

**Lebanese Troops
Manage Beirut Disaster**

**Pakistani Soldiers
Wield Soft Power**

**UAE Military Doctors
Offer Care to Civilians**

UNIPATH

MILITARIES RESPOND TO CRISES





Tourists sandboard in the Dubai desert, United Arab Emirates.
AFP/GETTY IMAGES





A weaver works a loom at the handicraft center in Al Jasra, west of the Bahraini capital, Manama.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

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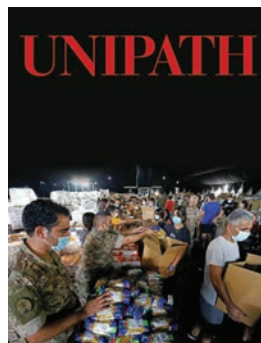
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Lebanese Soldiers and volunteers distribute food to the victims of the Beirut port explosion. REUTERS

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KEY LEADER'S MESSAGE

I appreciate the opportunity from U.S. Central Command to provide an introduction for this special edition of *Unipath* magazine, devoted to the role of militaries in helping civilian leaders manage crises. Events during the year 2020 validated this important concept throughout Oman, the region and the world.

Throughout much of 2020, militaries supplied front line troops in the battle against the global COVID-19 pandemic. Airmen, Soldiers and Sailors enforced quarantines, established mobile hospitals in virus hot spots, disinfected public spaces and delivered lifesaving medicine and equipment to remote areas. Here in Oman, the Sultan's Armed Forces played a pivotal role in the country's cross-government efforts to curb the spread of the virus by providing much needed assistance to areas under lockdown.

Oman recently celebrated 50 years of its modern renaissance, marking decades of development and remarkable progress under the wise leadership of His Late Majesty Sultan Qaboos and his successor, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq Al Said. The Sultan's Armed Forces are dedicated to building capability by equipping forces with the necessary training and skills. Through Oman Vision 2040, His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tariq Al Said, the supreme commander, bestows on his Armed Forces the right to ensure their ongoing transformation into a modern force that continues to protect our dear homeland and safeguard its achievements of security, national stability and peace.

His Majesty emphasized the important contribution of the Armed Forces in guaranteeing national security, noting that it "would not have been realized without the existence of modern Armed Forces that are fully mobilized and highly qualified in all its branches and sectors. It would not have been realized without the existence of security services that secured the stability



of this country and gained the respect of citizens. We appreciate the role of all in safeguarding the gains of the Sultanate and reiterate our support and our pride over their role."

A recent example of such a role was the intervention of the Sultan's Armed Forces in Dhofar governorate in May 2020 to save victims of a powerful tropical cyclone. While the Royal Army of Oman patrolled the region, the Royal Air Force of Oman rescued citizens trapped in cities

and villages. Military engineers were deployed to drain floodwater and repair broken power lines. In addition, the Armed Forces Medical Services were on hand to treat injured civilians.

To protect against an attack by weapons of mass destruction (WMD) — be they chemical, biological or radiological — the Sultan's Armed Forces have placed an emphasis on preparation. In March 2020, officers and noncommissioned officers conducted anti-WMD drills with trainers from U.S. Central Command at a chemical, biological and radiological weapons prevention exercise. The exercise involved a cross section of Omani public servants, representatives from the Public Authority for Civil Defense and Ambulance as well as Army troops. It is clear that any real-world attack against Omanis would require close coordination between these military and civilian agencies.

After the events of the past few years, countries recognize more than ever the importance of an integrated approach to crisis management that draws on military and civilian bodies alike. Intergovernmental cooperation, far from being a luxury, is now an essential element in responding to emergencies in our increasingly complex world.

His Highness Sayyid Shihab bin Tariq Al Said
Deputy Prime Minister for Defense Affairs
Sultanate of Oman

A Mission to **RELIEVE MISERY**

Lebanese Troops Aid Tens of Thousands of
Victims of the Beirut Port Explosion



Troops clean up the Port of Beirut. LEBANESE ARMED FORCES

At approximately 6:10 p.m. August 4, 2020, a massive explosion in the Port of Beirut rocked the capital and surrounding areas, leaving behind a great number of dead, wounded and missing persons in a matter of seconds and destroying an essential part of the port, including the wheat silos. It also caused enormous damage to properties and residential buildings in the port's vicinity (within a diameter of 7.5 kilometers), some of which collapsed, including historic structures.

Shortly after the explosion, the Lebanese government declared a state of emergency in Beirut, tasked the

Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) with carrying out the resolution's provisions, and established an investigative committee to determine the causes of the explosion and assign responsibility. Meanwhile, the fallout of the explosion continued to be felt at national and individual levels for months.

Immediate Action

Army Command took steps to absorb the shock and worked with every available resource to pick up the pieces from the terrible disaster. It quickly isolated the area



surrounding the site of the explosion to prevent tampering with the crime scene and undertook extensive action to evacuate, aid and ensure immediate assistance for the injured in coordination with first responders from the Lebanese Red Cross and Civil Defense.

At the same time, military personnel deployed to the affected area hurried to open the main roads for ambulances and firetrucks.

The LAF also made extensive use of helicopters to put out fires around the blast site with the support of the Civil Defense and the Fire Brigade, which helped to quickly extinguish and limit the spread of fires in the area.

To help Lebanese forces, U.S. Central Command began airlifts of food, water and medical supplies aboard C-17 aircraft. These flights carrying pallets of humanitarian aid arrived from Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar.

Army Medical Corps

The Army Medical Corps helped evacuate the injured immediately after the explosion, raising its operational readiness to the limits of its capacity. It received injured military and civilian personnel, providing them with first aid. The corps also worked to transfer by ambulance those who could not be received in the Central Military Hospital to other military clinics and civilian hospitals based on the condition of the injured.

In the field, Army Command supplemented its actions with a set of operational measures to organize and accelerate relief work. It identified a new area of operational responsibility called the “isolation sector” that included the port and its immediate surroundings. By doing so, it helped organize and coordinate relief efforts and remove debris. Military units, led by the Engineering Regiment and the Navy, began spot and perimeter surveys and carried out searches for missing persons. The effort involved Lebanese Navy divers and specialized foreign search and rescue teams from 12 countries (Cyprus, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Qatar, Russia, Spain and Turkey) totaling 429 individuals, who arrived in Lebanon in the days immediately following the explosion. These teams contributed their expertise and technical capabilities to assist the Army in surveying the area and quickly recovering the remains of victims from under the rubble.

This successful response is due in large part to the professionalism of the Lebanese Army as it divided the area into sections and assigned foreign teams to them based on experience, numbers, equipment and available capabilities. This focused the teams’ energy on appropriate places and reduced time needed for search and rescue. Work to remove rubble and debris, led by the Independent Works Regiment, began immediately with the help of the forces and units operationally deployed on the ground and in cooperation with the friendly armies of the French and Italians as well as the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. These actions helped provision the Port of Beirut and aid its return to normal operations.

Helping Victims

Friendly countries were quick to help Lebanon by sending a variety of medical and in-kind assistance. Given the great confidence that the international community and the Lebanese people place in the military for its impartiality and transparency, the Army assumed responsibilities for delivery and distribution of aid. In this context, Army Command formed a central committee, with several specialized subcommittees tasked with organizing the process of receiving, storing and packing aid and distributing it to those affected, according to clear and transparent criteria. Work occurred on two parallel tracks:

The medical aid track: The subcommittee on medical affairs, under supervision of the Army Medical Corps, stored aid in private warehouses. The subcommittee also prepared detailed regulations and submitted them to the Central Committee, which, in turn, coordinated with the Ministry of Health through the Ministry of National Defense and distributed the aid to affected hospitals.

The in-kind assistance track: Various types of aid were received by a committee formed for this purpose. It sorted, packed, stored and distributed food rations to affected households. More than 70,000 aid packages had been distributed by end of 2020.

Forward Operating Base

To coordinate relief missions in the aftermath of the explosion, Army Command established an emergency forward operating base to monitor the humanitarian and development situation in the affected area. The Army surveyed the area to avoid neglecting anyone in need, making its telephone numbers and email available to citizens to report property damage. It also established a call center to receive citizens’ complaints, identify their needs and address their concerns.

Additionally, the Army worked in cooperation with the governor of Beirut, the High Relief Commission, the Lebanese Red Cross and international and domestic nongovernmental organizations to ensure alternative and temporary housing for victims whose homes were damaged, as well as coordinate work among civilian agencies to improve management of reconstruction and relief efforts.

Surveying Damage

After determining the extent of damage and destruction — with the majority of people in the affected areas rendered homeless — Army Command accelerated a damage survey to begin reconstruction before winter. It formed a specialized damage survey committee composed of 1,500 members, including officers, noncommissioned officers and enlisted personnel who were joined by volunteer engineers. The committee worked to assess damage and identify affected buildings and, as a result, 55,000 apartments were found to be damaged.

Similarly, the number of damaged businesses totaled 14,848 corporations and 5,251 commercial companies, while 80 buildings were destroyed and eight more were too badly damaged to be fixed. To improve field coordination

Given the great confidence that the international community and the Lebanese people place in the military for its impartiality and transparency, the Army assumed responsibilities for delivery and distribution of aid to beneficiaries.



**Troops load aid
for distribution.**
LEBANESE ARMED FORCES



Kazakh Military Doctors Aid Lebanese Disaster Victims

Kazakh military doctors depart for Lebanon in August 2020.

KAZAKHSTAN MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

Just days after the port explosion in Beirut in early August 2020, a team of military medical specialists from Kazakhstan rushed to Lebanon to help disaster victims.

Kazakh physicians and nurses received 635 patients during a two-week stay at hospitals in the cities of Beirut, Bouar and Saida. Surgeons from Kazakhstan assisted with 73 operations, including repairing the shattered leg of a 90-year-old Lebanese man hurt in the explosion.

"I am from South Lebanon. I live in Beirut. At this difficult time for us, I would like to express my gratitude to the leadership of Kazakhstan and military doctors for helping my people and children. Welcome to Lebanon," said Fadi Ehriya, one of the patients helped by the Kazakh medical team.

The Kazakh response to the Beirut disaster was exemplary. On August 7, three days after the port explosion, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev summoned Minister of Defense Lt. Gen. Nurlan Yermekbayev and ordered the team to Lebanon. The doctors departed the next day, flying from Aktau to Beirut.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Kazakh authorities barred infectious disease doctors and therapists from

traveling abroad. The medical team affiliated with Kazakh Special Forces consisted of surgeons, traumatologists, neurosurgeons, anesthesiologist-resuscitators and nurses. Most of the Kazakhs spoke English. The military flight also carried medical supplies and equipment.

The Kazakhs were welcomed at Beirut's international airport by Lebanese Armed Forces Brig. Gen. Abi Karam and Ali Dirani of the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was the start of two weeks of close collaboration between Kazakh and Lebanese medical staff.

"In the course of work in the military hospital and municipal hospitals, we gained good experience," said Col. Askar Marufov, the lead surgeon from Kazakhstan.

Before their departure, Kazakh doctors met with Lebanese Gen. George Youssef, head of the Main Military Medical Directorate, and Gen. Abudahir Nasim, head of the Military Hospital Beirut. Both sides discussed possibilities for further cooperation in military medicine.

Even before the port explosion, Kazakh troops had gained familiarity with Lebanon as peacekeepers attached to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, or UNIFIL.



Soldiers deliver food to explosion victims.

LEBANESE ARMED FORCES

among the committee's task forces, each building, home, and apartment surveyed was given an LAF ID serial number to standardize the process and prevent duplication.

The committee also set up a database containing all the building supplies (such as aluminum, wood, soil, gravel, sand, iron, tile, ceramics, paint, hygiene kits) and household furnishings (furniture, electrical appliances, computers, among other items) that need to be secured for victims to rebuild and restore damaged buildings. This data is available to donors wishing to help.

In parallel to those efforts, the committee put together a list of owners of damaged apartments and distributed the first installment of compensation approved by the Lebanese government in a decree signed by the president. It provided for an exceptional allocation in the general budget for the payment of compensation amounting to 100 billion Lebanese pounds. The distribution was carried out according to a specific mechanism that assessed the value of damage in each house. This phase covered 12,400 damaged housing units.

Investigating the Explosion

The Army contributed to the investigation of the causes of the Port of Beirut explosion through the military police, whose initial work centered on gathering evidence from the blast site. The Forensics Department surveyed the crime scene and collected evidence instrumental to uncovering the circumstances of the explosion and put it at the disposal of police investigators. Police began investigations into

suspects under the supervision of the relevant court, in accordance with the Lebanese Code of Criminal Procedure and human rights principles.

Military Media

From the day of the explosion, Army Command's Orientation Directorate kept pace with events via a series of statements and tweets to inform the Lebanese people. Statements and tweets were also used to circulate general guidelines to ensure the safety of citizens and that search and rescue work was not hindered.

The Army organized several news conferences during which officers detailed the disaster, the work being done at the site of the explosion, and the assistance sent by friendly states and how it was distributed to stakeholders. They also gave detailed explanations of how the damage was surveyed, the findings of the survey, and the plan to compensate property owners. The directorate strengthened its cooperation with the media and facilitated the work of local and foreign journalists, organizing field trips for them inside and outside the explosion site so they could convey information to the Lebanese people and the international public.

Despite the suffocating economic crisis that has affected LAF members in the same way that it has affected the rest of the Lebanese, and despite the coronavirus pandemic that threatens their lives and those of their loved ones, the LAF continues to carry out tasks entrusted to it and aims to perform its duty to the fullest. ♦



SAVING LIVES in Abu Dhabi

**UAE CREATES A TRAUMA, BURN AND REHABILITATIVE MEDICINE PROGRAM
WITH U.S. PARTNERS AT SHEIKH SHAKHBOUT MEDICAL CITY** UNIPATH STAFF

When troops engage in combat, the need for rapid access to advanced trauma care is critical. The chances of surviving potentially fatal injuries rise dramatically when a highly capable hospital is located within an hour of the battlefield. Physicians call it the “golden hour.”

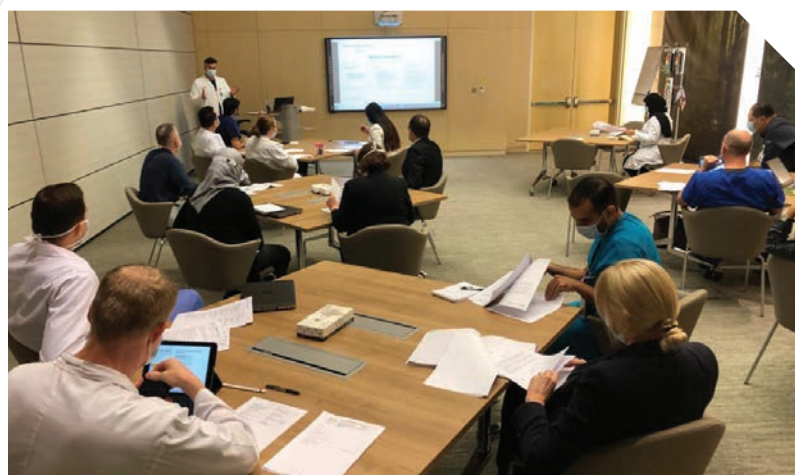
Thanks to a medical partnership between the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the United States, Sheikh Shakhbout Medical City (SSMC) in Abu Dhabi is developing advanced trauma, burn, and rehabilitative medicine capabilities that serve not just civilians across the region, but also battlefield casualties.

The Trauma, Burn and Rehabilitative Medicine (TBRM) mission in Abu Dhabi involves doctors, nurses, and administrators

from the U.S. military and the UAE Military Medical Services Corps. The U.S. and UAE team is partnered to build broad capabilities within a civilian hospital that can also provide wartime support in times of conflict.

“The TBRM effort will be a force multiplier for the U.S., UAE and all partner nations conducting operations within the Middle East region,” said Col. Brigilda Teneza, the TBRM program’s executive officer and a 24-year U.S. Army physician. “In addition, the trauma center will provide a future world-class training platform for Department of Defense trauma, burn and rehabilitative medicine specialists.”

The medical partnership — financed by the United Arab Emirates — began in 2018 as part of the U.S./UAE Defense



Staffers at Sheikh Shakhbout Medical City receive instruction as part of the TBRM mission.

U.S. OFFICE OF DEFENSE PARTNERSHIP

Cooperation Road Map and Joint Military Dialogue. The newly opened Sheikh Shakhbout Medical City was a logical choice for the TBRM mission. With plans for 741 beds, 440 doctors and 1,800 nurses, it is the country's largest hospital. It operates in partnership with the Mayo Clinic, a renowned medical center based in the U.S. In addition to its military component, the TBRM mission also engages officials from the Abu Dhabi Department of Health, the Abu Dhabi Health Services Co. and the U.S. Department of State.

Once it's fully operational, the TBRM mission will include rotating deployments of surgeons, anesthesiologists, operating room nurses, and technicians. TBRM personnel will provide advice, training, mentorship and technical support to ultimately make SSMC a verified trauma center.

Aside from its ability to care for critically injured troops, SSMC's primary mission is to care for injured civilians in the UAE. SSMC is the lead trauma center within Abu Dhabi, admitting over 1,800 trauma patients in 2020 alone.

"The UAE healthcare sector already serves as a resource to an entire region of the world," said U.S. Air Force trauma surgeon Lt. Col. Brian Gavitt. "The TBRM team's mission is to harness the expertise that exists to establish a world-class multidisciplinary trauma system within Abu Dhabi that is integrated from point of injury to re-integration. With the simultaneous development of trauma centers within a larger trauma system, post-injury survival rates will predictably improve."

In the past, critically injured troops were often transported to military hospitals in places such as Germany. Among the priorities of U.S. Central Command was to improve combat casualty care among partner nations in the Middle East. The TBRM mission at SSMC is the first of its kind.

"With the collective leadership engaged and formal partnerships established, the critical elements are in place for long-term system success," project organizers announced. "Ideally, the Middle East wartime TBRM continuum will never have to be utilized, but if it is required, we stand ready." ♦



SOFT POWER IN PAKISTAN

THE ARMY DEVISES A COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CAMPAIGN TO ALLEVIATE VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN
PAKISTAN'S NORTHERN PROVINCES

MAJ. GEN. (RET.) MUHAMMAD SAMREZ SALIK, PAKISTAN ARMY

Using military force against people within your own borders can be the most dreaded and detested scenario for any army of the world. In Pakistan, misguided and opportunist segments of society took up arms and challenged the writ of the state. Reestablishing order wasn't possible without kinetic operations that involved collateral damage and property loss. These losses were extremely undesirable but essential for achieving peace.

But after the military cleared and held areas formerly occupied by militants, it was time to win the hearts and minds of the population. Sustaining the authority of the state required providing for the basic needs of the people in these sometimes neglected regions. The Army's Winning Hearts and Minds (WHAM) campaign has been the mechanism for doing just that.

WHAM projects range from the mundane (installation of hand-operated water pumps and distribution of sports gear) to megaprojects (construction of roads, bridges, dams, hospitals, schools, markets, stadiums, hostels and

deradicalization centers. Although Pakistan's federal and provincial governments financed many of the projects, friendly countries also provided resources. Execution of projects under the auspices of the Army ensured optimum use of available resources. The Army paid special attention to infrastructure damaged during military operations.



ORIGINS OF WHAM

To fight the menace of terrorism, the Pakistan Armed Forces, with full backing of the nation, launched operations across the country. Operations Zarb-e-Azb, Raddul Fasaad, Khyber I and II, and intelligence-based operations hunted militants who had disguised themselves in the folds of religion, ethnicity or provincialism. In addition to operations within the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) in Pakistan's northern regions, operations were conducted against violent militants in Baluchistan, Karachi and other parts of the country. The task was gigantic but so was the resolve of Pakistani forces.

Realizing that defeating terrorism and extremism involves use of both hard and soft power, Pakistan adopted short-term as well as long-term measures. Even during military operations, extrication of innocent people from areas of operations, establishment of temporary camps and repatriation were arduous tasks marvelously executed by the Pakistan Army. As of today, a major portion of displaced people has returned to their respective areas. Back home, they do not find war-ravaged infrastructure and towns, but rather new roads, bridges, hospitals, schools and cadet colleges.

The Pakistan Army has used WHAM operations as a tool of military strategy but also as a means to express deep-rooted love for the Pakistani people. The Pakistan Armed Forces are proud of the nation's trust, love and support, and stand committed to ensure its safety under all circumstances.

After defeating the insurgents, the military helped local people build houses and sponsored quick-impact projects in affected areas. These projects were undertaken with the help of foreign donors including the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United Arab Emirates Pakistan Assistance Program (UAEPAP). Multidimensional projects costing \$1.1 billion focus on the communications, education, health, power and agricultural sectors.

In 2015, the government of Pakistan announced a rehabilitation strategy in FATA to repair damage, rebuild education and health centers, and reintegrate detainees. The strategy's five main goals were rehabilitating infrastructure, strengthening law and order, expanding government service delivery, restarting the economy, and strengthening social cohesion and peace building. The projects would take two years. To achieve these objectives, the civil authorities, FATA Secretariat, federal government and Armed Forces increased coordination.

These plans were assigned to military engineers and other professionals and comprised 213 social welfare and developmental projects. For example, UAEPAP financed Cadet College Wana; Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Hospital; Younus Khan Sports Complex in Miran Shah, North Waziristan; and Shahid Afridi Sports Complex Bara in Khyber Agency. Another 257 major and minor projects included the reconstruction of the towns of Miran Shah and Mir Ali and construction of markets at Razmak, Dossali, Damdail, Gharium, Jhalar and Bichhi.

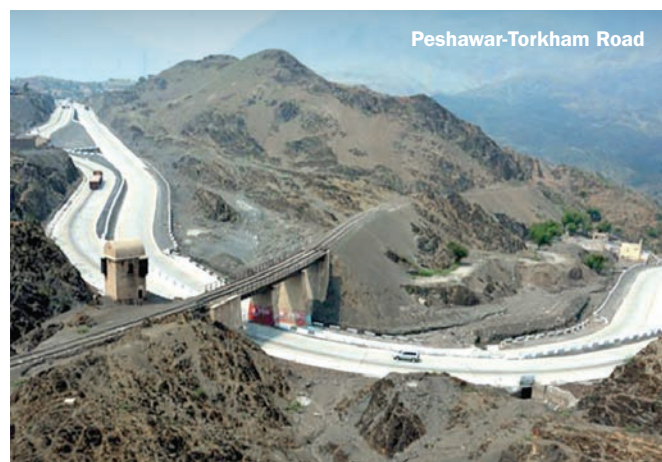


COMMUNICATIONS

Roads and bridges in FATA have always been inadequate, underdeveloped and badly maintained. Pakistan has been carrying out large-scale infrastructure projects with the help of the United States, the UAE and Saudi Arabia. They are meant to improve accessibility, transport and trade. Rehabilitation of damaged roads and bridges was essential to link isolated communities to other communities. It was well understood that enhanced connectivity will reduce internal rivalries by

facilitating interaction amongst the tribesmen. Also, law and order will improve through greater accessibility and logistic support to law enforcement agencies.

So far, projects completed by Pakistan's Frontier Works Organization (FWO) have included 18 major roads extending 1,205 kilometers, two large bridges and a tunnel. The newly reconstructed Peshawar-Torkham Road is the most significant for accessibility of FATA with land-locked Afghanistan and the Central Asian states. FWO also built the Torkham-Jalalabad Road inside Afghanistan to facilitate two-way traffic between the neighbors.



Afghanistan and Pakistan have a new land link through the Dera Ismail Khan-Wana-Angoor Ada Road, closed more than a century ago. The 80-kilometer Bannu-Miranshah-Ghulam Khan Road is the northern prong of a central trade corridor that passes through prominent towns of North Waziristan and Tochi Pass. The 75-kilometer Wana-Shakai-Makeen Road completed by FWO links Wana, the capital of South Waziristan, with North Waziristan from where the 73-kilometer Makeen-Razmak-Miranshah Road stretches to the Afghan border.



HEALTH

The Taliban targeted government installations to establish a presence in tribal agencies. The health sector faced the brunt as terrorists blew up a large number of clinics and dispensaries. The medical staff abandoned their posts under threat of death.

The unavailability of health care caused feelings of deprivation among the people of FATA and hindered development. The Army, along with the federal and local governments, initiated developmental and rehabilitation projects related to health.

Since 2009, 1,013 health centers, clinics and dispensaries have been established in FATA and the Malakand Division. Nearly 5,400 jobs were created, benefiting 6.4 million people. Bed capacity increased by 680. Newly established permanent and mobile hospitals such as Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed and Sheikh Fatima Category A Agency Hospital benefit the people of FATA, Swat and

Malakand divisions. Mobile clinics provide hepatitis screening, blood and urine tests, gynecological checkups, and family planning counseling. Moreover, the Army provides special teams of female doctors and nurses to care for women and children. The government deployed 1,050 doctors, 200 female medical officers and 150 nurses to provide rural health care.

The country established training institutes for the medical staff. For example, Paramedical Institute in Swat has become one of the best institutes in Malakand Division for training male and female paramedics. It has an annual capacity of 450 students and benefits about a million people directly and indirectly. A sudden rise in polio cases in Pakistan in 2014 led the Army to organize a national anti-polio campaign. Cases dropped from 306 in 2014 to eight in 2017.



WHAM has focused on rebuilding schools destroyed by terrorists.



EDUCATION

Pakistan has deployed troops in the FATA since 2002 so miscreants could not create sanctuaries in the tribal belt. The most important aspect of the overall fight against militancy is education. Terrorists in the region were vocal critics of education, particularly the education of women, on fanatically religious grounds. Out of 458 educational institutions destroyed (primary schools, secondary schools and colleges), 317 were for boys and 141 were for girls.

Restoration of schools became another challenge for the government and Army. An initial assessment was carried out to determine the damage wrought by the fanatics. In areas where schools were destroyed, Pakistan provided tents and rented space to ensure learning continued during the rebuilding phase.

Outreach campaigns were designed to encourage enrollment and reduce dropout rates, particularly among girls. Student enrollment increased by 300%, and 16,140 staffers were recruited in places such as Cadet College Wana, Girls Degree College Laddha, and the Government College of Technology in Khar.



YOUTH

Pakistan is blessed with vibrant and talented young people who warrant greater attention to ready them as entrepreneurs and innovators. Training is essential to give them job skills. Through WHAM, the Army engaged young people to promote entrepreneurship and employability. They were also taught to prepare curriculum vitae and polish interview skills.

In 2014, the chief of Army staff announced a youth program for FATA. In addition to career fairs, six-month internships were created. A FATA youth scholarship program engaged 456 students at a cost of 27.4 million rupees, and an Army youth enrollment program attracted 2,637 students.

A lot of students have been admitted to various cadet colleges. Furthermore, 50 students of FATA have been sent abroad to study, and 1,188 FATA youths have been recruited into the Army. Fifty FATA young people joined the Construction Technology Training Institute to learn skills to secure, higher-paying jobs.



WATER, POWER AND IRRIGATION

An estimated 40% of cultivated land in FATA and Malakand Division requires irrigation because the area is arid and semiarid. People in Swat relied on distant wells for drinking water. Even worse, floods in 2010 contaminated water and spread disease. To combat this, the UAE has financed 76 water supply projects to provide clean drinking water to the region. The people of Malakand Division and FATA now have systems that use electric pumps powered by generators to dispense clean water to every household. The systems not only provide water but reduce water-borne disease in these areas. More than a million people have benefited in 80 towns and villages. Another 1.3 million residents profited from reconstruction of 736 irrigation systems.



Gomal Zam Dam

Dhana Irrigation and Water Supply Project, one of the major projects, consists of canals that channel rain and floodwaters to 13,000 acres of farmland near Wana. It also helps conserve and recharge groundwater.

As far as the power sector is concerned, new and refurbished hydroelectric dams and power stations raise regional living standards. For example, completion of Gomal Zam Dam is a big step for the peace and prosperity of South Waziristan. With its huge reservoir of water and completely lined canal network of 260 kilometers, the dam will irrigate 63,086 acres of land in the Tank and D.I. Khan districts. The electricity generated from flowing water can power 2,500 households of South Waziristan.

Gomal Zam Dam was at the epicenter of terrorism. Chinese contractors abandoned construction when militants attacked their camp in 2004. Pakistan's FWO made great sacrifices to resume the work. Besides the socio-economic opportunities the dam offers, it aids the environment and tourism. It has effectively controlled flash floods that caused devastation in the past.



DERADICALIZATION

Deradicalization was one of the pillars of WHAM. The basic concept behind the Army's deradicalization strategy was to remove the psychological burden caused by ideological exploitation and coercion and provide an environment for the restoration of self-respect. It was named "Journey from Darkness to Light."

One of the first efforts was the Swat Deradicalization Program, which the Army began in 2009 after the Pakistani Taliban were defeated. Most militants apprehended during the operation were teenagers and children trained as suicide bombers. Its four components are psychological rehabilitation, religious counseling, formal education (up to 10th and 12th grades) and vocational training. The ultimate aim was to reintegrate former terrorists and radicals into mainstream civil society.

Programs include Sabaoon for kids between 12 and 18, Rastoon for youths between 19 and 25, and Mishal centers for families of militants. Since 2009, Sabaoon has rehabilitated about 200 militants and Rastoon, 1,196 militants. The Army has converted four large school buildings in Swat into deradicalization centers. Overall, 4,151 people have been deradicalized, and another 599 will rejoin society soon.

Swat's program became a model for rest of the country. It has been regarded as a complete package for transforming extremists into useful Pakistani citizens.



DISPLACED PEOPLE

During Operation Zarb-e-Azb, 337,336 families were displaced from war zones, many of them in North Waziristan. In 2014, the Army established a refugee camp at Bakka Khel near Bannu with two health clinics, a school, four mosques, a *jirga* hall, two markets and a cricket ground.

The Army promised the displaced that they could return home by the end of 2016. Provision of basic amenities was considered a prerequisite for their repatriation. Rehab work — 500 projects worth 5.35 billion rupees — included construction of schools, mosques and markets. A Citizen Losses Compensation Program handled

private claims. Thanks to all these efforts, 95% of North Waziristan's displaced citizens have returned home.



SOCIAL SECTOR

To regain the trust of the people of FATA, the Army stressed reintegration as a part of its WHAM campaign. Troops organized recreational programs in schools and institutions, and the government established a special directorate for sports. A cricket stadium named for Younus Khan opened in Miran Shah. Up till now, 17 new stadiums have been built to benefit the region's youth.

Furthermore, the Army organized a "Peace Cup" match between a Pakistani military team and a team of British civilians. The match was attended by dignitaries, including Pakistan Army 11th Corps Commander Lt. Gen. Nazeer Butt.



Mir Ali Market

In August 2017, the FATA Secretariat launched a series of "peace games" to celebrate Independence Day. Games included cricket, football, volleyball and wrestling. It sent a message that the tribal belt was no longer a safe haven for terrorists aiming to spread insurgency in Pakistan.

The Pakistan Cycle Federation and the Mohmand Agency local administration, with the support of the Army, organized a Tour de Mohmand to promote peace and health in militancy-stricken areas. More than 70 bikers participated in the 66-kilometer race from Gharsal Pass near the Afghan border to Ghalanai.

To help revive the economy, the Army's 45th Engineers Division built the Miran Shah Market Complex. The market contains 42 sections with 1,300 shops. It possesses an internal road network, separate parking for trucks and cars, a dedicated electric supply, four bathrooms, a water supply and a lush green park at its center to entertain children.

I am proud to recount these successes of the Army toward the rehabilitation of a troubled region. The Army has contributed to peace in FATA by winning hearts and minds. As much as anything else, the success of the WHAM campaign proves that Pakistan is resilient. ♦

The article is an edited excerpt from Gen. Salik's book, *Fighting Shadows*.

Protecting Civilians From CYBER CRIME



UNIPATH PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

Maj. Gen. Saad Maan



Criminals have always found ways to exploit new technologies, and the internet is no exception. By now, most computer users are familiar with such novel terms as phishing, spoofing and spamming. And while the terminology may be new, the ultimate goals of cyber crime are ancient — they include theft, coercion and extortion. Governments and private cyber security firms have made steady but uneven progress since the advent of cyberspace, combating this latest trend in criminal activity. Like modern-day Sherlock Holmes, cyber security professionals use an array of tools and tradecraft to track cyber criminals. Unipath interviewed Maj. Gen. Saad Maan, director of public relations for the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, who spoke about the major achievements and challenges facing security services tracking cyber crime.

UNIPATH: What makes Iraq vulnerable to cyber crime?

MAJ. GEN. SAAD MAAN: Typically, criminals employ modern technology and innovations that mankind has developed to serve humanity to carry out their own crimes. Looking back, we find that there are dual uses for every tool or machine that has been created by man since the beginning of time: good uses and evil uses. This includes technologies such as axes, knives, guns, engines and atomic energy. The advances brought about by the digital age are no exception. The damage caused by technological advancement is commensurate with the extent to which the technology is employed. Unfortunately, before 2003, Iraq was shut off from the world as a result of international sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council on the former regime and our preoccupation with counterterrorism thereafter, in addition to other problems. All of these reasons have prevented us from employing the latest digital technology in the energy, manufacturing, agricultural, commercial and even security sectors. For these reasons, cyber criminals have found an environment vulnerable to their deception, extortion, intimidation, and other virtual crimes stemming from the misuse of social media channels.

UNIPATH: What challenges do security personnel face in going after these types of criminals?

MAJ. GEN. SAAD MAAN: The biggest challenge is that we don't have a special law addressing cyber crime, so we have been forced to resort to the old penal code which has, in some cases, led to exploitation of the absence of such a law to deter cyber crime.

Despite the prevalence of these crimes all over the world and the enactment of special laws to deter them, no law has been enacted in Iraq to deter or reduce cyber crime. This is a significant challenge for security personnel, and we look forward to the passage of a law that gives the judiciary powers to sentence perpetrators of this type of crime and security personnel the legal authority to go after and arrest cyber criminals.

As an alternative and in the absence of deterrent legislation, we currently base prosecution of such offenses on legal articles of the 1969 Penal Code. However, as its title indicates, these laws were enacted in 1969, and although amended since then, most predate the digital age and include no criminal penalties for cyber crimes. This has limited the power of lawyers and judges to handle these modern crimes. The reinterpretation of old legal material in trials for this type of offense usually results in reduced penalties or even acquittal because the statutory passages specify direct threats rather than electronic extortion. If all the forensic evidence of the offense is confirmed, the accused may be sentenced to prison for no more than seven years.

UNIPATH: Describe the nature of these crimes.

MAJ. GEN. SAAD MAAN: A small proportion of these crimes are committed as revenge because of a failed relationship or business partnership that ended in some kind of problem. In these cases the perpetrator knows the victim, knows his or her address, phone number and details and uses these for extortion. These cases are limited and easy. But a greater portion of these crimes are committed by experienced criminals or organized gangs for extortion. This is the most serious and common type. For example, we received a complaint from a girl who was the victim of blackmail, so we tracked down the suspect with the cooperation of Baghdad Police Command and intelligence from the Ministry of Interior, arrested him, and after an examination of his cellphone by technicians at the Forensic Evidence Unit, we found more than 60 crimes of blackmail and photos of minor girls.

If we talk about murder, threats, drugs trafficking and other crimes, we see that cyber crime plays a big role in all of them because the internet has made it easier for criminals to coordinate remotely and given them the ability to conceal their identities by opening accounts with fake names from different devices and sites.

UNIPATH: How broad is the problem of cyber crime?

MAJ. GEN. SAAD MAAN: Electronic extortion is an important topic of concern for all security personnel. Some may think that the work of the Ministry of the Interior is limited to the pursuit and arrest of criminals after the crime has occurred, but they would be wrong. The ministry plays an important role in community policing. This entails preventing crimes, not just tracking down criminals after they have committed crimes. Through our field experience, our presence in the community and the activities of ministry personnel, in addition to the reports we receive, we are noticing that cyber crime is the vessel within which other crimes are carried out. If we talk about murder, threats, drugs trafficking and other crimes, we see that cyber crime plays a big role in all of them because the internet has made it easier for criminals to coordinate remotely and given them the ability to conceal their identities by opening accounts with fake names from different devices and sites.

Outside of the numbers, the specialized departments of the Ministry of the Interior have been able to solve many cases of cyber extortion, apprehend criminals and bring them to justice via cyber crime departments, information technology departments and the fruitful cooperation of citizens.

UNIPATH: What is the connection between the perpetrators of this type of crime and terrorist groups?

MAJ. GEN. SAAD MAAN: When it comes to cyber crime, there are countries and organizations that support subversive activities as well as espionage to advance their interests or damage their enemies. There are certainly terrorist activities in cyberspace for the purpose of recruitment, financing and extortion. Cyber crime is a new type of modern crime (so to speak) in which information technology and digital advances have been used across the vast array of internet services. Like other criminals, terrorists use social media to ensnare their ignorant and ill-informed victims in a variety of ways. They use cyber crime in general and extortion in particular to trap their recruits with promises of a better future, promises that turn out to be false.

The goals of these two types of crimes — terrorist crimes and crimes of extortion — differ. But in the eyes of the law, a criminal is any person who commits a crime for individual or collective gain at the expense of larger society, whether for psychological, economic or ideological motives, in violation of man-made, customary or divine laws. This has united the ranks of various security forces to confront crime of any kind, form or motive.

UNIPATH: If a victim reports a crime, how is individual privacy respected and the victim's identity protected?

MAJ. GEN. SAAD MAAN: Of course, the identities of victims remain confidential. We in the Ministry of the Interior want the victim to come forward and report his or her experiences with this crime with confidence. In our media leaflets on this subject and over hotlines, we always emphasize the importance of maintaining confidentiality and provide assurances to the victim in this regard.

The Ministry of Interior's Public Relations and Media Department plays a large and important role in tackling cyber crime in general and crimes of extortion in particular following the launch of the #bintunatuhimuna (our daughter matters to us) campaign, which has taken on a prominent role in the media to educate all sections of society, especially our teenage girls who are going through a difficult stage of their lives. They need to be aware

of the danger of falling victim to trafficking, and we need to expose all manner of fraud in this field and encourage victims to quickly notify the relevant departments of the Ministry of Interior to report perpetrators.

UNIPATH: Describe the programs to protect teenagers.

MAJ. GEN. SAAD MAAN: Three years ago, we started a community outreach campaign to protect society against electronic blackmail. We tweeted out the hashtag #bintunatuhimuna and the Supreme Judicial Council took a serious stand against this issue. The challenge we face with threats is that the law is only enforced if a complaint is filed by the victim; otherwise the case is closed. However, the head of the Supreme Judicial Council supported a deeper investigation and, on the grounds of public rights, the offender can be held accountable even in the absence of a complaint against him by the victim. This marked a turning point in the prosecution of cyber crime, resulting in a significant reduction in cyber extortion offenses. The men of the Anti-Crime Directorate set up the 533 hotline and, as a result of the efforts of the directorate's skilled officers, dozens of extortionists, including organized cyber crime groups, were arrested.

UNIPATH: Which cyber crime cases are the most difficult for security services?

MAJ. GEN. SAAD MAAN: It's clear that the effort to catch cyber criminals and cyber extortionists is generally quite significant since the perpetrator is invisible, uses several different methods and is constantly developing skills to avoid detection by security forces. In contrast, our security forces are also developing skills and tactics to elevate their technical staff to the point where they can effectively confront cyber criminals and keep up with or exceed their skills and tricks. You can imagine the efforts made to prepare, direct and bolster the capabilities of the security and intelligence officials working in this field. There is without a doubt joint cooperation between our security institutions to exchange expertise and compare information, which benefits the rule of law and combating criminals.

UNIPATH: How are electronic monitoring teams selected and what are their qualifications?

MAJ. GEN. SAAD MAAN: The Electronic Crimes Department of the Ministry of Interior's Federal Intelligence and Investigation Agency,

along with other relevant departments, are careful to establish special controls, conditions and qualifications for security officers and civil servants; foremost among them is scientific and professional specialization in computer science and information technology. They also need knowledge of science-based intelligence and security work, in addition to special skills in the field of investigations. On the other hand, we are keen to provide intensive courses to enhance and upgrade capabilities that help them succeed in their work. We include them in internal and external courses to enhance their skills and keep them abreast of global developments, especially in cyber crime.

UNIPATH: What are the characteristics of a cyber criminal in Iraq?

MAJ. GEN. SAAD MAAN: It is not possible to specify the precise characteristics of cyber criminals because their methods are constantly evolving and vary according to their intentions and objectives. Our relevant institutions have arrested many of these people and their ages, educational qualifications and social conditions have varied, bearing in mind that adolescents are the most common perpetrators of cyber crimes for reasons of financial or sexual blackmail or to force their victims to commit broader crimes such as drug violations.

UNIPATH: What advice do you have for citizens subjected to electronic extortion?

MAJ. GEN. SAAD MAAN: I stress the importance of promptly informing the security authorities in the Ministry of Interior and the other relevant agencies to prevent further harm they could suffer if they continue to cooperate with blackmailers or fail to come to the Ministry of Interior. Keeping quiet about extortion will lead the victim into dangerous pitfalls and, as a result, to a tragic end. That is why the victim should contact the relevant security authorities, because someone who blackmails you once will come back and blackmail you again. You should be in close contact with the security forces and bear in mind the importance of time as a factor. Criminals believe that they are safe from security personnel and that the law cannot reach them. Here I would like to emphasize that there is a very large technical effort within the Ministry of Interior's Directorate of Intelligence that enables us to hunt down cyber criminals and anyone who misuses the internet or social media channels. I would also like to clarify that the door of our department is always open to all our brothers and sisters who are subject to these crimes. ♦



Fields of **DEATH**

Thousands of Yemenis Have Died From Land Mines Planted in Violation of International Law

MOAMMAR AL-ERYANI, YEMINI MINISTER OF INFORMATION, CULTURE AND TOURISM

It is no exaggeration to say that the planting of land mines by the Iranian-backed Houthi militia in Yemen since the coup in 2014 is the largest since World War II and is considered one of the most serious crimes against humanity committed by the militia against Yemenis' present and future.

The Houthi militia has placed mines in all the areas it reached, withdrew from and still controls. It does so without differentiating between military and civilian sites. Houthi mines lurk among homes, schools, mosques, markets, and grazing and agricultural areas.

They threaten lives along roads, at airports and ports, and in territorial waters and international shipping lanes.

The National Mine Action Program counts more than 7,000 civilian casualties — the majority women and children — from Houthi mines. These mines have left thousands of amputees and others with permanent disabilities. They also have obliterated livestock — cows, sheep and camels — in grazing grounds in Hodeidah, Marib, Al-Jouf, Al Dali and Shabwa governorates.

A Saudi-backed team of military experts deactivates 5,000 land mines and explosives in January 2021. AFP/GETTY IMAGES



Tragic stories of civilian victims proliferate, including that of Nasser Muhammad, 13, who stepped on a Houthi mine while playing and lost an eye to shrapnel.

The Immorality of Mines

Yet even statistics from international organizations tasked with monitoring mines don't reflect the scale of the disaster and the actual numbers of victims of Houthi mines. Governmental reports issued by the National Mine Action Program confirmed that the Houthi mines were not part of the Yemeni Army's arsenal before the 2014 coup and that they were manufactured locally by the Houthis under supervision of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard and its allies.

National Mine Action Program Director Brig. Gen. Amin Saleh Al-Aqili stated that the Houthi militia uses ammonium nitrate (a major component in explosives used for mining) and TNT inside the mines' metal shell.

Yemen signed the Ottawa mine-ban treaty in 1997 and passed legislation that criminalized and prohibited the manufacture, design, import, export, possession, transfer and planting of these mines. The Yemeni Army destroyed its stockpile in 2007. But the Houthis' manufacture and planting of hundreds of thousands of mines spoiled that progress, and Yemen has regressed to being among the main countries in the world afflicted by mines.

Even worse, the Houthis, under supervision of Iranian-backed experts, transformed anti-vehicle mines into anti-personnel mines by attaching pressure plates triggered by weights as light as 3 kilograms, less than that of a toddler.

Houthis have crafted improvised explosive devices (IEDs) from rockets, tank shells and artillery, camouflaging them as rocks, and have fashioned stick bombs out of PVC pipe containing up to 30 kilograms of explosives.

The Houthis use heat sensors to activate camouflaged IEDs and mines on public roads without distinguishing between military and civilian targets, men or women, the elderly or children, humans or animals. A victim's body heat activates the device when approaching the bomb, triggering an explosion.

Stepping on pressure wires can activate mines, and they also can be set off by remote control.

To kill demining teams and inflict the largest number of civilian casualties, the Houthis modified larger mines to ignite during attempts to remove them.

Iranian-backed Houthi terrorism is not limited to land: Their mines have appeared in the waters of the Red Sea and the Bab el-Mandeb strait to target commercial ships and oil tankers in international shipping lanes.

During the past few years, mines have damaged merchant ships and fishing boats, and hundreds of

fishermen have been killed in coastal waters.

The joint forces of the Saudi-led Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen announced that it has destroyed more than 150 mines to preserve maritime navigation.

Cleaning Up the Fields of Death

Yemen's legitimate government has made great strides in removing and destroying mines, raising awareness of their dangers and assisting victims. This has occurred through the National Mine Action Program and the military engineering teams of the Ministry of Defense, in partnership with the United Nations Development Program, the Saudi Project for Landmine Clearance (MASAM), and supporting states and organizations.

Despite political and economic turmoil caused by years of wars in Yemen, medical teams have aided victims by performing plastic surgery, fashioning artificial limbs and providing rehabilitation.

Within the framework of the rapid response plan approved by the government, the National Mine Action Program, with the support of brothers and friends, has conducted mine clearance across vast areas of Yemen. As of August 2020, we have destroyed 14,031 anti-personnel mines and 621,531 anti-vehicle mines. A UNICEF-supported mine-awareness campaign reached nearly 1.3 million Yemenis.

This work continues the demining efforts of the United Nations Development Program, which disposed of more than 35,000 mines and unexploded ordnance in 2019.

The MASAM project, affiliated with the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center, played a major role in bringing hope to Yemenis. Its demining teams enabled the displaced to return to their homes and provided medical care and humanitarian aid to mine victims.

The Houthis' excessive use of mines and IEDs — and planting them randomly without maps in populated regions — constitutes a danger to millions of civilians. It disrupts public life, exacerbates human suffering, hinders development, and represents an environmental risk for decades to come, long after the war ends.

Although the Houthi mines remain a core issue in peace talks, United Nations Special Envoy Martin Griffiths has expressed disappointment at lack of progress on the part of the Houthis and their Iranian supporters.

Will the international community and the United Nations Security Council turn their backs on these crimes in which thousands of women, children and the elderly fall victim to mines? Will the world hold Houthi leaders accountable for these war crimes and crimes against humanity? ♦



An Authority on Airpower

Maj. Gen. Salem Al-Nabet propels the Qatar Emiri Air Force into an era of increased cooperation

BRIG. GEN. ENGINEER SALEM ABUSHERIDA, QATAR SENIOR NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE TO USCENTCOM

When Maj. Gen. Salem Al-Nabet reviews the achievements of the Qatar Emiri Air Force, two stand out. It possesses not just one of the world's most modern air defense systems, but also a stellar training academy: Al Zaeem Mohammed Bin Abdullah Al Attiya Air College.

A fighter pilot who commands the Qatar Air Force, Maj. Gen. Salem has spent much of his 37-year career organizing, training and equipping Air Force units to ensure the security, sovereignty and integrity of his nation's airspace.

He was instrumental in the creation of the air college and served as its first commander starting in 2009. The air college's supporting specialties received his full attention: to develop the skills of Air Force officers in the field of fighter guidance and air control.

Under Maj. Gen. Salem's guidance, the Air Force continues to enhance its fighter squadrons, adding 36 U.S.-built F-15QAs to its existing strength of mostly European military jets.

"It is one of the best aircraft. It is a strong plane and I hope to fly by myself next time," the general said after enjoying an F-15 demonstration at Al Udeid Air Base. "It will be the backbone of my Air Force and I look forward to receiving it."

CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Gen. Salem began his flying career as a young lieutenant in the 1980s. He received his initial pilot training at the King Faisal



Air Academy in Saudi Arabia — where he was awarded a flying trophy for being the top pilot — and traveled to Great Britain for advanced flight training. He has accumulated more than 2,400 flying hours on a variety of jets such as the French Mirage F1, Mirage 200, the PC-21 training aircraft, the British Strikemaster, and most recently the French Rafale aircraft. He is one of the few Air Force commanders who still actively flies.

He has commanded several squadrons in defense of Qatar, including the Air Excellence Squadron and the 11th

Fighter Wing Squadron. Gen. Salem took part in several Qatar Emiri Air Force missions such as the Gulf War to liberate Kuwait and Operation Unified Protector in defense of Libyan stability.

In 2002, he arrived at U.S. Central Command Headquarters in Tampa, Florida, to serve as senior national representative for Qatar. He views his country's relationship with the U.S. military as critically important. Al Udeid Air Base near Doha hosts about 13,000 U.S. troops, mostly Air Force personnel.

"It is important to be able to meet as friends and exchange information," the general said. "The unity and partnership between the United States and Qatar is based on a common vision of being ready to defend and preserve security, peace and stability in the region."

EDUCATING PILOTS

Gen. Salem takes pride in his stewardship of Al Zaeem Mohammed Bin Abdullah Al Attiya Air College. The college prepares and qualifies students in specialties such as flying fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters, operating weapons systems, military air traffic control, air surveillance and directing aerial combat.

Qatar aims to make the air college the leading flight training and aviation center in the region and takes pride in its international certification. Among the nearly 100 students receiving bachelor's degrees in the graduating class of January 2020, nine came from Kuwait others from the Republic of Rwanda. Iraqis have also enrolled at the college.

Women have made great strides in the Air Force under Gen. Salem's leadership. During the January ceremony to award diplomas, Gen. Salem witnessed the graduation of Lt. Al-Jazi Al-Nasr, the first Qatari woman trained as a fighter pilot.

Qatari women already fly helicopters, but Lt. Al-Jazi is the nation's first female fighter jet pilot. The general assured attendees at the air college graduation ceremony that she would not be the last.

QATARI-U.S. MILITARY RELATIONS

Reinforcing an already strong partnership, Qatar Emiri Air Force commanders joined U.S. Air Forces Central Command personnel at Al Udeid for a friendship event in August 2020.

The main purpose was to introduce the F-15 to Qatari officers in preparation for delivery of the aircraft to Qatar starting in the summer of 2021. In return, U.S. Air Force officers learned about Qatar's existing fleet of Mirage and Rafale fighter jets.

The event was organized with the participation of Lt. Gen. Ghanem bin Shaheen Al-Ghanim, chief of staff of the Qatar Armed Forces and also a pilot by training. Gen. Salem studied the capabilities of the F-15 from the back seat of the cockpit on a "familiarization flight." Qatar has agreed to upgrade Al Udeid to accommodate the F-15 and other fighter aircraft.

"Given the importance of this partnership to the state of Qatar, we have begun to work in full swing to develop Al Udeid Air Base to increase the operational efficiency and capacity of operations led by our allies," Lt. Gen. Ghanem said.

"We welcome the presence of our friends in the American Armed Forces in their second country, Qatar, and we are ready to strengthen the partnership between our Armed Forces and our allies in the state of Qatar in a way that contributes to enhancing regional and international security and stability."

As the Qatari leadership made clear with its 2019 appointment of Gen. Salem to command the Qatar Emiri Air Force, the general will be a prominent advocate of increased cooperation with the U.S. and other partners in the name of regional peace.



Maj. Gen. Salem Al-Nabet is buckled into an F-15E fighter in August 2020 in preparation for a flight.

TECH SGT. MICHAEL BATTLES/U.S. AIR FORCE



OMANI EARNS TOP MILITARY HONORS

UNIPATH STAFF

An Omani cadet was named top international student at Great Britain's Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

The Sandhurst commandant awarded Omani Officer Cadet Al Azhar bin Zahir Al Zakwani the Overseas Sword in August 2020. The award is given to the best international cadet in every class at the academy.

More than 5,000 foreign nationals from 120 countries have studied at Sandhurst since 1947. Omani cadets have a long history of attending the academy, thanks to the two countries' robust relationship dating back decades.

Oman's Royal Armed Forces were established in the 1950s with the help of the British Armed Forces. Oman's forces continue to grow in personnel and equipment to keep pace with security developments in the region. Omani troops numbered more than 57,000 in 2019, not including 4,500 reservists.

His Royal Highness Sultan Haitham bin Tariq Al Said, who ascended to the throne in early 2020, issued a directive to improve recruitment and training for the Armed Forces. The directive includes recruitment of officers from among college students who didn't attend a military academy.

The training efforts include the joint Omani and British military exercise called Saif Sareea, or Swift Sword. The countries have held this large-scale exercise since 1986.

Sources: Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, *Oman Daily Observer*, <https://www.omaninfo.om/>



Omani Officer Cadet Al Azhar bin Zahir Al Zakwani poses with his award at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

ATHEER.COM



Soldiers from an Omani tank regiment speak with members of the British Armed Forces during exercise Saif Sareea 3 in Oman in 2018. GETTY IMAGES

Qatar Enhances Coastal Forces

UNIPATH STAFF

Qatar's investment in maritime security is paying off with the delivery of a new naval ship from a Turkish shipyard in October 2020.

The Al Doha QTS-91, built at Anadolu Shipyard in Istanbul, is one of the largest training ships in the world, designed for search and rescue operations and maritime patrols. The ship displaces 2,150 tons and can hold 150 Sailors and naval cadets.

The Qatar Emiri Navy bought the ship as part of a larger deal signed during the 2018 Doha International Maritime Defense Exhibition and Conference.

Qatar held a ceremony to mark the delivery of Al Doha QTS-91. It was attended by dignitaries such as Qatari Defense Minister Khalid bin Mohammad Al Attiyah, Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar, Qatari Ambassador to Turkey Salem bin Mubarak Al Shafi and several high-ranking Qatari military officers.

To enhance maritime security and secure its 563-kilometer coastline, Qatar has signed several contracts to buy armaments from Turkish firms. In 2014, the Qatari Coast Guard ordered 17 military vessels, and in 2018, another nine.

The Coast Guard is charged with search and rescue missions at sea and protecting ports, maritime industries and oil and gas installations. It also provides security during popular events such as conferences and sports tournaments.

In July 2019, Qatar opened the Al Daayen Naval Base in Simaisma, 30 kilometers from Doha on the country's eastern coast, to expand the operational capabilities of the Coast Guard. The opening ceremony drew dignitaries such as Vice Adm. James Malloy, then commander of U.S. Naval Forces, U.S. Central Command.

Sources: Naval News, Aljazeera.net



JORDAN REINTRODUCES THE DRAFT FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

UNIPATH STAFF

The Jordanian government has reinstated military conscription for 25- to 29-year-old men lacking job, family or educational prospects.

The reintroduction of the draft required enlistment of 5,000 men in 2020 and will affect another 15,000 in 2021. A memorandum of understanding was signed in August 2020 between the Jordanian government represented by then Prime Minister Omar Razzaz and the Jordan Armed Forces represented by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Maj. Gen. Yousef Al-Hnaity.

The period of military service is 12 months, during which new recruits will spend three months at boot camp to acquire basic military skills. For the remaining nine months, they will be working for private companies.

This isn't the first time Jordan has taken such a step. Two-year conscriptions existed between 1976 and 1991, after which military service became voluntary for men and women between the ages of 18 and 27. In 2007, limited military conscription resumed with the aim of improving job skills among youth.

The reintroduction of conscription serves Jordan two ways: It provides employment for the jobless and promotes military preparedness in a region facing terrorism and other security threats. Young men are exempt if they are employed, enrolled in school or maintain a family.



Jordanian troops hold a picture of His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein during a parade in Amman celebrating the country's 74th Independence Day on May 25, 2020. REUTERS

Other countries in the Middle East have taken similar steps. Since 2014, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait have all introduced military conscription, citing the need to instill a sense of service among young people.

Jordan defines conscription flexibly. The Compulsory Military Service Act No. 23 of 1986 permits the postponement of the draft when the military deems it has sufficient troops. Sources: Arab News, alaraby.co.uk, globalsecurity.org

Saudis Splinter Iranian-backed Terrorist Cell

UNIPATH STAFF

Saudi security services announced the capture of Iranian-trained terrorists armed with guns, bombs and improvised explosive devices.

Ten extremists — three of whom received military training from the Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps — were arrested in September 2020.

A spokesman for Saudi Arabia's Presidency of State Security said the leaders of the terrorist cell "received military and field training, including on how to make explosives, inside Revolutionary Guards sites in Iran" in late 2017.

The terrorists had stashed their arsenal in two locations: a house and a ranch. Among the weapons discovered were explosives shaped like sunglasses



Workers repair a damaged Saudi Aramco plant following a drone attack in September 2019. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

and other sunglasses equipped with cameras and eavesdropping devices.

"Seized material suggests that terrorists are now employing more sophisticated tactics and techniques

to supplement the prevailing traditional tactics and methods used in terrorist attacks such as firearms or explosives," Saudi political analyst Dr. Ahmed Al-Shehri said.

"Such techniques to collect intelligence needed to attack specific targets carry the fingerprint of the IRGC [Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps] and its surrogate militia groups such as the Yemeni Houthi group."

Iran was also the main suspect in a destructive attack on Saudi Arabia on September 14, 2019. Drones attacked a Saudi Aramco oil processing facility in eastern Saudi Arabia, causing large fires and temporarily cutting Saudi oil production capability in half. Source: alarabiya.net



Egypt Hosts Joint Exercise Medusa 10

UNIPATH STAFF

Egypt hosted a multinational coalition to conduct an air and naval exercise on the Mediterranean Sea in late 2020.

The weeklong joint exercise, named Medusa 10, occupied waters off the coast of Alexandria and drew participants from Cyprus, France, Greece and the United Arab Emirates.

Aimed at enhancing regional and international cooperation to confront security challenges in the Mediterranean region, the maritime drills were observed by representatives from each country's ministry of defense. Prominent among them was Egyptian Lt. Gen. Mohamed Zaki, the country's minister of defense and military production.

The exercise began with a military briefing aboard the Egyptian helicopter carrier Anwar El Sadat. Participants engaged in drills that included sailing in formation; airstrikes against hostile maritime targets; naval gunnery; repelling asymmetric attacks; amphibious landings; and visit, board, search and seizure of suspicious vessels.

The event — which has taken place regularly since 2017 — concluded with a parade by naval and air units from the participating countries.

Upon conclusion of Medusa 10, Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sisi visited France on December 7, 2020, for a meeting with French President Emmanuel Macron. The two-day visit culminated in a joint news conference at which Macron praised Egypt as “an important partner in the battle against terrorism” and promised greater defense cooperation with Cairo.

Sources: *Al Ahram* newspaper, egyptindependent.com

Egyptian helicopter carrier Anwar El Sadat
REUTERS

Lebanese Learn Lessons on Crowd Control

UNIPATH STAFF

To enhance the professionalism of the Lebanese law enforcement in serving its communities, Soldiers attended a conference on how to manage unruly crowds and political demonstrations within the parameters of international human rights laws.

The workshop organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in October 2020 stressed the importance of complying with humanitarian principles governing the use of force during public unrest. ICRC receives money from the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration.

Held at the Lebanese Armed Forces 11th Infantry Brigade headquarters, the sessions emphasized guidelines, roles and responsibilities of law enforcement officers in handling demonstrations, protests and rallies. Approximately 30 troops learned ways to preserve human rights while also protecting property and public institutions from vandalism. Such training is essential to build a culture of respect for international human rights law within the Lebanese military.

Article 13 of the Lebanese Constitution states: “The freedom to express one's opinion orally or in writing, the freedom of the press, the freedom of assembly, and the freedom of association shall be guaranteed within the limits established by law.”

Lebanese security forces have generally demonstrated high discipline and compliance with international human rights standards in handling popular demonstrations that erupted after the explosion of the Beirut port on August 5, 2020. Injuries among Lebanese security forces didn't discourage them from continuing their work in guiding, directing and assisting victims of the explosion.

Sources: International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Lebanese Army



Lebanese Army Soldiers set up a security cordon around a bank in Tripoli during protests in June 2020. AFP/GETTY IMAGES



Building Resilience in Tajikistan

UNIPATH STAFF

Tajikistan is benefiting from a range of U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) programs designed to build resilience in the spheres of health care, water management and economic development.

In October 2020, acting USAID Administrator John Barsa announced new bilateral missions in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to promote reform-oriented development that would contribute to regional security.

“Missions are the hubs for USAID’s work and demonstrate that the United States is dedicated to building direct and meaningful relationships with

a country’s government and people. In Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, these missions will also help ensure that our work in the region is coordinated so that no country in Central Asia is left behind,” Barsa said.

USAID also lauded the success of the HIV Central Asia Flagship program, which improved the health of thousands of Tajiks over the past five years. USAID used rapid saliva tests to evaluate 55,500 people for HIV, and 2,900 people started lifesaving treatment.

“We must be mindful of the many vulnerable people around us in need of our care and support, including people

living with HIV and those at higher risk of infection,” U.S. Ambassador to Tajikistan John Mark Pommersheim said.

Tajikistan also participates in the newly launched USAID Regional Water and Vulnerable Environment program that will spend \$24.5 million over five years to promote water sharing and conservation among Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The water program will build on the results from earlier USAID investments in regional water cooperation in this semiarid region.

Sources: USAID, U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan

Pakistan’s Multinational Mission to Combat Maritime Piracy

UNIPATH STAFF

As monsoon season ended in the Gulf of Aden, the Pakistan Navy joined a multinational flotilla in November 2020 to deter piracy in critical shipping lanes.

Operation Shamal engaged several naval partners from Combined Maritime Forces based in Bahrain. Pakistan Navy ship Zulfikar joined ships from South Korea and Japan to patrol waters between the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa.

The Zulfikar worked closely with a South Korean ship on a passing exercise designed to test interoperability between the two navies in times of crisis. Pakistan is a member of Combined Task Force (CTF) 150, which patrols the Arabian Seas for terrorists, smugglers and other criminals. South Korea participates in Combined Task Force 151 in the Gulf of Aden.

“Operation Shamal was conducted to demonstrate to potential pirates and sponsors of piracy that there is a significant military force in the region that would deal with any attempted piracy attack,” said CTF 151 Operations Officer Lt. Cmdr. Yoo Sanghun of South Korea.

The calming of winds and seas between monsoon seasons signals an expansion in oceangoing commerce while thousands of fishing vessels and trading dhows appear off the



A Pakistan Navy helicopter gets ready to land on the deck of a Japanese ship.

COMBINED MARITIME FORCES

coasts of nations such as Yemen and Oman. That increases the danger of maritime violations.

“We are also here to reassure our partners on merchant ships that despite the increase in small boat activity, the military is there to respond,” Lt. Cmdr. Yoo said.

The Royal Navy of Oman also played a key role in alerting merchant vessels to the presence of warships during Operation Shamal. A Pakistani helicopter joined other nations, including those from the European Union, in providing

maritime patrol aircraft to monitor sea lanes for potential pirates.

“It is always pleasing when we are able to grow our capability by having so many countries operating closely together, whether it’s patrol aircraft and warships tactically maneuvering together or nation states coordinating their navies and coast guards to deliver freedom of navigation,” said CTF 151 Commander Rear Adm. Nejat Inanir of the Turkish Navy.

Pakistan’s contribution to multinational naval coalitions is expected to continue with the recent appointment of a new chief of naval staff. Adm. Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi was sworn into office in October 2020.

Sources: *Hilal* magazine, Combined Maritime Forces



Warring Parties in Yemen Exchange Prisoners

UNIPATH STAFF

Hailed as a “very important milestone” toward building peace in Yemen, the warring parties in the country’s civil war exchanged hundreds of prisoners in October 2020.

The breakthrough came during negotiations sponsored by the United Nations in Switzerland in September 2020. It was the largest release of prisoners of war by the Iranian-backed Houthi militia and the legitimate government of Yemen since the conflict began in 2015.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres thanked the International Committee of the Red Cross for helping oversee the prisoner exchange. About 680 rebels were released and flown to the city of Sanaa, under the control of the Houthis. In return, 400 war captives affiliated with the legitimate government were flown to the city of Aden. The Houthis also released two American hostages, and 200 Houthi supporters were allowed to return home from Oman.

The war in Yemen has left more than 100,000 dead and caused physical, social and economic devastation across much of the country. In July 2020, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) launched a three-year Economic Recovery and Livelihoods Program for Yemenis worth \$27.4 million. The money will help support farmers, fishermen, and small- and medium-size businesses.

Additionally, Abdallah Y. al-Mouallimi, permanent representative of Saudi Arabia to the U.N., announced that KSRelief — the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center — would contribute \$20 million to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The humanitarian aid is designed to help hundreds of thousands of displaced Yemenis. Sources: United Nations, BBC, Elaph.com, USAID

Yemeni prisoners once held by the Houthi arrive in Aden.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES



Afghan Forces Demonstrate Prowess in Removing Senior Al-Qaida Leader

UNIPATH STAFF

In a mission that united the efforts of Afghanistan's national intelligence service and military forces, Afghan troops tracked down and killed one of al-Qaida's top commanders.

The death of Husam Abd al-Rauf, also known as Abu Muhsin al-Masri, illustrates the growing ability of Afghanistan's legitimately elected government to defend its territory from the depredations of terrorists.

The Egyptian-born al-Rauf met his end in Ghazni province at the hands of Afghan special operations forces on October 24, 2020, and Afghan leaders suggested it wouldn't be the last such operation.

"Terrorist groups, especially al-Qaida and Daesh, should realize after the killing of their leaders that Afghanistan is not safe for their activities," Abdullah Abdullah, chairman of the Afghan High Council for National Reconciliation, said in a statement.

Afghanistan's government is negotiating with Taliban representatives on an agreement to end military conflict and share power. In the meantime, Afghan forces, especially the country's commandos and Special Mission Wing, have conducted more than 1,000 missions resulting in the destruction of terrorist cells lurking in the country.

Abd al-Rauf, who had been on the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation's Most Wanted Terrorist List, was reportedly living under the protection of the Taliban about 150 kilometers southwest of the capital, Kabul.

While praising his forces for their successful mission against al-Rauf, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani urged continued vigilance to purge the country of terrorist violence. Afghanistan's National Security Directorate was the first to announce al-Rauf's death.

"Terrorism still remains a huge threat to Afghanistan, the region and the world, and the Taliban has not cut off their ties with other terrorist networks, including al-Qaida, yet," the president announced the day after al-Rauf's demise.

U.S. officials cheered the news of the death of the al-Qaida leader. Until they lost power in Afghanistan in 2001, the Taliban harbored al-Qaida fighters in the country, a base from which the terrorist group launched global attacks.

"We commend the Afghan forces for their successful operation against al-Qaida senior leader Abu Muhsin al-Masri," the U.S. National Security Council said. "His removal is welcome news in the fight against al-Qaida and denying it a safe haven in Afghanistan."

Afghan government officials reiterated that, under the terms of a U.S.-Taliban peace agreement signed in February 2020, the group agreed to renounce support for terrorists.

After al-Rauf's death, President Ghani's office demanded the Taliban "stop the war and violence and facilitate a dignified and sustainable peace in the country."

Kyrgyz Foreign Minister Reassures Region

UNIPATH STAFF

Recently appointed Kyrgyz Foreign Minister Ruslan Kazakbayev made Kazakhstan one of his first diplomatic stops, visiting the capital of Nur-Sultan in October 2020 to discuss economic, security and cultural issues.



Kazakbayev reassured Kazakhstani President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Prime Minister Askar Mamim and Foreign Minister Mukhtar Tleuberdi that Kyrgyzstan, despite a change of government in mid-2020, would adhere to the spirit of the regional cooperation and strategic partnership.

Among the topics of discussion were trade and investment, transit and transport, water and energy, and containing the COVID-19 epidemic. Tleuberdi sought reassurances that Kyrgyzstan would prioritize law and order to protect Kazakhstani citizens living in Kyrgyzstan.

"The main purpose of my visit is to reassure the Kazakh side that Kyrgyzstan's foreign policy course remains unchanged amid the internal political changes," Kazakbayev said.

Both countries have expressed support for helping stabilize Afghanistan to support Central Asian security. Afghanistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs reached out to Kyrgyzstan's new government with a message of friendship.

"Kyrgyzstan is a valued friend and a committed partner that shares deep historical, religious and cultural ties with Afghanistan," Afghan Foreign Minister Mohammed Haneef Atmar announced. "I look forward to working with His Excellency Kazakbayev to further strengthen our bilateral political and economic relations and enhance our cooperation within regional and multilateral settings."

Sources: primeminister.kz, Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Astana Times



Kuwait Seeks to Modernize Armed Forces

UNIPATH STAFF

During a visit to the Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense in November 2020, His Majesty Emir Sheikh Nawaf Al Ahmad Al Jaber Al Sabah vowed to upgrade his country's Armed Forces by modernizing weapons and equipment.

Kuwaiti Soldiers perform at a graduation ceremony at Ali Al-Sabah Military Academy in Kuwait City in February 2020.

AFP/GETTY IMAGES

"We will not be skimpy nor lax in providing our military with modern weapons and vehicles and equipping it with whatever it needs to fulfill its duty to the fullest extent," the emir said. "And we will continue to work on developing and updating training and preparedness for its personnel in all branches."

In the decades before ascending to the throne, Sheikh Nawaf held several leadership positions relating to the security of Kuwait. He served at various times as minister of defense, deputy chief of the Kuwaiti National Guard and minister of interior.

During his long service, Sheikh Nawaf helped modernize and develop his country's defenses, most of which were destroyed when Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein invaded the country in 1990.

After the liberation of Kuwait in February 1991, successive Kuwaiti governments had to rebuild state institutions.

Among other armaments purchases, Kuwait in 2018 finalized a deal to buy 28 Super Hornets from the United States: 22 single-seat F/A-18E and six two-seat F/A-18F.

Then-U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait Alina Romanowski said that the Kuwaiti Army had contracted to buy 218 M1A2K tanks from the U.S. It is part of a U.S. commitment to ensure Kuwait's security and help Kuwait acquire and build a state-of-the-art military that includes enhancements to doctrine, policies, organization, training, equipment and materials.

"We are working to help Kuwait acquire state-of-the-art military equipment as part of our commitment to the country's security," Romanowski announced.

Sources: alkhaleejonline.net, USNI News, Office of Military Cooperation-Kuwait

BAHRAINI YOUNG PEOPLE RECEIVE SECURITY TRAINING

UNIPATH STAFF

Sixty young Bahraini men and women participated in an innovative two-week training program designed to promote national security.

Organized by the Southern governorate of Bahrain in September and October 2020, lecturers came from several security departments, including the Royal Academy of Police, General Administration for Combating Corruption, Economic and Cyber Security Administration, and Criminal Investigation and Forensic Science Administration.

The program — held virtually to avoid any spread of COVID-19 — raised awareness among young people on issues of security and safety. Participants ranged in age from 15 to 25, and 60% were female.

At the end of the training, the government organized an in-person ceremony under the patronage of Gov. Sheikh Khalifa bin Ali bin Khalifa Al Khalifa and the Director of Social Programs and Community Affairs Mohammed Hasan Al Faw.

Attendants expressed appreciation and gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the program addressing security challenges relevant to Bahrain's Southern governorate.

The Southern governorate is the largest geographically of the country's four governorates, but the smallest in population with 110,000 residents. The Bahraini government has battled to contain extremist groups supported by Iran that aim to destabilize the small island nation in the Arabian Gulf.

Sources: Al Watan, Bahraini Ministry of Interior



A Bahraini woman poses with an award received during security training. AL WATAN



Iraqi Armed Forces Root Out Daesh Remnants

UNIPATH STAFF

In a massive operation in the fall of 2020, Iraqi security forces captured 115 Daesh fighters, including terrorist leaders, and dismantled a terrorist network in Ninawa governorate.

These efforts came after Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kazemi and Director of the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Service Lt. Gen. Abdul-Wahab al-Saadi pledged to enhance security throughout the country.

Daesh affiliates have stepped up attacks on civilian and military targets in governorates the terrorist group lost to the Iraqi forces and the international coalition forces in August 2017. According to a former security official in Mosul, in August and September 2020, Daesh remnants tried to gain a foothold in southern Mosul, but successive security operations by Iraqi security forces thwarted all attempts.

That operation led to the death and capture of 38 terrorists, including a Syrian. Captured operatives confessed to being remnants of Daesh forces defeated by Iraqi troops several years ago.

“Forces from Ninawa Operations Command, 14th Infantry Division, 16th Infantry Division and the Ninawa Police Department launched a joint operation to search and clear Qanus Island from Daesh remnants and destroy their hideouts to enhance security and stability in the region,” said Maj. Gen. Yahya Rasul, spokesman for the Iraqi Armed Forces commander in chief.

Qanus Island, a densely vegetated hideout 10 kilometers



Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Service officers watch a video transmitted from a drone at the front line in West Mosul in 2017.

REUTERS

north in Qanus Village in Salah al-Din governorate, is used as a transit point for Daesh fighters between Syrian and Iraqi cities. In September 2020, U.S. Air Force F-15 Strike Eagles and F-35 Lightning II aircraft dropped 80,000 pounds of bombs on the island during Operation Black Dust to assist ground forces of the Counter-Terrorism Service.

Daesh occupied large swaths in Iraq and Syria in 2014, only to be expelled from Iraq by 2017. Its last stronghold in Syria fell to Syrian Democratic Forces in March 2019 during the battle of Al-Baghouz. Source: *Al Mada newspaper*

Dubai Police Seize Hidden Drugs

UNIPATH STAFF

The General Department of Anti-Narcotics in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) thwarted a plot to smuggle 8 kilograms of crystal methamphetamine and a kilogram of cannabis into the country in September, one of dozens of such counternarcotics operations throughout 2020.

“Reliable information was received from Dubai customs police that two men residing in a neighboring country came to a Dubai port by a dhow to deliver a quantity of drugs to a compatriot residing in

the Emirate of Dubai,” Department Director Brig. Gen. Eid Muhammad Thani Hareb said.

An undercover agent, who infiltrated the smuggling gang, received the drugs hidden in two vegetable boxes. Police arrested three drug traffickers at the port.

Emiratis attribute their success to cooperation from citizens and international partners. In the latest annual statistics available, the UAE Ministry of Interior noted an 11% rise in drug trafficking arrests and a 29% decline in drug abuse deaths.

Drug seizures amounted to 3,888 kilograms.

The UAE cooperated with 40 countries, resulting in 122 cross-border anti-narcotic operations.

In 1976, the Dubai Police Department created a modest office to fight crimes linked to illegal drugs. Owing to a constant growth in population and businesses and a consequent surge in drug cases, the office grew into the General Department of Anti-Narcotics.

Sources: Dubai Police, bawabaa.org, alkhaleejonline.net



Uzbekistan Hosts Head of U.S. Central Command

UNIPATH STAFF

President Shavkat Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan hosted U.S. Central Command Commander Gen. Kenneth McKenzie in October 2020 to discuss military cooperation and the peace process in Afghanistan.

Of particular concern was Uzbekistan's desire to help its neighbor integrate economically into the countries of Central Asia. Uzbek investments in Afghanistan include a railroad spur, power transmission lines and a proposed natural gas pipeline.

Gen. McKenzie highlighted a U.S. commitment to a strategic partnership with Uzbekistan. McKenzie's delegation reiterated that point during a visit to the Ministry of Defense in Tashkent. Uzbek Minister of Defense Maj. Gen. Bakhodir Kurbanov exchanged views with McKenzie on military and technological cooperation.

The delegation went to the Armed Forces Academy of the Republic of Uzbekistan to observe how the country educates its military officers. Among the curriculum was an online course taught by Dr. Robert Baumann, instructor at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

A Russian speaker, Dr. Baumann served as an educational



President Shavkat Mirziyoyev of Uzbekistan hosts U.S. Central Command Commander Gen. Kenneth McKenzie.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

advisor in Tashkent in 2016-17 as part of the Ministry of Defense Advisory Program conducted by the U.S. Department of Defense's Defense Security Cooperation Agency. Dr. Baumann was hired to resume that role in Uzbekistan for the second time and will work with the Uzbek Armed Forces Academy. Source: U.S. Central Command

KAZAKH TROOPS IMPROVE PEACEKEEPING SKILLS

UNIPATH STAFF

After 17 years of drilling with U.S. and British forces during regular Steppe Eagle peacekeeping exercises, Kazakhstan's Armed Forces flew solo in October 2020 by organizing the country's first comprehensive peacekeeping exercise.

More than 1,000 troops took part in drills attended by Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev. He observed troops performing missions in the field, but also toured classrooms that prepared peacekeepers in engineering, linguistics and medicine.

Though intended to prepare troops mostly for service outside Kazakhstan's borders, such training proved useful during the COVID-19 pandemic, when Soldiers helped enforce quarantines and deliver aid.

"Military officers have been on the front lines during this crucial moment. Soldiers and officers showed an example of true courage for their fellow



Kazakh peacekeeping troops conduct a drill.

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

citizens. I express gratitude to all military officers serving in the fight against the pandemic," the president said.

Kazakh forces have served in United Nations peacekeeping missions for more than a decade in places such as Nepal, Côte d'Ivoire, Western Sahara and Lebanon. Kazakhstan's government formalized that role with the passage of a peacekeeping law in 2015.

A force of 120 Kazakh peacekeepers has participated in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) since October 2018, rotating in and out of the country roughly every six months. UNIFIL patrols southern Lebanon's border.

Up to now, Kazakh peacekeeping troops have mostly staffed checkpoints and conducted patrols. But the country is expanding its range of missions by employing combat engineers, Army doctors, intelligence officers and military police.

"We have made a significant contribution to strengthening international security," President Tokayev told troops at the exercise. "Being a peacekeeper means being a peace ambassador. You have accomplished this task decently, and you have enhanced your combat skills during these exercises."

Source: *The Astana Times*



Middle Eastern Intelligence Officers Attend Online Conference

LT. COL. QUENTIN MCCART, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT DIVISION, THIRD ARMY/U.S. ARMY CENTRAL

Unable to gather in person because of the COVID-19 pandemic, intelligence officers from Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and the United States joined forces at a Virtual Land Forces Intelligence Conference in October 2020.

The three-hour online conference was hosted by Col. John Chu, head of military intelligence for Third Army/U.S. Army Central (USARCENT), and drew additional participation from Australia, Canada, France, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

The COVID outbreak forced the cancellation of the Third Army's annual Regional Land Forces Intelligence Symposium in March 2020. Rather than let a year pass without conferring with one another, more than 60 multinational intelligence officers held the virtual conference instead.

"The strength of USARCENT has always been the strength of partnerships throughout the region," Col. Chu said. "Relationships matter, and COVID-19 should not stand in the way of maintaining those relationships."

The virus dominated discussion among symposium attendees. After opening remarks by Australian Maj. Gen. Chris Field, USARCENT deputy commander for operations, participants discussed how intelligence organizations fit into their nations' COVID-19 response strategies. A highlight was a panel presentation by academics from the National Defense University, including retired U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Terry Wolff, director of the Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies.

While the fight against COVID-19 drew on the resources of land forces throughout the Middle East, regional threats

remained in place despite the global pandemic. Military intelligence professionals urged a continuation of cooperation to combat these threats of mutual concern.

Thanks to the virtual conference, USARCENT established a new relationship with the Ministry of National Guard (MNG) in Saudi Arabia.

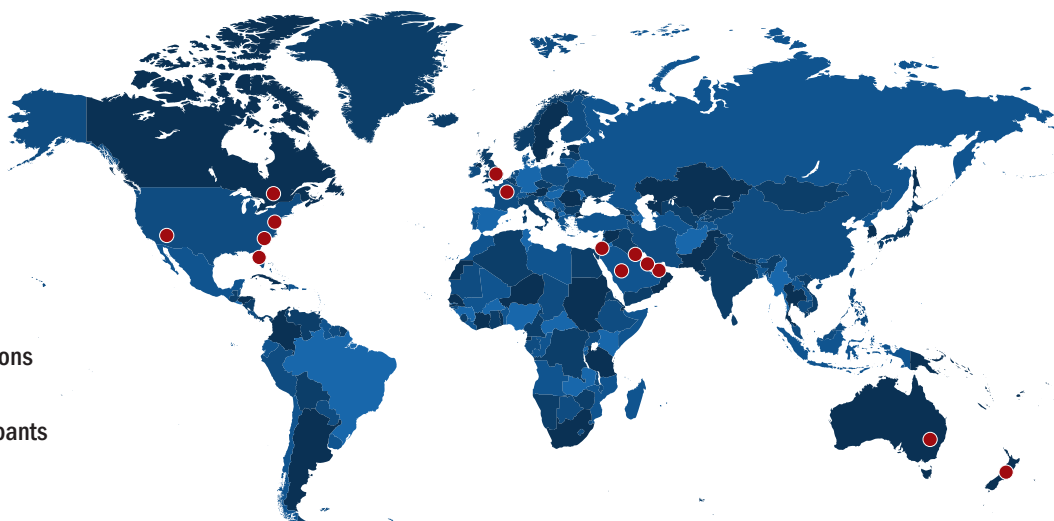
"The Intelligence Conference was a great opportunity to share information and stay connected," said Saudi Arabian Brig. Gen. Majed Al Osaimi, deputy director of intelligence for the Saudi Arabian National Guard. "We at MNG look forward to continuing this relationship and look forward to upcoming conferences."

The next Regional Land Forces Intelligence Symposium is scheduled for March 2021, but USARCENT plans to supplement that event with another virtual symposium in the fall of 2021.



CONFERENCE FACTS:

- 11** Participating Countries
- 12** Foreign Partner Organizations
- 23** Total Organizations
- 60+** Total Conference Participants
- 8** Time Zones



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