By advancing our shared interests and coming together to face shared threats, U.S. CENTCOM develops capable regional partners to act as guarantors of their own security and sovereignty, able to secure their own borders and ensure their internal stability,” the general said.

With a reemergence of hybrid styles of conflict that avoid outright battles between conventional militaries, the U.S. and its partners need to stay alert to shifting threats. Gen. McKenzie reminded conference attendees that the intelligence, military and political oversights that led to 9/11 still require the attention of powers today.

“There are no errors so old that we can afford to ignore them,” he said. ♦



SECURING

Syrian Refugee Camps



UNIPATH PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

Jordan focuses on ideological training to identify extremist thought before it becomes destructive

JORDANIAN PUBLIC SECURITY DIRECTORATE

Daesh's invasion caused a significant displacement of civilians who fled from conflict areas in search of a safe haven. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan enjoys security and stability under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, leading the nation to become the preferred destination of a huge influx of refugees from neighboring countries. This has occurred under difficult humanitarian conditions. It brings with it the possibility of people arriving who have different ways of thinking and cultures that may have been infused with terrorist ideology.

Jordan has played a vital role in international partnerships to counter extremism and terrorism. Domestically, Jordan has deterred the infiltration of terrorist ideology and restricted its sources emanating from neighboring countries, where local conflicts have contributed to a rise in terrorist activity.

Refugee camps in neighboring countries have experienced a lot of terrorist activity. Violent extremists have focused on recruiting women and children, while planning terrorist attacks inside and outside the camps. Terrorists have exploited administrative corruption and the limited religious culture among camp administrators to mislead and recruit. Sometimes bribery is used to bring weapons and contraband into the camps; other times, fabricated interpretations of religious texts are used to deceive young people and some security personnel at the camps.

Therefore, Jordan has introduced security measures to verify refugee identity, monitor suspicious activity within the camps, and safeguard all government personnel working within them. In cooperation with all international partner institutions and organizations, Jordan has also sought to create a safe ideological environment in the humanitarian refugee camps on its territory. This is based on the camps becoming part of local communities and continuing the Jordanian role in combating the evils of terrorism, wherever they may be.

One of the most important steps was to hand over responsibility for securing refugee camps to the Public Security Directorate, one of the most important Jordanian

institutions. In combating extremist groups, Jordan has mourned its martyrs and made sacrifices over the years. The Public Security Directorate is a well-established Jordanian institution active internationally. Its participation in peacekeeping forces has expanded over nearly 30 years, as one of the security agencies contributing most to international peacekeeping security forces.

The directorate's experiences have endowed it with the necessary capabilities to manage refugee camps through the Refugee Affairs Directorate of the Ministry of Interior. Its personnel are Public Security Directorate officers and staff, and their mission is to provide a safe environment, organize daily life, intensify cooperation with international organizations to care for refugees, and provide a stable and dignified life in camps spread across north and east Jordan. As of 2021, more than 128,000 refugees resided in Jordan and have been there for many years.



Syrian girls attend classes at Jordan's Zaatari refugee camp. The curriculum is designed to counter the messaging of violent extremists. AFP/GETTY IMAGES





Children play at the Zaatari refugee camp in Jordan, which has held tens of thousands of Syrians. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The Public Security Directorate has an ideological security plan to combat extremist thought. It has adopted prevention and intellectual safeguarding for its personnel and for the refugees in these camps through specialized units and support for the Refugee Affairs Directorate, including the Iftaa and Religious Guidance Department and the Community Peace Center.

Col. Samer al-Hawamala, director of the Iftaa and Religious Guidance Department in the Public Security Directorate, has said that his department has supported public security in the refugee camps in a functional role. The department uses a practical approach based on the true image of Islam from the Amman Message launched by His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein. The message carries with it a profound understanding of the origin of the relationship between the people and Islam, based on peace, tolerance and moderation.

The 2014 Jordanian National Strategy for Countering Intellectual Extremism assimilated this approach, based on a balanced policy of maintaining public freedom, security and the rule of law.

The Iftaa Department has focused on two specific areas. The first is aimed at the academic level of Iftaa employees to enhance the knowledge and the capabilities of imams and preachers within public security in general and workers at the Religious Affairs Directorate in particular. These clerics represent important pillars in the intellectual development of public security personnel.

This development includes promoting a correct understanding of Shariah and religious texts and teaching employees to recognize various types of extremism. Personnel can apply the knowledge in their daily work and communicate with refugees from all backgrounds. This helps identify people with extremist ideology in the camps and protects young people from the clutches of extremist thought.

To this end, the Iftaa Department has followed a number of measures, the most important of which is preparing a curriculum for the qualification and training of imams and preachers. The department has also encouraged clerics to publish works in the field of countering extremist ideology to describe the true teachings of religion and identify malicious outsiders advocating terrorism. This has made Iftaa personnel the first line in combating extremist ideology in an environment with refugees from all backgrounds who have been subjected to violence and witnessed horrific scenes of beheadings and safe houses being blown up.

Refugees may have been subject to brainwashing from propaganda broadcast by terrorists in the areas they had seized, including leaflets, radio broadcasts and compulsory lectures in residential areas. Among the most dangerous of these activities are forcing and misleading children to join terrorist training camps. Daesh also developed an elementary school curricula based on violence and extremism. Some of these were found by coalition forces following the liberation of cities.



Syrian refugees return home after crossing the Jordanian border. Jordan has hosted hundreds of thousands of refugees escaping Syria's civil war. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

An important factor has been the coordination between the security institutions and the Jordan Armed Forces, and the efforts of all government agencies in this field on a national scale.

The second area of focus for the Iftaa and Religious Guidance Department is to prepare public security personnel. It teaches a unified curriculum about Islamic culture in public security training institutes and centers. It includes preaching and religious guidance that consists of lectures and field meetings with public security personnel working in the camps. This guarantees that comments and suggestions from camp personnel are taken into account to enhance the meanings of mercy, tolerance and moderation.

Furthermore, the Community Peace Center belonging to the Preventive Security Department of the Public Security Directorate has made significant efforts in defending against extremist thought through specialized courses, programs and planning in which refugees have a large stake.

The head of the Community Peace Center, Lt. Col. Riyadh al-Battoush, said: "Since the beginning of the Syrian crisis, Jordan has hosted Syrian refugees on its soil. Relevant groups were given special attention by the Community Peace Center, as it is a unit specializing in combating extremist ideology to ensure their protection and steer education away from misguided ideologies."

The Community Peace Center focused first on personnel working in the Syrian refugee camps, equipping them with knowledge to identify extremist characters and deal with refugees coming from conflict zones. Second in line were volunteers working inside the Syrian camps. Eventually, Syrian refugees living inside and outside the camps became the focus of Peace Center programs.

"The center developed a long-term preventive approach and plan was implemented by specialist trainers. It consisted of programs, lectures and workshops on combating extremist ideology and online recruitment, and any other outside phenomena on society that undermines community peace for Syrian Refugees Affairs Directorate personnel," Lt. Col. Riyadh said. "Among these programs was the transfer of knowledge to the most prominent members within the Syrian refugee camps, as they are the most influential group there."

A training program called the Youth Awareness Initiative was also held in cooperation with community police in various areas of the kingdom, and young people from Syria took part in it. The program included lectures on awareness of extremist ideology and the role of young people in combating it.

Center officials also held meetings with the United Nations Office of High Commissioner for Refugees and other international and local partners. They agreed to

establish awareness and education programs on countering extremist ideology and community protection within the Syrian refugee camps.

Another important awareness program on countering extremism was held by the Community Peace Center in cooperation with the King Hussein Foundation's Institute for Family Health. The target group was university students, including Syrian students, and consisted of educational lectures on the subject of countering extremist thought and online recruitment.



A Jordanian charity teaches Syrian children to play squash in Amman, part of an effort to integrate them peacefully into Jordanian society. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

An important factor has been the coordination between the security institutions and the Jordan Armed Forces, and the efforts of all government agencies in this field on a national scale, such as the Ministry of Awqaf, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labor.

They have been devoted to ensuring that refugees' daily needs are met without discrimination and with fairness, equality and respect for human rights. This generosity has reduced discontent that can breed extremist thought. Overall, Jordan has continued with security and intelligence efforts to prevent the spread or infiltration of those with extremist ideology and to deal with them if discovered. ♦



REINTEGRATING RETURNEES

Uzbekistan Cited as a Model for How to Repatriate Spouses and Children of ISIS Fighters

COL. UMED AHMEDOV, FORMER SENIOR NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN AT U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

Between 2017 and 2021, the government of Uzbekistan, with participation of international organizations, repatriated 531 citizens previously involved in the criminal activities of international terrorist organizations in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.

These humanitarian operations, known collectively as Mehr (compassion), retrieved mainly women and children manipulated or influenced by close relatives, parents or spouses who belonged to violent extremist groups.

To rehabilitate and socially reintegrate these citizens, Uzbekistan has adopted measures

bringing together representatives of government and civic organizations. This effort has drawn participation from the ministries of health, public and preschool education, justice, and labor and employment. Outside organizations such as the Women's Committee of Uzbekistan are also involved. These groups help ensure the returnees are employed, enrolled in schools and treated for physical or psychological ailments.

Upon arrival in Uzbekistan, the repatriated women and children undergo rehabilitation and social adaptation in several stages, organized jointly with UNICEF.

Based on the hundreds of Uzbeks who have passed through the system, United States and United Nations officials cited Uzbekistan as a model for repatriation of ISIS women and children from the Middle East, according to the Voice of America. The officials encouraged other countries to duplicate these deradicalization efforts to reduce the risk of terrorist resurgence.

In the first stage, the country validates or reissues passports and birth certificates for returnees. In some cases, such as children born in Iraq or Syria, these documents must be created from scratch. The women and children also attend cultural and educational events such as concerts and competitions and receive moral and psychological guidance. Children are tested to ensure they are placed in the right schools at the right grade level.

The second stage provides for appointment of guardians from among the relatives of repatriated orphans or their assignment to group homes known as “houses of mercy.” To become a guardian, relatives must fill out applications attesting to their ability to care for the minors. Candidates are evaluated by the chairman of the commission on guardianship, who decides which child is placed with a particular family.

The third stage brings together repatriated citizens and their relatives as they are escorted to their new homes. Law enforcement agencies investigate any criminal cases against the returnees and release many with promises of good behavior. Orphaned children proceed to the group homes run in many cases by regional governments.

The fourth stage ensures that returnees receive further help in reintegrating into Uzbek society. The government provides housing, training and employment assistance for adult returnees and pensions for the elderly. Based on their ages, repatriated children enroll in schools or preschools. Children are assigned psychologists and teachers who provide care and tutoring. Women can receive financial assistance if they are disabled or raising children by themselves. Mentors from neighborhood associations keep track of each repatriated citizen, and official imams and religious scholars counsel families about the fallacy of extremist and terrorist ideas.

Based on the hundreds of Uzbeks who have passed through the system, United States and United Nations officials cited Uzbekistan as a model for repatriation of ISIS women and children from the Middle East, according to the Voice of America. The officials encouraged other countries to duplicate these deradicalization efforts to reduce the risk of terrorist resurgence.

“They have done a very credible, excellent job,” U.S. Ambassador to Uzbekistan Daniel Rosenblum told the Voice of America.

That appreciation was echoed by U.N. Resident Coordinator in Uzbekistan Helena Fraser, who commended Uzbekistan for setting an example for dozens of other countries whose citizens joined extremist groups in Syria. ♦



Uzbekistan repatriates citizens in a humanitarian operation that reintegrates wives and children of ISIS members into society.



Lt. Gen. Ahmed Jassim Maarij,
commander of the Iraqi Navy

A PARTNER in the Northern ARABIAN GULF

IRAQ'S NAVAL COMMANDER FOCUSES ON
UPDATING THE SKILLS OF HIS SAILORS AND
THE TECHNOLOGY ABOARD HIS BOATS



UNIPATH STAFF | PHOTOS BY IRAQI NAVY

Despite contested territorial waters and terrorist attempts by organized crime gangs, the Iraqi Navy has proved it can protect maritime navigation in the northern Arabian Gulf as well as play an important role with regional and international partners in securing the Gulf. Unipath interviewed Lt. Gen. Ahmed Jassim Maarij, commander of the Iraqi Navy, about its achievements, its international partnerships and his plans to improve Iraq's naval capabilities.

Unipath: How does the Iraqi Navy conduct its mission?

Lt. Gen. Maarij: Naval Command protects Iraqi territorial waters and the coastline as well as oil terminals and supplementary loading platforms. Responsibilities include protecting Al-Faw port, the commercial ports of Umm Qasr and Khor Al-Zubair as well as the cities of Umm Qasr and Khor Al-Zubair. It also carries out search and rescue missions at sea.

Unipath: What challenges do you face carrying out these duties?

LEFT: Iraqi Navy patrol boats tasked with protecting oil terminals dock at Umm Qasr Naval Base.

ABOVE: Naval officers aboard a patrol boat honor Navy Day with the Iraqi National Anthem

Lt. Gen. Maarij: There are a number of challenges confronting our leadership when it comes to implementing its duties, the most significant being overlapping territorial waters with neighboring countries. This is the biggest challenge facing leadership. Another major challenge is the abundance of commercial traffic, especially boats designed for fishing that sail near oil ports and naval operations yards. They can be used for various illegal activities such as piracy and drug smuggling alongside their use for fishing. We have worked very hard to curb illegal operations at sea by stepping up patrols and conducting sting operations in the area.

Unipath: What is the role of international partnerships in defending freedom of navigation in the Arabian Gulf?

Lt. Gen. Maarij: Threats in the maritime domain impress on us that a single nation, irrespective of its military capability and political will, is not capable of dealing with those threats on its own, especially in a region like the Arabian Gulf, where the global economy depends on the trade that passes through it. Therefore, the development of a unified plan of action for all countries of the region, in coordination with the U.S. Fifth Fleet, that includes continuous maritime surveillance and patrols, intelligence gathering and the exchange of information, is essential for addressing numerous maritime security challenges.

Unipath: The Iraqi Navy, in coordination with the specialized Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Unit at the Ministry of Interior, recently removed a mine from a ship anchored in a troublesome area. Describe the operation.

Lt. Gen. Maarij: Our Navy made great efforts to remove the limpet mine from an oil tanker, the MT Pola, in January 2021. The intervention and rapid response of our Navy was a clear example of the heroism of the officers and enlisted men. An operations room was established to manage the demining process with the participation of a number of small and midsize patrol boats in addition to a detachment of divers and the Ministry of Interior EOD unit. The patrol boats evacuated ships, tankers and fishing boats from the vicinity of the Pola, while speedboats transported the divers who approached the mine



Iraqi Sailors patrol the nation's waterways.

and dressed it in a way that ensured its safe removal from the tanker's hull before pulling it off. The mine was then detonated in a safe area by the EOD unit.

Unipath: Has this event caused the Iraqi Navy to think about establishing a specialized EOD team or about adding a minesweeper to the fleet?

Lt. Gen. Maarij: We already had plans to enhance the fleet with a minehunter and mine countermeasure systems before the limpet mine incident on the MT Pola. This incident and incidents before it in the waters of the Arabian Gulf encouraged us to think seriously about the need to secure this technology. We are now working to prepare a number of officers and noncommissioned officers to enroll in specialized courses on naval mine countermeasures.

Unipath: How do you cooperate with the United States in policing the northern Gulf?

Lt. Gen. Maarij: There is cooperation and coordination with the U.S. Fifth Fleet based in Bahrain, where we have a liaison officer with the Fifth Fleet who coordinates and exchanges information and carries out other activities in the northern Gulf region.



Iraqi fast attack boats conduct a visit, board, search and seizure mission in the Arabian Gulf.

“THREATS IN THE MARITIME DOMAIN IMPRESS ON US THAT A SINGLE NATION, IRRESPECTIVE OF ITS MILITARY CAPABILITY AND POLITICAL WILL, IS NOT CAPABLE OF DEALING WITH THOSE THREATS ON ITS OWN.”

Unipath: All the Gulf countries have periodic bilateral exercises with either the U.S. or British Navies. Is Iraq interested in such exercises?

Lt. Gen. Maarij: Since 2005, we have been participating in exercises with the U.S. Fifth Fleet by sending naval vessels or observer officers. In some exercises, a number of officers and noncommissioned officers are sent to participate as observers on foreign naval vessels participating in the exercises. There are also trilateral exercises in which our Navy has taken part alongside the Kuwaiti and U.S. navies, but due to the coronavirus pandemic, we have not participated in any exercise during this period.

Unipath: How are naval personnel selected and trained?

Lt. Gen. Maarij: We have the Arabian Gulf Academy for

Naval Studies, which specializes in naval science and engineering and prepares naval officers, engineers and midlevel noncommissioned officers to supplement our command with young Navy personnel. We also have a naval school that specializes in courses aimed at developing the skills of officers and noncommissioned officer grades in various naval disciplines.

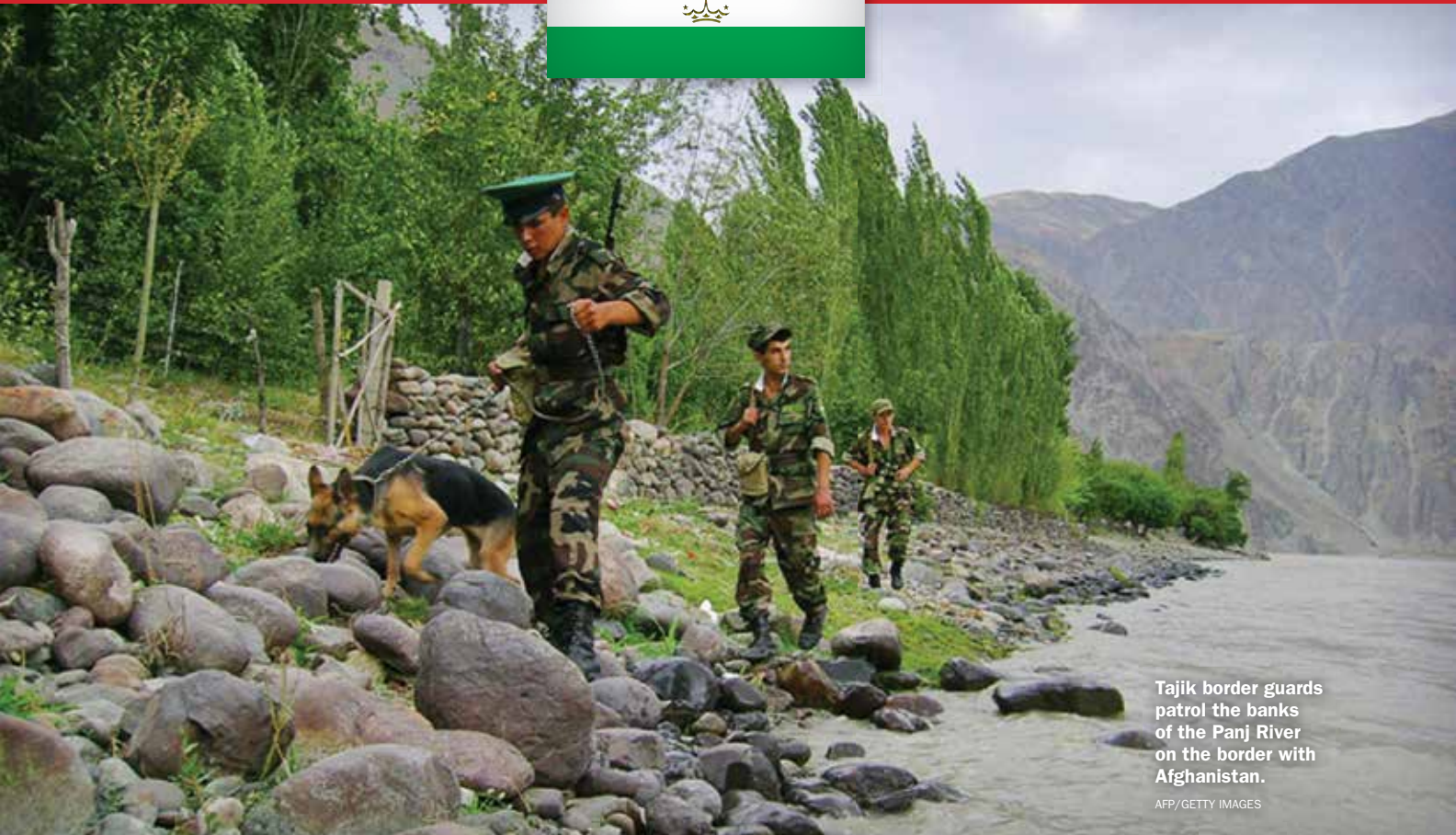
Unipath: How can you improve the Navy’s capabilities?

Lt. Gen. Maarij: First we would like to build a base at Al-Faw Grand Port that will house a number of formations and naval battalions composed of various warships and gunboats with sophisticated armaments to ensure the implementation of maritime duties. Second, we would like to enlist modern hardware and equipment to improve naval intelligence and reconnaissance. ♦

U.S. HELPS STRENGTHEN



TAJIK BORDER WITH AFGHANISTAN



Tajik border guards patrol the banks of the Panj River on the border with Afghanistan.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

UNIPATH ILLUSTRATION



UNIPATH STAFF

A U.S. donation of more than half a million dollars is helping Tajikistan fortify a strategic border post at the junction of Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Tajik authorities expressed concern about tensions along the 1,344-kilometer Afghan border after the Taliban captured provinces bordering Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

Central Asian states that share borders with Afghanistan are wary of security threats emanating from the war-torn country and the potential influx of thousands of refugees trying to escape the Taliban. Remote mountain passes make up part of the border.

The U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan announced it would pay for construction of housing for border guards and their families at Ayvoj, located in the Shakhritus district of the Khatlon

region. The project will allow more troops to monitor and patrol the border.

“The new border detachment will replace the old one in Shakhritus, and it will allow the border service to quickly deploy troops to border areas in response to threats,” the U.S. Embassy noted in a statement.

U.S. Ambassador to Tajikistan John Pommersheim stressed the American interest in helping secure the Tajik border against incursions by terrorists and drug smugglers:

“The U.S. and Tajikistan work closely on security issues, and this border security project is just another example of our shared commitment to the security and sovereignty of Tajikistan and Central Asia.”

Since 2002, the U.S. has provided Tajikistan with over \$300 million in

security assistance, including money to build a Tajik border outpost at Chaldovar in the same mountainous corner of the country as Ayvoj.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime — with financing from the U.S. Embassy — has coordinated a project called “Strengthening Control along the Tajik/Afghan Border” since 1999. The project helped refurbish a border post at Yol on the Panj River in 2021. The Yol outpost also received donations of trucks and drug detection equipment.

Both countries also participate in the U.S. Central Command-sponsored Regional Cooperation military exercise focused on stability operations along international borders. Tajikistan has hosted the exercise several times. ♦

Sources: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan



UNIPATH ILLUSTRATION

SIX TYPES OF

TERRORIST RECRUITS

The Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition hosts a lecture on identifying vulnerabilities in young people exploited by violent extremist organizations

ISLAMIC MILITARY COUNTER TERRORISM COALITION

Terrorist organizations go to great lengths to attract young people into the arena of terrorist operations, frequently using online cells. These cells are responsible for 70% of youth recruitment.

Eventually many of these recruits realize they have been deceived and seek ways to escape the inferno into which they have been thrust. But to free youths from the clutches of violent extremists and reintegrate them into society, it's worth inquiring about the typical characteristics of young people drawn to these organizations.

For answers, the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC) turned to Dr. Abdullah Saad Al-Jasser, an expert in youth issues that include rehabilitation and reintegration of terrorist organization returnees.

Dr. Al-Jasser delivered a keynote lecture at the IMCTC headquarters in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in June 2021 that analyzed the types of individuals most frequently targeted by violent extremist organizations. It's no surprise that terrorist recruiters avoid people unlikely to offer subservience to the organization. But what personality types do they seek?



Categories Targeted for Recruitment by Extremist Organizations

According to Dr. Al-Jasser, young terrorist recruits fall into these six main categories:

THE REVENGE SEEKER

These recruits see themselves as victims of society. They believe external factors are the cause of their unhappiness. In recruiting such people, terrorist organizations allow them to vent their resentment and anger through retaliation. Terrorists use these types of people in two ways: by letting them disseminate the ideology of the given terrorist organization and to carry out terrorist acts.

THE PRESTIGE SEEKER

These people insist that society fails to understand or appreciate them. They believe their talents and abilities are not positively reflected in the values of society. Nevertheless, their ambitions usually exceed their capabilities. Terrorist groups snare such people with prestigious titles such as prince, leader or mujahid to provide them with a sense of higher status, even though most of these honorifics are meaningless.

THE IDENTITY SEEKER

Such individuals evince keen interest in joining a group or organization to be part of a movement. For humans, a sense of belonging is natural and innate, and the identity seeker needs to belong to a group because this affiliation determines his role in society. Such people often grow up in families that fail to provide a sense of worth or value their interests. They feel ostracized. Terrorist groups identify such individuals and give them a sense of belonging.

THE THRILL SEEKER

Such individuals are full of energy and vitality, seeking challenges and adventures to validate their masculinity. They are risk takers seeking excitement. Terrorist organizations entice such individuals with

recruitment videos about their operations, the alleged heroism of their members, and their claims of power. The thrill seeker is bored at home, looking for new experiences or adventures, and is often middle-class with no clear vision of a future. While rehabilitating one individual in this category, Dr. Al-Jasser learned the man voluntarily joined the terrorist organization without even being directly recruited.

THE ESCAPE SEEKER

Individuals falling into this category seek to escape from dysfunctional families or community-triggered problems that they cannot solve or endure. They want to get involved in new experiences, even if they are part of an extremist group. By doing so, many believe they are salvaging their family's honor. Dr. Al-Jasser said such individuals make up the bulk of young people who join terrorist organizations.

MENTALLY UNBALANCED INDIVIDUAL

Such individuals suffer from psychotic or neurotic disorders, which usually appear only when they are exposed to stressful situations. They are often in the early stages of mental debilitation when terrorist organizations recruit and use them for bombing operations.

Dr. Al-Jasser discussed methods to rescue people deceived by violent extremist organizations. Most eventually realize terrorists engaged them under false pretenses. Over time, they want to escape their predicament and search for lifelines with which to flee.

Families are the best way to approach such disillusioned extremists. But in most cases, relationships between the young men and their families are troubled.

For example, Dr. Al-Jasser helped rehabilitate a 22-year-old who traveled to a conflict zone to escape



family shame when a sister ran away from home. The young man sought martyrdom and purification to salvage his family's reputation — in other words, legally sanctioned suicide. It was later discovered that the sister's behavior was caused by a bipolar disorder, and she received treatment.

Another young man joined terrorists to escape squabbles between his mother and his father. His father had married another woman and mistreated his mother. The young man believed his parents were disobedient to God and destined for hell. By his martyrdom, he hoped to earn divine intercession for his parents.

Nevertheless, recovery usually begins with families who create channels of communication — usually social media — with their children living abroad. If they want to escape their predicament, families coordinate return procedures with various government agencies.

Recruits who have committed crimes usually refuse to return because of fear of prosecution. Others grow accustomed to their lives of violence.

Those who return are diagnosed and provided with services aimed at their ideological, mental, social, physical, educational, economic and professional welfare. It's important to note that terrorists will seek to recover these penitents and pressure them to rejoin their organizations. Therefore, society must help resolve their problems and reintegrate them.

CONCLUSION

After Dr. Al-Jasser concluded his speech, the floor opened for robust discussion. Dr. Zayed Al-Harthy, delegate of the ideological domain of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the IMCTC, pointed to other ideological, social and economic factors in terrorist recruitment.

For example, it isn't always ideology that attracts some recruits; sometimes it's cash and other financial rewards. Some of that money comes from the sale of illegal narcotics and other smuggling.

Every aspect must be considered to reintegrate such young people into society. In this regard, the experience of Saudi Arabia in rehabilitating repentant terrorists has been incomparable. It is a successful model from which other countries can learn.

Brig. Gen. Rashid Al-Dhaheri, delegate of the United Arab Emirates to the IMCTC, asked: In what ways can countries protect youth from extremist ideologies promoted by social media? Dr. Al-Jasser replied that confronting this phenomenon requires initiative, not reaction. Young people, embracing the social media preferred by their peers, must spearhead attractive, proactive initiatives.

If they believe in an idea — in this case counterterrorism — they will embody it in their daily lives. ♦

Iraqi troops guard a Daesh terrorist accused of killing hundreds in Baghdad in 2016. He was captured through a complex intelligence operation in August 2021.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES



PARTNERS *in a* CRISIS



**COMMANDER AZAMAT
MURZABEKOV**
SENIOR NATIONAL
REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF
KAZAKHSTAN
AT U.S. CENTRAL
COMMAND

PHOTOS BY KAZAKH
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

Kazakh troops
evacuate citizens
and foreign
nationals from
Afghanistan.



Evacuation from Afghanistan: successful military work in tandem between Kazakhstan and the United States

When an international coalition led by the United States ended a 20-year military campaign in Afghanistan, the pinnacle of the operation was an unprecedented airlift of more than 120,000 Afghans and foreign citizens from Afghanistan.

From the beginning of August 2021, ethnic Kazakhs applied to the Kazakh Embassy in Kabul for evacuation from Afghanistan and a return to their historical homeland, the Republic of Kazakhstan. So important was this mission to aid ethnic Kazakhs, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev assumed special control.

The embassy's diplomatic staff quickly established contact with Afghan Kazakhs and citizens of Kazakhstan living in Afghanistan. As a result, 42 people were subject to evacuation. The group consisted of 25 ethnic Kazakhs and citizens of Kazakhstan (including seven embassy employees and 10 children), 15 citizens of Kyrgyzstan, and one citizen each from Russia and Lithuania.

At the same time, the Kazakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs was working to obtain consent to fly aircraft into

Afghanistan. Negotiations were conducted with different countries and, above all, through the Kazakh military representation at the headquarters of U.S. Central Command, which later played an important role in the evacuation.

Meanwhile, the situation around Kabul airport worsened every day, and the threat of terrorist attacks grew hourly. Thanks to intensive negotiations and the coordinated efforts of the Kazakh Embassy in Kabul, the Kazakh Ministry of Defense and U.S. Central Command, agreements were reached and a timetable set for the arrival of the Kazakh aircraft.

On the morning of August 18, at an airfield in the city of Shymkent, a C-295 military transport aircraft of the Kazakh Air Force flew to Kabul. In addition to the crew, Special Forces Soldiers and a medical worker were aboard. The governments of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan — through whose territory the plane would fly — had preapproved the flight path.

A convoy from the Kazakh Embassy, timing its movements

to the plane's departure from Shymkent, traveled to the Kabul airport. For Kazakh pilots, navigating the plane through Afghan airspace was difficult because of the mountainous terrain and the complete absence of ground-to-air guidance. Nevertheless, the experience and skill of the crew led to the successful evacuation from Kabul.

It's worth noting that despite the atmosphere of crisis, the evacuation carried out by Kazakhstan's ministries of defense and foreign affairs in cooperation with the U.S. Central Command showed a high level of coordination between Kazakhstan and the United States.

As a result, the Republic of Kazakhstan became the only country in Central Asia and the first among the states of the former Soviet Union to evacuate not only its own but foreign citizens from Afghanistan.

As with the repatriation of Kazakh citizens from Syria, Kazakhstan has once again demonstrated to the world its capabilities to protect the interests and rights of its citizens and ethnic Kazakhs abroad. ♦



A Mantas T-12 unmanned surface vessel operates beside Royal Bahrain Naval Force fast-attack craft RBNS Abdul Rahman Al-Fadel during an exercise in the Arabian Gulf. SPECIALIST DAWSON ROTH/U.S. NAVY

NAVAL PROWESS

U.S., BAHRAINI AND ISRAELI NAVY COMMANDERS OFFER THEIR WISDOM ON THE BENEFITS OF INTERNATIONAL MARITIME COOPERATION

VICE ADM. BRAD COOPER, COMMANDER OF U.S. NAVAL FORCES CENTRAL COMMAND, U.S. 5TH FLEET AND COMBINED MARITIME FORCES; **REAR ADM. MOHAMMED YUSUF AL-ASAM**, COMMANDER OF ROYAL BAHRAIN NAVAL FORCE; AND **VICE ADM. DAVID SA'AR SALAMA**, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ISRAELI NAVY

We are honored to submit this article collectively because the seas unify us regardless of the uniform we wear. There is a well-known saying that goes: “Alone we are strong; together we are stronger.” It reflects our commitment to fostering an enduring maritime partnership built on a foundation of trust and a shared interest in maintaining security and stability. Exciting opportunities lie ahead to strengthen and expand naval cooperation throughout the region.

In November 2021, we made history when Israel, Bahrain and the United States conducted maritime security training at sea with other regional partners. This training marked the first time our navies collaborated together in naval operations, and it was exciting to see. Maritime collaboration helps ensure regional security and stability, which is essential to the free flow of commerce.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has been a steadfast partner in fostering regional maritime security cooperation. Its strategic location, historical connection to the sea and key role in international trade distinguish it as a crucial maritime crossroads in the Middle East. As the host country for the Combined Maritime Forces, Bahrain continues to play a central regional role. Additionally, recent visits to Bahrain by senior Israeli government and military leaders signify the continuing normalization of ties with Israel.

Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, right, speaks with Vice Adm. David Sa'ar Salama, commander-in-chief of the Israeli Navy in October 2021. U.S. NAVY CENTRAL COMMAND





The national flags of Israel and Bahrain fly alongside a U.S. Navy admiral flag on a U.S. Navy ship docked in Bahrain.

SPECIALIST DAWSON ROTH/U.S. NAVY



The recent alignment of Israel to U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility opens opportunities to deepen naval ties and enhance regional maritime security and stability, as demonstrated during a recent multinational exercise. For the first time, the Israeli Navy participated in International Maritime Exercise (IMX)-Cutlass Express 2022, the largest maritime exercise in the Middle East with 60 partner nations and international organizations. The level of international representation was truly remarkable and demonstrated the expansion of maritime partnerships in the region.

The IMX-Cutlass Express exercise spanned the region from the Arabian Gulf to the Red Sea. By training together across this vast operating area, we demonstrated our collective resolve to preserve the rules-based international order. This order is essential to safeguarding the free flow of regional maritime traffic and disrupting smuggling and other activities that threaten peace and stability ashore. We are always at our best when we train and operate together.

IMX-Cutlass Express offered a tremendous opportunity to train shoulder-to-shoulder and strengthen what is most important, our four "ships" – relationships, partnerships, friendship and shared leadership. Integrating processes, synchronizing systems and expanding relationships are essential to addressing today's challenges at sea. One nation cannot ensure regional maritime security alone. Disrupting

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and Prime Minister of Bahrain, center, receives a brief on the GHOST 4 unmanned aerial vehicle.

SPECIALIST MARK MAHMOD/U.S. NAVY

and deterring destabilizing activities in critical regional waterways requires us to work more closely together.

One area in particular where we are expanding our collective cooperation is in integrating unmanned systems and artificial intelligence to build a common operating picture of the surrounding seas. IMX-Cutlass Express enabled us to run complex scenarios for employing new, cutting-edge technology. We confirmed that drones and unmanned boats can supplement manpower and provide broader surveillance of the naval theater, improving our visibility above, on and below the sea.

The strategic environment is constantly evolving, and our navies must keep pace by integrating more unmanned systems to remain relevant and effective, and deter those seeking to destabilize the maritime environment.

IMX-Cutlass Express was only the first glimpse of a new horizon we will explore together. The future holds great promise for continued maritime cooperation through combined exercises and technology exchanges. Our shared commitment to protecting regional waterways and the free flow of commerce unites us all. ♦



MISSION OVER CENTRAL AFRICA

Pakistan Aviation Units Conduct Daring Missions in Support of U.N. Peacekeeping Operations

MAJ. KHURRAM SHAHZAD, PAKISTAN ARMED FORCES

For several decades, United Nations peacekeeping has grown increasingly complex. The spectrum of United Nations peacekeeping operations include restoring state authority, protecting civilians, and disarming, demobilizing and reintegrating former combatants. For that reason, successful peacekeeping missions demand greater flexibility and interoperability.

To meet these complex peacekeeping challenges, aviation components often play a pivotal role in maintaining safety, security and stability toward successful achievement of the mission's mandate. In addition to providing thousands of ground troops to U.N. missions, Pakistan is proud to supply aviation units to ease suffering in places like the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

DEPLOYMENT OF UNITED NATIONS

Operation des Nations Unies au Congo was the United Nations' first peacekeeping mission with muscle, dispatched to the Belgian Congo after the United Nations Security Council Resolution 143 of July 14, 1960.

The second United Nations Force went to DRC's South Kivu province in 2004 as part of the South Kivu Brigade. Its mission was to implement the mission mandate of the United Nations in the region and to be prepared for deployment in varying regions of the DRC on the directions of the force commander.

The third deployment, as part of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), was in 2011. It was tasked with stabilizing the DRC and providing air support along with timely deployments of other contingents. The peacekeeping force was to also prevent human rights violations in the region and manage refugee inflow from Burundi.

As of July 31, 2021, the total strength of U.N. peacekeeping personnel in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was 17,456. More than 50 nations have contributed military and police personnel for the peacekeeping efforts.

Notably, a Pakistan Aviation Unit of Puma helicopters has been a major contributor to the peacekeeping mission in the DRC since 2011. Before that mission, the

Pakistan, as a responsible nation, upholds peace and detests war and, therefore, it has the capacity of establishing itself as a global peacekeeping and peace-building architect.

unit served in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) from 2001 till 2004 and Sudan (UNMIS) from 2006 till 2011.

PAKISTAN AVIATION IN DRC

The Pakistan Aviation Unit is serving humanity by accomplishing the United Nations peacekeeping mandate and has kept the flag of Pakistan flying high in the multinational deployment.

The squadron's main area of operation is the Southern Sector but as a mission asset the unit can be tasked all over the DRC. The area is quite demanding, consisting of jungles, high altitudes, marshes and lightly populated areas. The country has limited emergency landing areas along with limited road infrastructure.

Consisting of three Puma SA 330L helicopters, the squadron is commanded by a lieutenant colonel. A total of 12 pilots (including the commanding officer) form part of its flying strength. Each helicopter can carry up to 10 fully equipped Soldiers or 2,000 kilograms of strapped-down cargo.

The helicopter can be pre-positioned at temporary operations bases for up to four weeks, refueling in the field from barrels if necessary. Once summoned for a military mission, the squadron can fly within two hours, although preparation is longer if the helicopters are airlifting a quick reaction force. These quick reaction troops can deploy by fast rope and rappelling.

Pumas have the ability to land on unprepared terrain using visual flight rules day and night without assistance from the troops on the ground. For self-defense, each helicopter mounts two machine guns.

If used to evacuate medical cases, each Puma can accommodate five or six stretcher patients or 10 sitting patients, along with two medics.

OPERATIONS AND MISSIONS

The main task of the Pakistan Aviation Unit in MONUSCO is to provide air support according to the terms of



A Pakistan Aviation Unit helicopter returns to service after undergoing maintenance in the DRC. MUHAMMAD BILAL/MONUSCO

employment reached between the government of Pakistan and the U.N. As of mid-2021, Pakistani helicopters had tallied nearly 14,000 flight hours.

Considering the country's challenging terrain, this length of service is testimony to the extraordinary professionalism of the pilots and technicians.

The squadron actively participated in several military operations planned by Force Headquarters toward achieving the goal of peacekeeping. Some of the military operations supported by the Pakistan Aviation Unit include Operation Pacific, Operation Resolve and Operation Garuda.

Due to the scarcity of roads in the DRC, emergency medical evacuations are restricted to aerial means. The Pakistan Aviation Unit has continually conducted medical evacuations of all kinds of patients, both military and civilian.

The squadron always manages to lift off within 30 minutes of receiving orders and has saved several lives through timely takeoffs, earning the respect in the Air Operations Branch of the United Nations. Pakistani Pumas have completed nearly 150 medical evacuations, including COVID-19 patients, and saved more than 200 lives.

Over the decades, Pakistan has deployed thousands of troops in U.N. peacekeeping missions around the world. The cost has been high: 156 enlisted personnel and 24 officers have died during these peace and stability missions to some of the most troubled regions of the world.

The 10th Pakistan Aviation Unit is proud to represent the Pakistani flag in MONUSCO. Despite fierce and unfavorable weather, the unit is fully committed to its role and task and has earned great respect among the troops of contributing countries.

In supporting global peace regardless of internal and external challenges, Pakistan has undeniably proven one dictum: "Pakistan, as a responsible nation, upholds peace and detests war and, therefore, it has the capacity of establishing itself as a global peacekeeping and peace-building architect." ♦

A version of this article appeared in Hilal magazine.

THE THREAT of UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS

Low-Cost Drones Change the Complexion of Low-Intensity Conflicts in the Region

ISSAM ABBAS AMIN

GENERAL DIRECTORATE FOR INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY OF THE IRAQI MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



A drone of the type used to harass shipping in the Arabian Gulf GETTY IMAGES

Unmanned aerial systems, or drones, pose a new challenge in conflict management as an emerging weapon that states and armed groups are finding useful. It appears that drones will change the nature of warfare, or at least will change low-intensity conflict. In 2020, drones were the tactical weapon of choice in the conflicts raging in the Middle East. It is notable that states sponsoring terrorism are the main beneficiaries of this weapon and that their use constitutes a potential challenge to the regional balance of power.

Drone warfare has become widespread since the United States deployed its Predator aircraft in Afghanistan following the September 11 attacks in 2001. The U.S. has possessed drone superiority, but the low relative cost of such systems makes them attractive to malicious actors in the Middle East. The gap is shrinking between the U.S. and these malicious actors accompanied by their supporting extremist groups.

The Battle of Idlib in Syria revealed a new role and combat doctrine, with the core focus based on drones changing the balance of power on the ground. Turkey launched its main offensive of about 100 locally produced

drones that fired cheap guided munitions with lethal efficiency. The Syrian regime lost at least two fighter jets, eight helicopters, 135 tanks, 77 armored vehicles, and had 2,500 casualties before the battle ended, according to the Turkish Ministry of National Defense. The attack left the Syrian Army unable to protect its arsenal and artillery units on the front lines, which were systematically targeted with cheap but high-precision missiles from Turkish drones.

As a NATO official said: "Dozens of these drones flew over Idlib, dropping these bomblets on the Syrian regime throughout the night, drawing the attention of Russian President Vladimir Putin." The Turkish drones were able to dominate the air, and this was repeated in Libya and the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict.

In Libya, the Turkish drones thwarted an attack on Tripoli, and the Government of National Accord turned from a defensive to offensive posture to pursue the forces of Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar toward the strategic outskirts of Sirte. The same situation was repeated in the Caucasus, where Azerbaijan, using drones, took over territory claimed by Armenia for more than 20 years.



An Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Service Soldier targets a Daesh drone during the liberation of Mosul. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

In the cases of Libya, Idlib and Azerbaijan, the effectiveness of drone usage was validated. In these three theaters, Turkish experts appeared to use a common tactic of jamming systems, and drones commenced their attacks by targeting air defense systems, even if some losses were suffered. This allowed the drones to attack military targets on the ground with fewer losses after neutralizing the adversary's air defense, making their tanks and armored vehicles easier targets.

These examples raise the question: Should such tactics lead to strategic reevaluations?

It is preferable to respond here with the shocking attack on the Saudi Aramco facility in September 2019, which temporarily halted 6% of global oil production. The Aramco attack — combined with Houthi attacks against Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates — indicated a significant development in Iranian or its allies' drone capabilities.

What is striking here is Iran's prowess in operating a large number of drones — approximately 50 — during a military exercise in July 2019. The Iranians also demonstrated a significant capability when they took control of a sophisticated U.S. drone that fell on their territory and created a replica to suit their requirements.

Some assessments rate the effectiveness of drone attacks at 85%. This is a high percentage and demonstrates the technology's sophisticated capability and high reliability. Such attacks could also target infrastructure such as power stations and weapons manufacturing plants.

So, we are facing a new situation in conflict management, which is the capability of drones to surprise even the most advanced military nations. So far, it has been proved that in the confrontation between costly air defense systems and low-cost offensive drones, the drones come out on top, especially with the correct tactics. Reports have suggested that Turkish drones used by Azerbaijan neutralized the well-known S-300 missile system, which is a key air defense system for many countries, including Egypt, India, Iran and Syria.

Even the more sophisticated S-400 missiles deployed in Syria have proved ineffective against the combined use of electronic warfare, anti-radiation missiles and precision-guided munitions. Even a country such as Saudi Arabia, which has a high density of sophisticated air defense systems, the majority of which are Western, found it difficult to repel the 2019 drone attack on Saudi Aramco facility.

The world is facing a new and difficult challenge to the strategic balance in the Middle East after these low-cost, high-impact technologies found their way to terrorist organizations in Iraq, Libya and Syria.

In the face of this challenge, modern warfare is experiencing more covert terrorist attacks. In recent years, drones have become a major weapon for organizations and military forces, especially in the Middle East, but their use has varied between legitimate and illegitimate. The key factor that drives commanders to use this type of weapon is its ability to evade radar and the deniability with which it can be deployed. This has been observed, for example, in attacks on Iraq's Erbil International Airport.

The world should pay attention to the implications of drone use in the Middle East. It has the potential to alter the regional military balance of power and encourages death and destruction at a low cost with a high margin for denial. ♦

We regret to report the death of author Issam Abbas Amin. His passing is a great loss for Unipath readers and the Intelligence and Security Directorate of the Iraqi Ministry of Defense.





Debris from Iranian-made Houthi drones is displayed in the United Arab Emirates after being recovered in Yemen. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

FOREIGN AID BOLSTERS LEBANESE ARMED FORCES

Lebanese security forces stand guard during a public protest in the northern city of Tripoli in January 2021. GETTY IMAGES



THE UNITED STATES AND MIDDLE EASTERN PARTNERS HELP LEBANON THROUGH ITS ECONOMIC CRISIS

UNIPATH STAFF

The Lebanese Armed Forces will receive an additional \$67 million from the United States to aid in stabilizing the country.

U.S. Undersecretary of State Victoria Nuland announced the new funding during her first visit to the Lebanese capital of Beirut in October 2021.

The country is suffering a deep economic downturn exacerbated by COVID-19 and the 2020 Beirut port explosion. Shortages of basic goods had led to rampant smuggling that Lebanese security forces have interrupted.

One operation in September 2021 seized hundreds of tons of smuggled fuel oil stored in underground tanks in the town of Ansar. Meanwhile police discovered a truck in Baalbek loaded with 20 tons of ammonium nitrate. The Lebanese Interior Ministry investigated to learn whether the chemical, most often used as agricultural fertilizer, was destined for the manufacture of explosives.

Ammonium nitrate was the source of the Beirut port explosion on August 4, 2020. Hundreds of tons of the compound, improperly stored at the port, led to the cataclysm that killed 214 people and injured another 6,500. The disaster left parts of the capital city in ruins.

Aside from the United States, other international partners are contributing supplies and money to alleviate the suffering of the Lebanese people.

France's Ministry of Defense held a virtual conference in June 2021 soliciting partner nations for food, medical supplies and spare parts for military equipment to help the Lebanese Armed Forces.

Lebanon's Middle Eastern neighbors were quick to send fuel, food, and medical supplies to Lebanon after the blast and during the COVID-19 pandemic. To address the electricity and fuel crisis in July 2021, Iraq promised to supply Lebanon with a million tons of fuel oil in exchange for services and goods. At the same time, Qatar announced it would continue providing Lebanon with 70 tons of food each month.

A Jordanian military cargo plane landed in September 2021 at Rafic Hariri International Airport, unloading 10 tons of food for Lebanese Soldiers. Kuwait's aid to Lebanon continued as the Kuwaiti Red Crescent Society in August 2021 shipped 8 tons of medical supplies, baby formula, COVID-19 vaccine and an ambulance to the Lebanese Red Crescent.

The Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation from the United Arab Emirates, in conjunction with Lebanon-based Dar Al-Fatwa relief organization, launched an initiative to aid over 35,000 households in Tripoli and other cities in northern Lebanon. ♦

Sources: Lebanese Army, Aljazeera.net, alquds.co.uk

Lebanese Army
motto: Honor,
Sacrifice, Loyalty
LEBANESE ARMY

EXPOSING THE ENEMY

THE PROBING EYES OF THE IRAQI DIRECTORATE OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVE A VITAL COUNTERTERRORISM FUNCTION

UNIPATH STAFF

The Iraqi Directorate of Military Intelligence specializes in collecting information on adversaries, analyzing that information, and identifying risks and threats, in addition to monitoring information security and personal security. However, at the same time, it has played a prominent role in mitigating the crises that have affected the country in recent years, particularly those caused by terrorist control of some areas and the ramifications of that. These are among the most serious and complex crises the country has experienced, and the directorate has achieved success by completing missions with courage, patience and care.

To talk about the role of the Directorate of Military Intelligence, Unipath met with Director-General Maj. Gen. Faiz Fadil Al-Mamouri.

UNIPATH: How did Iraq's intelligence system change after June 2014?

MAJ. GEN. AL-MAMOURI: Hybrid warfare has undoubtedly made the armies of the world change their tactics to deal with new threats. Because military intelligence is the backbone of urban warfare, much has changed in the way intelligence operates to match the types of emergent threats. Daesh's invasion of Mosul and other areas in northern and western Iraq came as a great shock and a true test of the effectiveness of traditional intelligence operations. It convinced the world of the need to devise and update human and technical intelligence methods to fit modern warfare, in which all available means are employed to win battles, including asymmetric warfare, hybrid warfare and proxy warfare.

Intelligence has had a significant role in settling many conflicts, by combining human and technological factors to collect information about the adversary, analyze it and submit it quickly to security forces. This allows preemptive attacks to abort enemy plans or cut off its logistics and funding or isolate it from its social surroundings. In addition to security forces seizing hoards of extremely important information and terrorist files stored on smartphones, computers and hard drives during raids on terrorist dens and cells, intelligence services helped them conduct these successful missions and provided them with a database that reveals the enemy's future intent.

As I already mentioned, tactics during the War on Terror took the global intelligence community by surprise. The speed of rumors being spread and the effectiveness of Daesh's online propaganda army on social media channels contrasted with the slowness of traditional intelligence operations. Therefore, we began forming online surveillance teams and opened intelligence cells across the whole security apparatus, within operational command and formations.

This has increased the speed with which intelligence reaches the appropriate sectors and thwarted the criminal plans of the terrorists. The presence of intelligence specialists within the joint operations room has helped to develop robust plans to defeat the adversary. As part of the Global Coalition Against Daesh, the Directorate of Military Intelligence has become the link between global intelligence agencies and our advanced military units on the front lines.

Coalition forces were providing us with accurate information on foreign fighters and their communications. We exchanged information with them that our men in operational units had obtained. Intelligence from all these sources — from Iraqi agencies and from coalition forces — greatly helped to thwart enemy attacks and destroy their positions. Leveraging the technological advances of friendly forces in the form of drones, satellite imagery and monitoring enemy communications to serve human intelligence on the ground



Director-General Maj. Gen. Faiz Fadil Al-Mamouri

has given us the upper hand over the adversary, and we aborted their plans.

However, the most important basis for victory was the continuous support from the population for our security forces. They provided accurate information on enemy movements and weapons caches, which made it easier for us to identify objectives in the battles for liberation, in addition to securing liberated areas, raiding terrorist hideouts and making arrests.

We also intensified the intelligence effort in terrorist-controlled areas and

recruited human sources, planting them within Daesh ranks to gain knowledge of terrorist intent and secrets, and provide units with intelligence to conduct successful operations and achieve the required goals. We knew all the internal disputes among the personnel and the groups, and we worked on sowing doubt and propagating dissension among their ranks, which enabled us to defeat them on all levels.

The General Command of the Armed Forces ordered numerous changes to the departments of the Intelligence Directorate to keep pace with changes on the ground and to be more effective in combating the terrorist threat. The most important of these changes was establishing the basis for the Deep Reconnaissance Battalion, which played an active part in collecting information on the adversary, his movements, and his physical and human capabilities.

The Directorate of Military Intelligence and its associated unit adjusted their operations to match the scope of current threats to meet intelligence and security demands. This included the formation of an intelligence and counterterrorist cell in 2020 and approval to form a drone unit equipped with modern aircraft and thermal cameras.

UNIPATH: What are your plans for developing military intelligence personnel?

MAJ. GEN. AL-MAMOURI: The directorate is working on selecting and recruiting effective and competent people in accordance with specific military regulations and contexts. We care about the accuracy of selection and focus on intelligence, physical aptitude, and psychological endurance since an intelligence officer works in all terrains and conditions and may be forced to work solo behind enemy lines. He must be able to defend himself, have an intuitive feel for the job and maintain a high sense of security. After the process of selection and successful completion of basic training, personnel engage in courses specializing in domestic and foreign intelligence, such as the method of information collection, because of its impact on intelligence decision-making and the process of recruiting sources.

So that what happened in 2014 is not repeated, terrorists must be prevented from establishing hideouts and breeding

grounds inside and outside the cities. Currently, it is necessary to develop and support the intelligence community, as it is among the most pressing priorities for the success and operationalization of the military-security community. The intelligence effort must be reinforced by drawing on military and security sources that provide accurate and timely information and help to combat enemy breaches.

The effectiveness of intelligence services must also be raised by developing a certification and training system that includes certified leadership cadres and training on respect for human rights. As we train and certify, we must coordinate and cooperate with allied and friendly state intelligence services and international organizations, especially in the field of counterterrorism.

The intelligence community must rely on a range of human competencies qualified to work within this field locally and globally across specializations. They must be able to employ methods and advanced techniques used by modern intelligence services around the world. Funding must be provided to sustain and support the intelligence community with credible sources, without whom it would be difficult to obtain accurate information.

We have created a database to store intelligence received from intelligence departments in the operational sectors and from intelligence and security officers in the field. The database is shaped, studied and analyzed with an eye toward identifying terrorist threats.

UNIPATH: What challenges have officers faced conducting work in the field?

MAJ. GEN. AL-MAMOURI: We previously faced a complex problem, which was tasking intelligence personnel who worked within military formations with missions that had nothing to do with their specializations. Therefore, intelligence officers and commanders from reconnaissance brigades were instructed not to give intelligence officers duties unrelated to security and intelligence, so that they had time to move about freely and track terrorist activities in their sectors of responsibility and provide details to the directorate.

UNIPATH: Do you maintain specialized teams to track social media platforms on which terrorists are active?

MAJ. GEN. AL-MAMOURI: We have a technical tracking and online surveillance team in the Intelligence and Counter-Terrorism Cell. It specializes in tracking Daesh activity on social media sites, and we are developing it through support from various experts. Fourth- and fifth-generation wars are concerned with the online battlefield and the internet. Therefore, we are interested in attracting computer and network engineers to be part of the teams in the Directorate of Intelligence. We have departments specializing in electronic warfare, extracting evidence from devices we discover in terrorist hideouts and monitoring and tracking terrorist communications across chat rooms and email.

UNIPATH: What is the role of military intelligence in draining the sources of terror financing?

MAJ. GEN. AL-MAMOURI: The Intelligence and Counter-Terrorism Cell also specializes in monitoring bank transfers and money laundering. Because terrorist activities are highly dependent on funding to recruit, transport fighters, and plant explosives, it is therefore considered a priority to drain the sources of terrorist financing in all forms. We work closely with coalition partners to share intelligence related to domestic and foreign financing networks. They and friendly intelligence agencies share their findings with us after tracking suspicious activity abroad, which provides everyone with a complete picture of domestic and foreign terrorist financial networks so they can be targeted.

UNIPATH: Some of your operatives, called Unit 43, played a significant role during the battles for liberation by instilling panic in terrorists and communicating with the civilian population. What can you tell us about this unit?

MAJ. GEN. AL-MAMOURI: There is no doubt that the Psychological Operations Unit has played a significant role in sowing panic and chaos in the enemy ranks. This unit was tasked with the planning, production and distribution of all psychological operations-linked products, so that the Ministry of Defense had a unified and specialized approach in the field of psychological operations. The unit has been provided with experts and specialists from the National Security Advisory, and its personnel have passed through specialized courses run by coalition forces. The unit commander was sent to the United Kingdom and the United States to observe similar units in those two countries and returned with a range of expertise that has been applied.

In addition, the unit was supplied with modern technology used in the battles of liberation that has proven its ability to defeat terrorism. Unit 43 also succeeded in motivating the population to cooperate with the security forces and communicated with them through radio broadcasts and by dropping leaflets from the air. The leaflets dropped in Mosul confused Daesh, as we watched them from reconnaissance aircraft come running out into the streets and alleys to pick up the leaflets all day, out of fear that they would reach the population.

However, collecting leaflets exhausted them and sowed fear in their hearts. They could not collect the millions of leaflets dropped into Mosul every night. Unit 43 also succeeded by using loudspeakers to emit the roar of bombing, the thundering of tanks, and the clamor from the battles of liberation. Many terrorists fled in panic from villages and kasbahs without firing even a shot, and people talked about hearing fierce battles throughout the night.

UNIPATH: How have intelligence missions changed after the liberation of cities from Daesh occupation?

MAJ. GEN. AL-MAMOURI: After cities were liberated from Daesh terrorists, intelligence missions focused on arresting and hunting fugitives and hidden terrorist elements and foiling sleeper cell plans with preemptive operations based on the accurate analysis of information collected by intelligence operatives. In addition, work continued on collecting information on adversarial activity and intent, conducting aerial reconnaissance and sifting information to identify enemy hideouts.

We also prepare intelligence situational reports and movement analysis and work on penetrating enemy ranks through reconnaissance detachments. We enter cities and patrol to collect information on enemy deployments and their headquarters. We have also harnessed social media platforms to launch psychological operations against the adversary by publishing imagery and locations we obtained from aerial reconnaissance and satellites.

The directorate focuses on integrating the role of drones by procuring aircraft, cameras and technical materials to take part in surveillance operations, analysis, and tracking Daesh leaders. It focuses on forming teams and detachments for security check procedures for internally displaced people (IDP) and collecting information on dangerous fugitives who might be hiding among them.

As for psychological warfare, we have focused on disseminating rumors in areas where the enemy is located to break their morale and remind people of Daesh's crimes, while exposing and refuting their extremist ideas and fatwas. We publicize the exploits of the Iraqi military and the intelligence directorate in the media. The Technical Tracking and Online Surveillance Division has played a prominent role in identifying, infiltrating and disrupting Daesh terrorist websites.

The specialist teams have also collected intelligence to study the psychological state of the enemy by monitoring and tracking social media sites and media outlets, whether they are personal accounts or belong to terrorist organizations.

We worked with friends in the coalition forces Joint Operations Center with a unified team spirit. We provided them with accurate intelligence during preliminary operations, as well as conducting expeditionary strikes to prevent the adversary from reinforcing, as international coalition forces conducted hundreds of airstrikes against Daesh dens and headquarters. We also supplied the Iraqi Air Force and Iraqi Army Aviation with required intelligence as part of plans to develop aerial targeting against the terrorists. That information contributed to many successful airstrikes.

Over the course of liberation operations, we effectively reinforced combat units with intelligence detachments, each consisting of an officer, other ranks and mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles, known as MRAPs. These detachments were equipped with technical devices and specialist drones for aerial reconnaissance.

We set up checkpoints along the axis of advance to provide units with coordinates, enemy locations and real-time information, while giving a clear picture of the nature of enemy defenses, human resources, and combat capabilities to commanders on the battlefield. We transmitted a live drone



Unit 43 of the Iraqi Psychological Operations Unit uses a loud speaker to communicate with Baghdad residents during a counterterrorism mission. IRAQI DIRECTORATE OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE

video feed to safeguard unit movements, avoid being targeted by vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, and destroy enemy targets during the advance.

UNIPATH: How did you manage to work on two fronts at the same time: managing the battles of liberation and dealing with the internally displaced people crisis?

MAJ. GEN. AL-MAMOURI: The IDP crisis caused disruption to the advancing units and delayed the progress of offensive forces. That helped protect innocent people and even altered the rules of engagement, as the terrorists hid among the IDPs at times using them as human shields. After building IDP camps, in cooperation with coalition forces and the United Nations, we faced security breaches from terrorist infiltration of civilians.

Command, therefore, formed joint committees from all security agencies and tasked us with checking IDP data before their entry into the camps. Our directorate formed task forces equipped with a database of wanted individuals to compare them with the personal information of the IDPs, and through this Daesh elements and leaders were apprehended.

Our directorate was also able to seize a large collection of Daesh documents in various sectors. Committees were formed to sort and analyze these documents, as well as to organize an exhibition that was inaugurated at directorate headquarters in February 2017. The aim of the exhibition was to reveal to local and international visitors the crimes committed by the terrorist gangs against the people.

The exhibition also attracted worldwide media attention and included the most prominent documents and criminal exhibits belonging to Daesh. It included books that were printed on special local presses to publish extremist ideology, printed textbooks for the benefit of the so-called Diwan of Education, which served the Daesh Ministry of Education, as well as inflammatory posters, lists of terrorist names, communication devices and drones. ♦

INTELLIGENCE PARTNERSHIP



Reaches New Heights

COL. FAISAL AL QATTAN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR G2, KUWAIT LAND FORCES; **LT. COL. LAURA CROSS**, TASK FORCE SPARTAN G2;
AND **LT. COL. QUENTIN MCCART**, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT DIVISION, THIRD ARMY/U.S. ARMY CENTRAL



Kuwait and the United States have widened military intelligence cooperation, turning what had been occasional meetings into weekly engagements that help provide security for the region.

By mid-2021, the partners announced completion of 63 bilateral intelligence engagements over a single year, most of them virtual in light of COVID 19 lockdowns. Kuwait Land Forces and U.S. Army Central (USARCENT) recognized this milestone by committing to a continuation of the successful intelligence partnership.

“Relationships matter, and COVID-19 should not stand in the way of maintaining those relationships,” said U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Patrick Hamilton, commander of Task Force Spartan, a mobile force that helps advise and train partners in the Middle East. “Knowing who to call when something goes wrong is the key to every position and relationship.”

Early in 2020, the pandemic forced cancellation of most in-person events, including bilateral exchanges. Because adversaries never take a break, Kuwait Land Forces and USARCENT’s intelligence directorate, known as the G2, realized neither partner could afford indefinite delays.

Raising levels of tactical and operational awareness is a priority if Kuwait and the U.S. are to preserve peace in the region, said Col. Faisal Al Qattan, deputy director G2 of Kuwait Land Forces.

“We must all work together to restore peace,” Col. Al Qattan said. “We have recently seen the capabilities developed by organizations considered hostile to peace in the region. These organizations are working tirelessly to obstruct all efforts made to maintain peace.”

While the Kuwaiti and USARCENT G2 relationship is not new, the commitment and consistency of this partnership is noteworthy. Increasing partner capacity and interoperability are key to the region’s success.

Col. Faisal Al Qattan, deputy director of the Kuwait Land Forces intelligence directorate, meets Lt. Col. Laura Cross of Task Force Spartan G2. KUWAIT LAND FORCES

In the past this relationship was conducted mainly through in-person engagements of subject matter experts, leveraging forward deployed units such as Task Force Spartan G2. Symposiums were added later so that senior U.S. and Kuwaiti officers could meet their counterparts face to face.

When the pandemic struck in 2020, intelligence officers from both countries decided to continue these events virtually. The team used technology from the Coalition Partner Network to continue its fruitful collaboration. Although this platform allowed the partners to maintain communication, it created dependency on a network that sometimes became overloaded from shared use.

Regional threats made an in-person component imperative. Though augmented by virtual technology, the events emphasized face-to-face engagement. This hybrid approach, which the G2 and other warfighting sections of the U.S. military adopted as a pilot project, maximized intelligence synchronization.

Virtual augmentation of engagements was necessary because of the reduced number of USARCENT personnel allowed to travel to live events. On the plus side, such technology allowed even greater participation in the events. Organizations that had rarely participated in the past could now attend with greater ease. These weekly events became successful forums for sharing regional security concerns.

Kuwait Land Forces, USARCENT and Task Force Spartan G2 intend to broaden their relationship with future engagements, including a program called Junior Officer Professional Development. ♦



Strengthening Qatari Sea Power

Naval Staff Maj. Gen. Abdullah bin Hassan Al-Sulaiti is on a Mission to Expand and Enhance the Qatari Emiri Navy

UNIPATH STAFF

“Here is the dream interpreted ... here is hope fulfilled ... here is the crop bearing fruit ... rising waves, powerful winds, and night followed by day ... everybody wonders will the Halul vessel be able to sail? The answer, in God’s name, was its course and anchorage ... in the name of God we cut through the ocean waves in spite of the winds ... we are the waves and we are the wind.”

~ An original poem by Naval Staff Maj. Gen. Abdullah bin Hassan Al-Sulaiti, commander of the Qatari Emiri Navy



Geography requires Qatar to maintain a skilled and vigilant naval force. As a peninsula jutting into the Arabian Gulf with 563 kilometers of coastline, maritime defense cannot be neglected.

After decades of commanding ships and leading several positions, Naval Staff Maj. Gen. Abdullah bin Hassan Al-Sulaiti is qualified to lead Qatar’s modernizing and diversifying naval forces.

His ascension to naval leadership coincided with a strategic overhaul of the Armed Forces. Under Maj. Gen. Al-Sulaiti’s leadership, the Qatari Emiri Navy is investing in larger ships to project power beyond its territorial waters as part of multinational naval coalitions. Equally important is a focus on military education in the form of a new naval academy and maritime training center.

“Our borders are open to large areas of ocean, which makes them vulnerable to smuggling and

illegal maritime incursions,” Maj. Gen. Al-Sulaiti told Unipath during a recent interview. “As the majority of trade is done by sea, and our national economy also is mostly based on gas and oil wealth located offshore, all this and more makes the mission of defending this national and economic structure an extremely important issue.”

Maj. Gen. Al-Sulaiti joined the Qatari Armed Forces 40 years ago and scaled the ranks of the Navy. He accumulated early command experience aboard gunboats and missile-equipped fast attack craft. His career advanced to leading strike forces and fleets. All the while he gained practical and theoretical knowledge by studying and training abroad in Egypt, France, Great Britain and the Netherlands.

Maj. Gen. Al-Sulaiti’s successful stint as commander of Qatar’s fleet and coastal defense launched him to the senior ranks of the Armed Forces: He became Qatar’s deputy naval commander in 2016 and naval commander in 2018.

Since Qatari independence in 1971, the Navy has developed in four stages, Maj. Gen. Al-Sulaiti said. British gunboats formed the backbone of the country’s first fleet in the 1970s. Damsah-class missile boats from France, acquired in the 1980s, increased naval capacity. Qatar added British Barzan-class missile boats to its defensive arsenal in the 1990s.

“As for the fourth stage, it is not simply a conventional or routine stage but rather a quantum leap, which began with the adoption and initial implementation of the new project signed with Italian company Fincantieri,” he said. “The fourth stage is considered to be a quantum leap because it is a comprehensive and precise modernization with a clear strategic vision using proper defense doctrine.”

The ships from Fincantieri will be the biggest and best-armed vessels yet put into service by Qatar. Among them is a strategic amphibious assault ship outfitted with a helicopter landing pad. As a base for these new ships, Qatar is

**Dibel missile boat in
Qatari regional water**
QATAR ARMED FORCES



“We are keen to strengthen international alliances, whether with neighboring or distant nations. We always try wherever possible to establish international partnerships with major nations such as the United States, Turkey, France, Britain and Italy.”

~ Naval Staff Maj. Gen. Abdullah bin Hassan Al-Sulaiti



A Qatari Emiri Navy fast-attack craft participates in the Eastern Defender 20 exercise with U.S. Naval Forces Central Command.

SPC, TRADALE BRYANT/U.S. ARMY

building a new port outside Doha to handle cargo and naval vessels.

Defending the port and the rest of the nation's maritime borders is a technologically updated coastal defense battery system. The batteries are one of a kind among Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

"It is a concealed system, a strategic weapon, and its role is instilling fear in all those who dare to enter Qatari waters, apart from vessels that can be monitored by radar," Maj. Gen. Al-Sulaiti said.

Human development is equally critical. The Navy's vision for development consists of three pillars: human development, material development and moral development based on honesty, loyalty and excellence, the general said.

The Qatari Navy has established the Maritime Center for Warfare Courses and Operational Training. The aim is to train naval officers closer to home, providing them with operational knowledge and expertise through coursework and warship training simulators. In addition, the Mohammed Bin Ghanem Al Ghanem Maritime Academy, a specialized institute for marine sciences, has admitted its first class of highly qualified students to expand the Navy's ranks.

Qatar has begun to welcome women into naval ranks in fields such as engineering, logistics and administrations. The change allowing women to volunteer for national service occurred in 2018.

"Within its new vision, the Navy has adopted a national policy aimed at encouraging female potential to defend, alongside their male counterparts, the supreme interests of the nation," Maj. Gen. Al-Sulaiti said.

The general also oversees efforts to strengthen the Navy's intelligence capabilities and combat power. It established a brigade-level team within the Marines divided into battalions with specific combat missions combining land and naval fighting skills. Such fighting power is essential to defend not just a vulnerable coastline but more than 200 oil and gas terminals that form the foundation of Qatar's wealth.

"We have begun negotiations with a number of countries that are professional and have a long history of these types of forces, so we can benefit from their expertise and raise the standard and readiness of this force. God willing, it will have a high profile within the ranks of the Emiri Navy in the near future," he said.

Such multinational military cooperation is a foundation of Qatar's strategy. The acquisition of larger warships will allow the Navy to range beyond home waters.

"We found that our fleet of vessels had limited our movement, and we were unable to go beyond



Qatar sails its new Al Zubarah class of multi-purpose corvette built in Italy. QATARI EMIRI NAVY

the Arabian Gulf," Maj. Gen. Al-Sulaiti said. "We were eager to obtain new vessels that would enhance opportunities for international participation with European forces in general and with U.S forces in the Arabian Sea."

A well-read man as well as accomplished Sailor, Maj. Gen. Al-Sulaiti encourages like-minded inquisitiveness from his subordinates in the Navy. The general is proficient in French and attended the French Naval College. He later earned a master's in military science in Egypt.

As officers are sent abroad to study, Maj. Gen. Al-Sulaiti expects them to function as experts and mentors when they return. Simply attending lectures and browsing training manuals will no longer do.

"Everyone is responsible for and trusted in their areas of specialization," he said. "This is about state security. A lack of knowledge is a failure and betrayal of this trust."

Maj. Gen. Al-Sulaiti sees his task as implementing the vision of His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, emir of Qatar and commander in chief of the Qatari Armed Forces. That vision includes a larger role for multinational cooperation that benefit's Qatar's security in a sometimes unpredictable region of the world.

"We are keen to strengthen international alliances, whether with neighboring or distant nations," the naval commander said. "We always try wherever possible to establish international partnerships with major nations such as the United States, Turkey, France, Britain and Italy."



LEBANON ARMED FORCES BENEFIT FROM INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

UNIPATH STAFF

Lebanon is increasing its supply of food, medicine and military supplies with the aid of international partners committed to its stability and security.

At the end of an international virtual conference hosted by French Defense Minister Florence Parly in June 2021, partner nations led by France, in conjunction with the United States and Italy, promised to help the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) weather the country's economic crisis.

Parly reaffirmed her country's commitment to continued support of Lebanon's military and people, praising the LAF as the backbone of security and stability. The conference was aimed at soliciting international partners for food, medical supplies, and spare parts for military equipment.

In a speech at the conference, LAF Commander Gen. Joseph Aoun thanked participants for their confidence in Lebanon's military institutions.

Qatar quickly responded, pledging to provide the LAF with 70 tons of food a month, and a Qatari Air Force plane carrying the first shipment arrived July 8, 2021, at Beirut-Rafic Hariri International Airport.

Workers at Qatar's Al Udeid Air Base load packages of humanitarian aid destined for Lebanon in July 2021. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

"The Paris conference is meant to prompt partner nations to think creatively about how to help the LAF through 2021, but also in ways that allow the command of the Armed Forces to focus on its missions — border security, counterterrorism, internal stability," said Aram Nerguzian, senior advisor at Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center.

Because the LAF aims to represent the country as a whole and recoils from internal political and factional disputes, the Lebanese people view it as a guarantor of national unity, independence and sovereignty. The country has suffered a series of economic blows, including the Beirut port explosion in August 2020, that have hindered its ability to maintain military readiness without international support.

Sources: Lebanese Armed Forces, Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Reuters, Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center



U.N.: Central, South Asia Face Flow of Afghan Refugees

UNIPATH STAFF

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) predicts a surge in refugees from Afghanistan that could flow into neighboring Central and South Asia nations. Violence following the withdrawal of coalition troops from Afghanistan has created hundreds of thousands of newly displaced Afghans.

Afghanistan's regional neighbors would be among the hardest hit by instability in the country. Already, Pakistan hosts more than a million Afghan refugees, a number that could grow as frightened Afghans approach the border regions.

Displaced civilians, including an increasing number of women and children, have described their travails to the UNHCR and other agencies that focus on Afghanistan. Fighting, extortion, loss of livelihood and collapsing social services were cited as reasons for the flight.

The UNHCR vowed to help newly displaced Afghans with emergency shelter, food, health care and cash assistance. The United States has also devoted at least \$100 million to help resettle vulnerable Afghans fearful of violence.

U.S. officials have requested that Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan host thousands of those Afghans as they await visas to travel to the U.S. Tajikistan has offered to accommodate at least 100,000 Afghans should such a need arise.

In a sign that Uzbekistan has begun to grapple with a flow of Afghan refugees, the country erected a tent city near the border town of Termez in the summer of 2021. The camp is a short journey from the Friendship Bridge connecting Uzbekistan and Afghanistan.

"A failure to reach a peace agreement in Afghanistan and stem the current violence will lead to further displacement within the country, as well as to neighboring countries and beyond," the U.N. refugee agency said in July 2021. Sources: UNHCR, Bloomberg, Eurasianet

Displaced Afghan families gather in Kunduz to escape violence in June 2021.

AFF/GETTY IMAGES

Kyrgyzstan Fights Human Trafficking

UNIPATH STAFF

The Cabinet of Ministers of Kyrgyzstan announced that it launched the first National Simulation Exercise on Combating Human Trafficking in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Bishkek.

The four-day simulation took place in Kyrgyzstan's Issyk-Kul province. Deputy Chairperson of the Cabinet of Ministers of Kyrgyzstan Zhyldyz Bakashova and Head of the OSCE Program Office in Kyrgyzstan Alexey Rogov initiated the training program.

Kyrgyz officials recognize the importance of this event to better locate and help victims of human trafficking through a new approach.

"We understand that the fight against this type of crime should be tackled with new technologies and approaches. We should improve the system of criminal prosecution of criminals," Bakashova said.

She presented a new training format developed by the OSCE that is applicable to agencies with more than 60 employees, including Kyrgyz law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, labor inspectors, social services, and nongovernmental and international organizations.

The simulation involved real-time anti-trafficking measures in an environment resembling reality as much as possible. The program is designed to prevent human trafficking, support victims, improve skills of government and nongovernmental organizations, and update Kyrgyzstan's legal system.

These exercises followed the Kyrgyz Interior Ministry's announcement on July 30, 2021, that it was launching a 100-day informational campaign to stop human trafficking. According to the head of the Criminal Police Service of the Interior Ministry, Marlis Dzhumabaev, the campaign was motivated by the U.N. General Assembly's declaration of July 30 as World Day against Trafficking in Persons.

He stressed that the country's policy on trafficking must include rescuing and rehabilitating people trapped in servitude.

Sources: Cabinet of Ministers of Kyrgyzstan, Kaktus Media, Kabar



Bahrain Empowers Humanitarian Workers

UNIPATH STAFF

To enhance professionalism in providing assistance and relief during natural disasters and armed conflicts, the Bahraini Ministry of Interior hosted a two-day Humanitarian Operations Workshop in May 2021.

Drawing more than 40 military and civilian leaders from Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and the United States, the workshop was facilitated by U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) and the U.S. Agency for International Development and patronized by Bahraini Maj. Gen. Abdullah Muhammad Al Zayed, deputy chief of public security in the Interior Ministry.

The agenda included topics aimed at honing participants' skills and knowledge for responding to humanitarian disasters: emergency management, disaster response improvement, infectious disease survival strategies, general surgical emergencies and emergency resuscitation.

"Humanitarian disasters don't happen on a schedule. They don't offer fair warning, and they strike the vulnerable with particular cruelty," said NAVCENT Commander Vice Adm. Brad Cooper in his opening remarks.

"Yet we also know that the response to disasters brings out the best in humanity. It unites an array of people, international organizations, governments and militaries from around the world to support a common goal — to provide aid for



Bahraini and U.S. participants discuss a case at the Humanitarian Operations Workshop in Manama in May 2021.

PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS JORDAN CROUCH/U.S. NAVY

those desperately in need."

In responding to humanitarian disasters and armed conflicts, Bahrain plays a key role. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the kingdom contributes through zakat and sadaqa to humanitarian operations worldwide. These contributions have benefited more than 33 countries affected by armed conflict and natural disasters, among which were Lebanon, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. Bahraini relief and assistance to affected countries is mainly delivered through Bahrain's Red Crescent Society and the Royal Charitable Organization. Sources: Bahrain News Agency, NAVCENT, UNOCHA

Saudi Arabia Finances Yemeni Scholarships

UNIPATH STAFF

Thousands of Yemeni college students will benefit from the generosity of Saudi Arabia, which is providing \$46 million in financial aid for Yemenis pursuing higher education abroad.

The Saudi Development and Reconstruction Program for Yemen agreed to pay over \$2 million in tuition for 796 students during 2020 and 2021. Another \$11 million was allocated to cover tuition and fees for 6,136 students during the 2020 academic year.

The scholarship program was enshrined in an agreement signed in June 2021 by Yemen's Minister

of Higher Education and Scientific Research Khaled Al-Wasabi, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Waed Bathib and Saudi Ambassador to Yemen Mohammed Al-Jaber. Al-Wasabi noted that the agreement will alleviate financial hardships of thousands of students, many of whom enrolled abroad during the country's destructive civil war.

His Majesty King Salman bin Abdulaziz created the Saudi Development and Reconstruction Program for Yemen in 2018 to improve quality of life for Yemenis.

In addition to the scholarships, the program is also supplying the Yemeni government with \$400 million worth of petroleum derivatives to fuel more than 80 electric power plants.

Other prominent Saudi-financed projects include the King Salman Medical and Educational City in Al-Mahra, renovations to Aden International Airport and road construction in Marib. The three projects combined were valued at more than \$80 million.

Sources: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Yemen News Agency SABA, <https://alsharaeaneews.com>



In Yemen's Conflict, Children Pay the Price

UNIPATH STAFF

Six years of ongoing conflict between the legitimate Yemeni government and the Houthi militia have, among other things, deprived more than 2 million children of education, according to a UNICEF report.

In 2015, about 890,000 children were out of school, less than half the current amount. The significant increase reflects the accelerating deterioration of the situation in Yemen, pressing the international community to find a solution to end one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

Many fear those children will never return to school, hampering Yemen's development and prospects for recovery. Even those remaining in school did not always receive a quality education because of school and teacher shortages. Many school buildings have

suffered from the civil war — being damaged, converted into shelters or occupied by the Houthi militia.

The world has watched in horror as the Houthis have taken advantage of uneducated children and pressed thousands into combat to alleviate troop shortages. Some of this recruitment is conducted under the guise of providing summer camps for idle children.

Between March 2015 and February 2021, more than 3,600 Yemeni children were recruited by armed groups, and earlier it was reported that 17% of Yemen's children between the ages of 5 and 17 were exploited for their labor.

The United Nations estimates that eight of 10 Yemeni children live with families whose incomes are insufficient to meet basic life needs. An estimated 170,000 teachers have not been paid

for four years. Yemeni literacy rates lag behind much of the world, especially in rural areas.

Article 54 of Yemen's Constitution stipulates that education is a right for all citizens. Part of it reads:

"The state shall guarantee education in accordance with the law through building various schools and cultural and educational institutions. Basic education is obligatory. The state shall do its best to obliterate illiteracy and give special care to expanding technical and vocational education. The state shall give special attention to young people and protect them against wrong thinking, provide them with religious, mental, and physical education, and the appropriate environment to develop their aptitude in all fields."

Sources: UNICEF, aljazeera.net



Displaced Yemeni girls attend a class at a makeshift school run by volunteers in Hodeida in March 2021. AFP/GETTY IMAGES



UAE Promotes Domestic Defense Industry

UNIPATH STAFF

A delegation from the Emirati Ministry of Defense led by Maj. Gen. Dr. Mubarak bin Ghafan Al Jabri visited Lockheed Martin's Center for Innovation and Security Solutions (CISS) in Abu Dhabi in June 2021.

Robert Harward, Lockheed Martin's chief executive in the Middle East, expanded on his company's efforts to advance the skills of Emirati engineers toward developing a domestic defense industry.

Chief Engineer Hala Al-Zarqani, the first female Emirati engineer to work for CISS, briefed the delegation on the progress of CISS programs to boost Emirati innovation and nurture the capabilities of young Emiratis in the defense and space industry.

Lockheed opened a collaboration center in Abu Dhabi in December 2018 to explore innovation, advance security and help the United Arab Emirates (UAE) achieve its vision of diversifying its economy to include production of military equipment. According to Lockheed, CISS is the first of its kind outside the United States.

Since 2017, CISS has hosted more than 100 Emirati engineers, who have developed skills through specialized training programs in the defense industry. These programs provide training in artificial intelligence, drone design, defense simulation exercises, business management skills, software development and information technology systems management.

To develop a domestic defense industry, the UAE not only welcomes subsidiaries of globally known munitions producers, but founded the Emirates Defense Industries Co. in December 2014. It was absorbed by a larger conglomerate called EDGE in November 2019 and employs more than 12,000 people in 25 subsidiaries.

Sources: Al Ittihad, Lockheed Martin, Emirates News Agency

Members of the UAE Armed Forces perform a military drill during the opening of the International Defense Exhibition and Conference in Abu Dhabi, which showcases the latest in the defense industry. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

IRAQ HOSTS SUMMIT WITH JORDAN, EGYPT

UNIPATH STAFF

Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi welcomed Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi and His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein of Jordan to Baghdad for a summit of regional leaders in June 2021.

The leaders discussed a strategy for economic cooperation that Prime Minister al-Kadhimi calls New Levant. He wants to knit more closely the economies of Cairo, Baghdad and Amman.

"The project invests in Egypt's tremendous manpower, Iraq's oil wealth, and Jordan's geographical position, linking Iraq with Egypt," Iraqi strategist Hussein Al-Jasser said. "Project New Levant could be the nucleus for a broader bloc, which may soon draw other Arab countries, with the aim of tipping the balance in favor of moderate countries in the region amidst escalation in violence and extremism sponsored by a regional state."

After welcoming his two fellow leaders from Egypt and Jordan, al-Kadhimi outlined the region's security challenges and offered up potential economic solutions.

"We focused on investment and economic cooperation in our past meetings and agreed on a common vision, and now we are in the phase of executing projects pertinent to electrical interconnection, agriculture, transportation, as well as food security," al-Kadhimi said.

King Abdullah welcomed the talks and praised Iraqi hospitality.

"Our duty today is to bolster the bridges of cooperation between the three countries, and we are fully prepared to stand with the Iraqi government and the Iraqi people in facing challenges," the king said.

During what was the first visit to Iraq by an Egyptian president in 30 years, President el-Sisi commended Iraq's efforts to achieve security and stability and combat terrorism and extremism. He announced support for joint projects to cement relations between the two countries and to enhance Iraqi-Egyptian-Jordanian tripartite cooperation.

The Baghdad summit was the fourth in a series. The first was held in Cairo in March 2019 and culminated in the formation of a joint council. The second occurred in the United States in September 2019 and the third in Amman in August 2020.

Sources: Al Ahram, Sky News



Kazakhstan Confirms Partnership with NATO, U.S.

UNIPATH STAFF

Kazakhstan strengthened relations with NATO and United States Central Command (CENTCOM) in a series of meetings in the summer of 2021 that corresponded with the drawdown in Afghanistan.

In September 2021, Margulan Baimukhan, head of the Kazakh delegation to NATO, presented his credentials to NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg. They discussed cooperation between Kazakhstan and NATO that included defense- and security-related domestic reforms enshrined in the Individual Partnership Action Plan program between Kazakhstan and NATO for 2022-2025.

During the meeting, Baimukhan and Stoltenberg touched on the situation in Afghanistan and potential ways to extend humanitarian aid to the Afghan people. Baimukhan also emphasized Kazakhstan's contribution to strengthening international security, including the service of 120 Kazakh peacekeepers in Lebanon as part of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon mission.

NATO established ties with Kazakhstan in 1992, when the post-Soviet republic joined the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. Kazakhstan later joined the Partnership for Peace program, which has been promoting bilateral cooperation between NATO and individual countries in the Euro-Atlantic region since 1994.

Earlier in the summer, Gen. Lt. Timur Dandybayev, then Kazakhstan's deputy minister of defense, held discussions



Gen. Lt. Timur Dandybayev, then deputy minister of defense of Kazakhstan, left, meets Vice Adm. James Malloy, deputy commander of CENTCOM, in July 2021.

TOM GAGNIER/U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND

with Vice Adm. James Malloy, deputy commander of CENTCOM, at its headquarters in Florida.

The two leaders reiterated the countries' ongoing cooperation on issues such as counterterrorism, border security and military exercises. In light of the change of government in Afghanistan, Kazakhstan expressed support for a continued strategic relationship with the U.S. and its partners.

Kazakhstan is actively involved in military training, exercises, disaster planning and policy planning with NATO and the U.S. Two large joint exercises in which troops from Kazakhstan participate are Steppe Eagle and Regional Cooperation. The training helps prepare Kazakh troops for multinational stabilization missions.

Sources: Kazinform, Delovoi Kazakhstan, NATO, Regnum

Uzbeks Celebrate Diplomatic Successes on 30th Anniversary

UNIPATH STAFF

On the 30th anniversary of Uzbekistan's independence, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken encouraged the country's leaders to continue its role as a strong regional security partner.

"We support Uzbekistan's continued pursuit of bold reforms, including those in support of fundamental freedoms," Blinken said in a statement for the September 2021 anniversary.

He expressed continued U.S. interest in enhancing its strategic partnership with Uzbekistan to bolster regional security and stability, not least because of the instability in Afghanistan.

In his statement, Blinken reiterated the U.S. donation of 3 million doses of vaccine to Uzbekistan to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. The vaccines were sent to Uzbekistan as part of the international distribution program called COVAX.

Secretary Blinken's statement follows his meeting in July with Uzbek Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov at the State Department in Washington, D.C. The diplomats discussed strategic cooperation between their countries and regional security matters in Central Asia.

Secretary Blinken stressed that Uzbekistan remained "an important partner for regional security and

growth." Noting that the two countries celebrated 30 years of diplomatic relations this year, Blinken underscored the importance of deepening bilateral ties, which have significantly improved since Shavkat Mirziyoyev assumed the presidency in Uzbekistan in 2016.

During the meeting with Foreign Minister Kamilov, Blinken praised Uzbekistan's outreach to neighboring countries. It includes the C5+1 regional diplomatic platform, which brings together five Central Asian states and the U.S. to address issues of common concern.

Sources: U.S. State Department, Podrobno.uz, Twitter



Pakistan Discusses Security with Saudi Foreign Minister

UNIPATH STAFF

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia announced cooperation on security issues relevant to both countries, including Afghanistan, the end to the civil war in Yemen and economic relations.

In July 2021, Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi hosted Saudi counterpart Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud for talks in Islamabad.

“We have a very, very aligned view as toward the priority to regional stability, regional security, dialogue and resolving issues through dialogue, and we found that security is key,” Al Saud announced at the end of the visit.

Some of the discussions entailed the recently created Saudi Pakistan Supreme Coordination Council formed mainly to boost economic cooperation. Hundreds of thousands of Pakistani workers rely on remittances from Saudi Arabia to support their families, and COVID-19 has dampened economic activity between the two countries.

“We have made good progress on what the structure should, what the organization should look like and what should be the work plan,” Qureshi said.



Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi, right, and Saudi Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud speak during a press conference in Islamabad in July 2021.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Al Saud agreed: “We talked of course about the valuable contribution that the Pakistani community is making to Saudi Arabia’s economy ... and how we can expand the opportunities for Pakistanis in the kingdom.”

Pakistani Chief of Army Staff Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa used the occasion of Al Saud’s visit to reaffirm a relationship “based on bond of brotherhood and mutual trust,” Pakistan’s Inter-Services Public Relations office said.

Pakistan has sought support for its vision of Afghanistan’s future, and Saudi Arabia has pressed Pakistan to assist in stabilizing Yemen.

Sources: Al Jazeera, Inter-Services Public Relations, Reuters

Turkmenistan Secures EU Assistance

UNIPATH STAFF

Turkmenistan has stressed cooperation with the European Union in the fields of security, sustainable development and humanitarian aid. Those efforts intensified in December 2021 when Ashgabat hosted an international conference “Politics of Peace and Trust — the Basis of International Security, Stability and Development.”

Turkmen Minister of Foreign Affairs Rashid Meredov used the occasion to hold diplomatic contacts with the EU special

representative for Central Asia, Ambassador Terhi Hakala.

In addition to ongoing projects focused on regional development, Turkmen and EU representatives discussed efforts to fight cybercrime and improve biological security after the recent COVID-19 crisis.

A second meeting, with Diego Ruiz Alonso, ambassador of the EU to Turkmenistan, focused on environmental concerns and improving the country’s business climate. Ambassador Alonso stressed that

Turkmenistan and the EU have built strong bonds since establishing diplomatic relations in 1998.

The culmination of these relations was in 2019, when the EU approved the Agreement on the Establishment of the Delegation of the European Union in Turkmenistan. Turkmenistan participates in over 20 projects funded by the EU in fields such as security, trade, energy, rule of law, education, women’s rights and investment in young people.

Sources: Turkmenportal, Caspian News, United Nations



Oman Brokers Peace Talks in Yemen

UNIPATH STAFF

In a development that could reduce violence from years of civil war, an Omani delegation arrived in Sanaa in June 2021 to negotiate terms for a cease-fire between the legitimate Yemeni government and Houthi rebels.

Houthi leaders tentatively embraced a United Nations proposal to enforce a cease-fire in exchange for the Yemeni government lifting a naval blockade. As part of a deal, Yemen would reopen Sanaa Airport and the Port of Hodeida.

Martin Griffiths, U.N. special envoy for Yemen, expressed regret for his failure to mediate a lasting cease-fire during his three-year tenure. He told the U.N. Security Council he hoped Oman's diplomacy "will bear fruit."

The international community is encouraging the Iranian-backed Houthi militia, which has defied all previous efforts to broker a cease-fire, to end a war that has killed hundreds of thousands and damaged much of the country's infrastructure.

The world has come to rely on Oman as a trusted peace-maker. Not only did it help broker the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, also known as the Iran nuclear deal of 2015, it sought to reconcile Qatar and other Gulf Cooperation Council countries after a breach in relations in 2017. The efforts of then-Omani Foreign Minister Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah set the stage for the restoration of diplomatic relations between Qatar and its neighbors in January 2021.

Oman's political, economic and social stability, combined with its professed neutrality on the world stage, has gained it the trust of hostile parties seeking an unbiased mediator to resolve conflicts. Sources: Reuters, alarab.co.uk, omandaily.com, the Independent

Omani Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Al Busaidi, right, discusses a Yemeni cease-fire with Yemeni counterpart Ahmad Awad bin Mubarak in Muscat, Oman, in June 2021.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Kuwait Strengthens Relations with Turkey

UNIPATH STAFF

Kuwait commandos traveled to Turkey for a 10-day military exercise with a Turkish Special Operations unit in July 2021. The Kuwait 25th Commando Brigade, commanded by Col. Nasser Masoud Al Otaibi, sought to improve combat interoperability between the two countries.

"The execution of this exercise comes as a continuation of joint military coordination to achieve more harmony, exchange experiences and unify efforts," the Kuwait Army's Moral Guidance Department announced.

The Kuwait 25th Commando Brigade previously trained with Turkish forces in 2015. The nucleus of what would be the brigade was founded in 1960 by Brig. Gen. Mubarak Abdullah Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, then deputy commander of the Kuwait Army.

It has grown to become Kuwait's leading special forces unit and serves under the chief of staff of the Kuwait Armed Forces, carrying out missions in support of general operations of the Kuwait military.

Meanwhile, Turkish Parliament Speaker Mustafa Shantoub visited Kuwait and met with Kuwaiti National Assembly Speaker Marzouq Ali Al-Ghanim and other Kuwaiti leaders to promote bilateral relations.

"As parliamentarians of the two countries, we are pleased to take a close position in the international parliamentary organizations of which we are members and to work together to address issues of concern to our region," Shantoub said. "We and Kuwait have close historical relations, and the job of statesmen is to strengthen the cordial ties between the peoples of the two countries."

Turkish-Kuwaiti relations have witnessed significant growth in recent years, as the two countries signed several economic, military and security agreements. To follow up on such agreements, the governments of the two countries established a joint committee in 2018. The total value of projects implemented by Turkish contractors in Kuwait is estimated at over \$8 billion, the largest of which is \$4.3 billion to build a new passenger terminal at Kuwait International Airport.

Sources: alkhaleejonline.net, Daily Sabah, Turkpress.com



Jordan Reinforces Relations with U.S.

UNIPATH STAFF

Reaffirming the enduring resilience of the partnership between the United States and Jordan, His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein and his son His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hussein ibn Abdullah visited U.S. President Joe Biden at the White House.

The July 2021 meeting touched on topics such as Jordan's regional economic integration through investment in energy infrastructure, its plan for diversifying its supply of fresh water through desalination, U.S. support for the modernization of Jordan's F-16 aircraft and counterterrorism.

Also discussed was humanitarian assistance needed for over a million refugees who fled to Jordan during the ongoing conflict in Syria.

"You have always been there, and we will always be there for Jordan," President Biden said during the meeting with King Abdullah.

During his visit to the U.S., the king flew to Tampa, Florida, to meet with then-U.S. Central Command Commander Gen. Kenneth McKenzie.

"The leaders discussed shared challenges originating in the Middle East — from combating extremism to improving border security — and agreed to explore creative ways to expand bilateral coordination between the two nations," Gen. McKenzie's office announced. McKenzie called Jordan "an important pillar in preserving peace and advancing security throughout the region."

The two countries maintain a solid relationship dedicated to upholding security in the region. For example, in July 2021, the U.S. began shipping half a million doses of COVID-19 vaccine to Jordan as part of a U.S. global effort to fight the pandemic. Military relations include joint sponsorship of Eager Lion, the largest military exercise in the Middle East.

Then-U.S. Central Command Commander Gen. Kenneth McKenzie greets His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan in Tampa, Florida, in July 2021.
SPC. ROBERT VICENS/U.S. ARMY

Securing the World Cup in Qatar

UNIPATH STAFF

The Qatar 2022 Supreme Committee signed a memorandum of understanding in July 2021 with the International Center for Sport Security (ICSS) to collaborate on security, safety planning and capacity building for 2022 FIFA World Cup.

According to the memorandum, the ICSS will support the Supreme Committee in several key areas, including the creation of an overall master security concept for training and capacity building.

The ICSS will ensure effective coordination and interoperability across various Qatari committees tasked with safety and security preparations and accommodations for the 2022 FIFA World Cup.

"The ICSS's goal is to help event organizers stage safer major sporting events, and we are delighted to have signed this important agreement with the Qatar 2022 Supreme Committee," said Mohammed Hanzab, president of the ICSS. "The need to develop international standards for security procedures is more critical than ever, and we look forward to sharing knowledge, expertise and best practice from around the globe with the Qatar 2022 Supreme Committee."

Qatar, whose greatest achievement in soccer was winning the 2019 Asian Football Confederation Asian Cup held in the United Arab Emirates, successfully hosted the 17th edition of the FIFA Club World Cup in February 2021 to test its preparedness for the November 2022 World Cup.

ICSS is an international nonprofit organization based in Doha, Qatar, established in 2010 with the aim of promoting and protecting the integrity and security of sporting events. It provides consultation, training and research services to sporting events organizing committees, associations and governments.

FIFA awarded Qatar the right to host the soccer tournament in December 2010. It was the first country in the Middle East and North Africa so honored.

Sources: alkhaleejonline.net, the Independent, The Guardian

Sources: elaph.com, Aljazeera.net, The New York Times, CENTCOM



Egypt Promotes Interfaith Dialogue

UNIPATH STAFF

To advance peaceful coexistence in Egypt, a delegation from the Episcopal Church in Alexandria visited Al-Azhar in Cairo to promote the formation of a center for Islamic-Christian studies.

Grand Imam Dr. Ahmed Al-Tayeb, sheikh of Al-Azhar, praised the church for its sponsorship of Together for Egypt, a national spiritual project that included dialogue between imams and priests to create a culture of tolerance in Egyptian society.

“We are all soldiers in the battle to defend our religions and our homeland as we are all equals in humanity,” Dr. Al-Tayeb told the delegation.

The new Archbishop of the Episcopal/Anglican Diocese in Alexandria, Bishop Samy Fawzi, is continuing the church's work to establish a center that deepens Christian-Islamic dialogue, with the aim of introducing the lofty principles of the two religions to Egyptians and the world.

It would emphasize peaceful coexistence among followers of the two religions and debunk the misinterpretation of religious scriptures by extremists who practice violence in the name of God, many of whom have tried to exploit religious ignorance and social grievances to weaken the bonds of Egyptian society.

Egyptian Muslim women attend Christmas services with Coptic Christians in Cairo. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The church has also been active in Egyptian Family House, a Cairo-based socio-religious project established in 2011, under the chairmanship of the sheikh of Al-Azhar and the pope of the Coptic Orthodox Church. It enlists clergymen from several Christian denominations and Islamic scholars from Al-Azhar to help settle societal disputes.

Egypt emphasized its commitment to interfaith dialogue by hosting the 31st International Conference of the Islamic Affairs Supreme Council in March 2021. The theme of the conference was interfaith and intercultural dialogue. According to Egyptian Minister of Endowments (Awqaf) Dr. Mohamed Mukhtar Gumaa, more than 70 scholars from 35 countries attended the two-day event. Many had nothing but praise for Egypt's efforts at promoting religious harmony.

“Egypt, with its religious institutions, has taken a great interest in spreading peace and educating people about it. Today, we are in dire need of dialogue, peaceful coexistence and tolerating pluralism,” Mufti of Albania Bujar Spahiu said.

Source: Al Ahrām

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