

US Military and Economic Policy towards Yemen 1991-2012

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ARTICLE INFO

Received: 18 Mar 2025

Revised: 19 May 2025

Accepted: 28 May 2025

ABSTRACT

In summary, Yemeni-American military relations during the period from 1991 to 2012 were characterized by the following

The early 1990s marked the true beginning of the emergence of the United States' military presence on the regional political scene following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, which the latter used as a pretext for the entry of its military forces into the region, despite the Republic of Yemen's opposition to US intervention in the region due to the risks it posed to Arab national security.

Yemen's political rejection of military intervention in the region during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was based on its conviction that the problem must be resolved within an Arab framework, thus eliminating any pretext for the US, which was eager to enter the region under the pretext of expelling Iraq from Kuwait. Yemen's rejection was accompanied by fears that the United States would disrupt the military balance in the region in favor of the Zionist entity. Military and security cooperation between the United States and Yemen has yielded several important benefits for Yemen, including assistance to the Yemeni army in training, equipping, and arming some Yemeni military units to combat terrorism, including the Central Security Forces and Special Forces. The United States has also contributed to building, training, and arming the Yemeni Coast Guard, with the aim of protecting Yemen's long coastline and preventing al-Qaeda members from infiltrating Yemen to attack American interests in Yemen and the region. The United States has tightened military controls on the flow of various weapons into Yemen, citing concerns that these weapons could fall into the hands of al-Qaeda members in Yemen, posing a real threat to American interests in Yemen and the rest of the Gulf states.

Keywords: Military policy, economic policy, United States of America, Al-Qaeda, Yemen.

Introduction

The United States emerged from the Cold War in the early 1990s as a major global power with tremendous military capabilities. This superiority enabled it to dominate international affairs, as well

as to seek to impose its will on the international system and all its constituent units. This was achieved by developing a comprehensive strategic plan in 1992, which aimed to preserve the unipolar world order and prevent any global competitor⁽¹⁾. It threatens its hegemony with the West and the Zionist entity over the world, especially after the Western penetration led by the United States of America and its allies into the region became clear, in a way that disrupts the map of international balances in the region, threatening Iraq's power on the Arab and regional levels, within the framework of the new international balances that began to take shape after the collapse of the Soviet Union.⁽²⁾

During the Second Gulf Crisis, the Republic of Yemen refused the entry of US forces into the region,⁽³⁾ so as not to give the latter a favorable opportunity to attack Iraq and upset the balance of power in the region in favor of the Zionist entity.⁽⁴⁾

The US Military Strategy towards Yemen:

Yemen, with its geographical location and control of the Bab al-Mandab Strait, has strategic importance, controlling international shipping routes between the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean (). This has placed it within the US military strategy for the region, with a calmer stance as a preferred option to protect US interests first and foremost, and to ensure the flow of oil (). Accordingly, the US military strategy towards the Bab al-Mandab Strait and the Red Sea during and after the Cold War was characterized by the following:⁽⁵⁾

1. Ensuring that no hostile power, particularly the former Soviet Union, would control the Bab al-Mandab Strait and the Red Sea, or any local power bordering the sea, such as Egypt, pre-unification South Yemen, or socialist Ethiopia, allied with the Marxist camp.
2. Ensuring Israel's security and continued existence, and turning a blind eye to the latter's ambitions in the Red Sea and its islands.
3. Ensuring the unhindered flow of Arab oil from the Gulf states through the Bab al-Mandab Strait and the Red Sea. The United States did not hesitate to intervene directly militarily if it perceived a threat to the flow of oil, as occurred in the Gulf crisis. The United States of America, through its embassy in the capital of the Yemeni unification state, Sana'a, monitored the political and military developments in the unified Yemen, despite the tension between the political opponents in Yemen. America showed a lack of interest in political events, and generally ignored military information about the strategic stockpile of Soviet missiles that South Yemen possessed before unification. Despite its apparent lack of interest in this aspect, as it did not know whether the missiles were old or new, the United States of America determined its position on the Yemeni crisis after obtaining accurate information about the missile stockpile in South Yemen. It preferred to be directed towards protecting its interests, which could only be protected by the unified state, and that calls for secession were not consistent with its policies towards Yemen.⁽⁶⁾ The unified one that I supported at a pivotal moment, in order to integrate and contain the socialist South Yemen after the collapse of the Soviet Union.⁽⁷⁾

America's role in building Yemeni forces:

Yemen has been following with great interest the military development achieved by the United States of America, and in this context (Yemeni Army Magazine) has highlighted the efforts of the American army and its future plans to modernize its military capabilities, in the field of developing the theater high-altitude area missile defense system (THAAD), and the short- and medium-range missile system (Patriot). The magazine also indicated that by the 1990s, the United States of America will be able to equip its defense system to intercept enemy ballistic missiles.⁽⁸⁾

Yemeni unity was a fundamental link and part of the strategic competition between the Soviet Union and the United States of America. As soon as the Cold War ended, the leadership of the two parts succeeded in unifying Yemen.⁽⁹⁾ This resulted in Yemen having long coastlines and numerous and diverse islands after unification. It also had an excellent geopolitical strategic position, which required its political leadership to change its priorities, by paying attention to the coasts from a military and

economic perspective. After implementing this strategy, the Yemeni interior would be modernized. This necessitated the state, given its long and wide coastlines on the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, the Arabian Sea, and the Indian Ocean, to move towards building naval forces with all their equipment, equipment, and military supplies, to be the main pillar of the Yemeni armed forces. Securing the Yemeni coasts is one of the urgent security issues in light of the surrounding circumstances in which unrest and conflicts are widespread, especially in the Horn of Africa, from which Yemen suffers due to the high number of refugees fleeing violence and famine. This influx of refugees has increased the economic burdens on the Yemeni government, which is suffering from scarce resources.⁽¹⁰⁾

The United States of America did not deviate from its geopolitical view of the Red Sea as a passage for oil coming from the Arabian Gulf and American companies monopolizing its production, which increased the importance of the Bab al-Mandab Strait and Yemen, as controlling it means controlling maritime navigation, as the seas and the long Yemeni coasts overlooking it played an important role in Yemen's regional relations, but they were not without the emergence of differences between it and its neighbors in the region, due to the problem of demarcating borders and determining territorial waters. The issue of the Yemeni seas is a complex issue whose effects were reflected in Yemeni foreign policy, and the seas played a role in the nature of international relations due to the emergence of some political and military problems⁽¹¹⁾. The wars that Yemen witnessed, including the secession war during which the United States of America stood with the Sana'a government in 1994 AD.⁽¹²⁾

The Second Gulf War was the cornerstone through which the United States of America increased its military presence in the Arabian Gulf, and this gave it the ability to monitor military armament programs in the region, as the American military presence increased between 1995 and 1996.⁽¹³⁾

The United States of America's interest in the security aspect in Yemen increased, as the Deputy Commander of Central Forces in the Middle East, General (Lance Lee Smith), arrived in Sana'a on September 23, 2004, and discussed aspects of joint cooperation between the Yemeni and American armies, including cooperation in the field of training the Yemeni Coast Guard, to control and protect the Yemeni coasts from the infiltration of terrorists from the sea into Yemeni territory.⁽¹⁴⁾ Especially since the Republic of Yemen possesses the characteristics of a maritime state, and this has had an impact on the political decision-maker, who has been helped in the ability to move flexibly in the face of decisions and challenges that may be taken against Yemen with the aim of besieging or encircling it on the one hand, and monitoring global shipping lines on the other hand⁽¹⁵⁾.

The Yemeni government has neglected the long coastal strip it controls in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, allowing al-Qaeda members who fled Afghanistan to enter Yemeni territory, taking advantage of the security vacuum that provided them with freedom of movement as individuals and groups between Yemen and the Horn of Africa, and allowing the organization to establish bases and camps to train its members inside Yemen and develop its military activity.⁽¹⁶⁾ This made the United States of America sound the alarm, so it worked to assist the Yemeni government with (87) naval boats equipped with all military equipment, to be used by the Yemeni naval forces (Coast Guard) patrols, to protect Yemeni territorial waters and coasts.⁽¹⁷⁾

One of the documents leaked from the WikiLeaks website shows that the US Department of Defense is building the military capabilities of the Yemeni armed forces, by training security forces and naval forces to combat terrorism, in accordance with Article No. 1206 of the US National Defense Act issued in 2006, as amended, allowing Yemen to receive military aid to build its capacity to confront terrorism.⁽¹⁸⁾

It is clear from the above that the United States' efforts to build the Yemeni Armed Forces aim to achieve the following:

1. Build the capacity of Yemeni army units to confront the military challenges facing Yemen and threatening its security, stability, and U.S. interests.

2. Support the Yemeni Air Force to carry out its mission of protecting Yemeni airspace and striking any target that poses a threat to Yemen and U.S. interests.
3. Build the capacity of security forces to maintain stability, monitor the situation, and prevent the spread of the ideology of al-Qaeda, the archenemy of U.S. interests in the region.
4. Assist in building naval forces and developing the work of the Coast Guard to tighten surveillance of Yemen's long coastline and prevent al-Qaeda from infiltrating the country.

Military Cooperation and Armament:

North Yemen had early military relations with the United States during the conflict with the southern part, which was supported by the Soviet Union. Military relations then developed after Yemeni unification, characterized by America's support for Yemeni unity and its lack of enthusiasm for UN Security Council Resolution No. (924) issued in June 1994, which was called for by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and which indicated a halt to the supply of weapons to Yemen during the secession war. At that time, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, which supported the secession of South Yemen, realized, ⁽¹⁹⁾Through this policy, the United States of America tried to create a conviction among the Arab Gulf states that the best way to confront the security challenges in the region can only be resolved through a military arrangement with the United States of America, which wants to strengthen its presence in the region as a center for armament, training, and rehabilitation ⁽²⁰⁾. Training includes material and moral strength, preparation, training and armament within the framework of the need to ensure protection that only comes from the state of maintaining a degree of military force that can achieve this. This situation is more prominent in countries that rely on a policy of neutrality in their foreign policy. This aspect includes military tools, the establishment, training and distribution of armed forces, and the use of military force or the threat of its use. It also includes providing military advice, forming alliances and armed attacks against a common enemy, or a cross-border threat that threatens the interests of all, and which the two cooperating parties must confront, in the service of the higher interests between the two countries towards their interests. ⁽²¹⁾.

Yemeni-American military relations expanded and moved in two growing directions. This was accompanied by the Yemeni leadership's openness to opening the door to close military cooperation with the American side, and was closely strengthened after the visit of the American warship (Boxer) to Yemeni territorial waters, and at the invitation of the American embassy in Sana'a, a number of Yemeni government civilian and military officials, to conduct a reconnaissance visit to the American warship, on May 14, 1997. This visit reflected the development of Yemeni-American military cooperation relations, based on strengthening Yemen's foreign relations with the major powers, increasing effective cooperation on the basis of common interests, and forming a new and effective starting point, within the framework of exchanging experiences and cooperation and benefiting from the successes achieved by the American army, and the level of technical and professional development it has reached, in addition to benefiting from the advanced combat capabilities possessed by the American forces, in a way that serves to strengthen cooperation relations in the field of security and stability in the region. The Yemeni delegation, which moved on a helicopter from Sana'a airport to the deck of the American military ship, present in Yemeni territorial waters, and during the visit, saw The Yemeni delegation received US military training on board the ship. The Yemeni delegation also received a detailed explanation of the ship's operations from the US Navy officers operating it. ⁽²²⁾.

One of the documents, a letter from the Office of Military Cooperation at the US Embassy in the capital, Sana'a, clarified the efforts of the US Department of Defense in supporting the Yemeni Air Force since 2006, and supporting it with many military pieces and equipment that would increase future support to support the sustainability of aircraft and systems obtained from the United States of America. This requires the Yemeni Air Force to identify individuals for training on new American systems and equipment, and that not sending individuals for training and qualification threatens the effectiveness and operation of the new equipment and systems, and that it is in dire need of training and qualification, considering that the United States of America's supply of rotary-wing aircraft will

provide the Yemeni Air Force with the ability to perform tomographic imaging operations that support the missions of the Yemeni Armed Forces. The Office of Cooperation also requested the Ministry of Defense to provide trainees, and since the Second Aviation Brigade in the Yemeni Air Force will be exclusively concerned with using these aircraft, the American aircraft will be part of the brigade's staff as follows:⁽²³⁾ :

Brigade Name, Aircraft Type, Number	Brigade Name, Aircraft Type, Number	Brigade Name, Aircraft Type, Number
2nd Rotary Wing Aircraft 3	2nd Rotary Wing Aircraft 3	2nd Rotary Wing Aircraft 3
- Fixed Wing Aircraft 5	- Fixed Wing Aircraft 5	- Fixed Wing Aircraft 5

The data in the table above demonstrates the following:

1. The Yemeni Air Force has acquired aircraft to assist in developing the operational missions of the Yemeni Armed Forces.
2. Supporting the Armed Forces' military operations with aircraft dedicated to reconnaissance and battlefield surveillance.
3. Providing the Air Force with specialized aircraft that will provide the Armed Forces' military operations room with advanced tomography.
4. Allocating a special brigade within the Yemeni Air Force to include modern American aircraft among its military personnel.
- 5.

Military support for Yemen:

Leaked US documents on the WikiLeaks website revealed that the United States of America has provided military support to the Yemeni government in its war against the Ansar Allah group since 2004. This support consisted of US forces training units of the Central Security Forces, affiliated with the Ministry of Interior, and the Special Forces affiliated with the Yemeni Ministry of Defense. President Ali Abdullah Saleh played the role of the United States' agent in the war against Ansar Allah, after they launched slogans hostile to the latter, its dominance in the region, and its absolute support for the Zionist entity. One of the documents shows the Yemeni president's request in 2005 for US assistance in the war against Ansar Allah in Saada, considering that the latter are hostile to America and the Zionist entity, and support Iran, by raising slogans that support its policy. He also offered the Yemeni government's readiness to stop fighting in Saada when Ansar Allah stops chanting anti-American slogans. Another document, a letter sent by the Yemeni president on March 19, 2007, to US President George W. Bush, states that the Yemeni government has no problem with Ansar Allah in Saada, except in their hostility to the United States of America, and their efforts to harm its interests, which contributes to the destruction of Yemeni-American relations, which provided military support to the Yemeni armed forces, including supplying Yemen with intelligence technology, which played a role in the success of the Yemeni forces in assassinating Ansar Allah leaders.⁽²⁴⁾ .

The US Department of Defense has worked to build the military capabilities of the Yemeni Armed Forces and the Maritime Security Forces (Yemeni Coast Guard), after the US Department of State verified that Yemen is eligible to receive this assistance authorized by the US Department of Defense, authorized by Section 1206 of the Revised National Defense Act, which supports the ability of the Yemeni National Military Forces to use a US military computerized tomography program by providing training to use intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance equipment to achieve precision targeting of targets, considering that the Yemeni Armed Forces' support for this equipment supports US national security objectives globally and within the responsibility of the US Central Command in the Middle East, and was approved by the US Department of Defense and the Department of State, taking

into account human rights and the Yemeni government's respect for basic freedoms, while ensuring that the latter does not use this program negatively, on US personnel or operations in the region. The latter undertakes to provide Yemen with all equipment accompanied by some operating definitions, and it consists of precision targeting aircraft, spare parts, and management, and training of Yemeni elements operating the system.⁽²⁵⁾ .

It is clear from the above that US military support to Yemen has been characterized by the following:

1. Assistance in supporting the Yemeni Armed Forces with intelligence technologies, giving them an advantage in confronting entities hostile to the Yemeni government.
2. Work to develop some Yemeni army units in accordance with applicable US legal legislation.
3. The US Department of Defense's commitment to continuing military and technical support, training, and rehabilitation of Yemeni forces, contributing to achieving partnership in the fight against terrorism.
4. Enhancing the capabilities of the Yemeni Armed Forces and security forces to maintain the country's security and stability and protect the waterways of the Red and Arabian Seas.

The equipment for developing the Yemeni Armed Forces included equipping them with an aerial and ground tomography system, which includes numerous military equipment, as follows:⁽²⁶⁾ :

Equipment Source	Type	Number	Equipment Source	Type	Number	Equipment Source	Type	Number
4 Aircraft	USA		4 Aircraft	USA		4 Aircraft	USA	
6 Computers			6 Computers			6 Computers		
6 Digital Printers			6 Digital Printers			6 Digital Printers		
3 Projectors			3 Projectors			3 Projectors		
6 26-inch Monitors			6 26-inch Monitors			6 26-inch Monitors		
2 52-inch Monitors			2 52-inch Monitors			2 52-inch Monitors		
-			-			-		
4 UH-1H Engines			4 UH-1H Engines			4 UH-1H Engines		
2 Blades			2 Blades			2 Blades		
2 Rotors			2 Rotors			2 Rotors		
2 Transmitters			2 Transmitters			2 Transmitters		
6 Cranes			6 Cranes			6 Cranes		
12 Radios			12 Radios			12 Radios		

The above data demonstrates the following:

1. The US Department of Defense's commitment to joint cooperation with the Yemeni Armed Forces in service of shared interests.
2. The US side's serious interest in developing the capabilities of the Yemeni Armed Forces to serve US interests in Yemen and the region, thereby benefiting the Yemeni government's efforts to maintain security and stability.
3. Facilitating joint cooperation regarding counterterrorism in Yemen and preventing Al-Qaeda from using Yemen as a base to attack US interests.
4. Upgrading the Yemeni army's equipment with modern technical military equipment that keeps pace with the technological advancements witnessed by armies worldwide .

The ISR system is a modern military reconnaissance system. The US Department of Defense has provided the Yemeni army with this equipment. It provides storage for aerial video recording in various conditions. It is a beyond-the-line-of-sight communication system and provides integrated software solutions. The system gives Yemeni forces double power in the geographical area in which it operates. It enhances mission command and control during incident response, patrols, and daily operations. This system provides ground, air, and naval forces stationed along the Yemeni coast with communication and coordination during regular operations. It also shares the information it captures, such as images and videos, with the control center. It also captures images of incidents between two locations that require a joint response between the air, ground, and naval forces to confront an attack, after informing higher authorities to make a decision about it. This system gives the command the ability to coordinate and deploy Yemeni forces quickly in the combat operations area.⁽²⁷⁾ Accordingly, an agreement was reached with the Yemeni Ministry of Defense to qualify Yemeni cadres as follows :

;(28)

Number, Task, Duration, Location	Number, Task, Duration, Location	Number, Task, Duration, Location	Number, Task, Duration, Location
6 pilots, flight training, 24 months, Spain	6 pilots, flight training, 24 months, Spain	6 pilots, flight training, 24 months, Spain	6 pilots, flight training, 24 months, Spain
2 technicians, spare parts maintenance training, 24 months	2 technicians, spare parts maintenance training, 24 months	2 technicians, spare parts maintenance training, 24 months	2 technicians, spare parts maintenance training, 24 months

From the above, the following becomes clear:

1. The role of the US Department of Defense in enhancing the technical systems of the Yemeni Armed Forces in combat missions.
2. Assisting the Armed Forces in obtaining and storing aerial imaging technology for combat missions.
3. Developing the capabilities of the Yemeni Armed Forces to quickly respond immediately from the operational field.
4. Assisting the Yemeni Armed Forces in operational coordination during combat between military units involved in operations.

American experts in Yemen:

American experts contributed to helping the Yemeni government in removing the mines in Yemen. In February 2003, Commander Jonathan Wood, Director of the American Mine Action Program, accompanied by a team of mine action experts, visited Yemen. This team visited the Executive Mine Action Center in Aden. During the visit, the American experts listened to a detailed explanation from the Yemeni side and the role of the center in mine action. The American team explained their support for Yemen in the field of mine action, in addition to the annual support provided by the United States of America to the mine action program, estimated at about \$750,000, which helped in achieving the following:⁽²⁹⁾ :

Tasks, Accomplishment, and Handover	Tasks, Accomplishment, and Handover	Tasks, Accomplishment, and Handover
Clearing 38 minefields. Completed before 2003. Areas handed over to the government.	Clearing 38 minefields. Completed before 2003. Areas handed over to the government.	Clearing 38 minefields. Completed before 2003. Areas handed over to the government.
66,143 mines and shells	66,143 mines and shells	66,143 mines and shells

destroyed—under government supervision.	destroyed—under government supervision.	destroyed—under government supervision.
Clearing 18 minefields under construction. Expected completion in 2004.	Clearing 18 minefields under construction. Expected completion in 2004.	Clearing 18 minefields under construction. Expected completion in 2004.
509 mines and shells destroyed in January 2003 under government supervision.	509 mines and shells destroyed in January 2003 under government supervision.	509 mines and shells destroyed in January 2003 under government supervision.
Organizing several courses. Graduating a number of batches. Distributing trainees for work.	Organizing several courses. Graduating a number of batches. Distributing trainees for work.	Organizing several courses. Graduating a number of batches. Distributing trainees for work.

The above demonstrates the following:

1. The United States' active contribution to mine clearance in a number of mine-producing fields.
2. Working to operate the Yemeni Mine Action Center by contributing to the funding of its efforts to carry out this work.
3. Expanding its active participation by sending technical experts to assist Yemeni experts and technicians in this regard.
4. Continuing to provide the technical assistance the Republic of Yemen needs in the field of mine and shell clearance and clearing Yemeni lands of such mines and shells .⁽³⁰⁾

Military and intelligence ties between the US military and the Yemeni armed forces have expanded to confront terrorism. Yemen has been supplied with a number of intelligence equipment, which necessitated the dispatch of American experts to train Yemenis on its use, in addition to liaison officers between the Yemeni and American sides to facilitate communication and contact between them. A leadership ministry in the Yemeni Ministry of Defense has been linked with American officers in the US Central Command, which manages the US military operations in the Middle East. American interest in Yemen comes in line with the US military strategy that has made it the second most dangerous country after Afghanistan .⁽³¹⁾

The missions of the American experts in Yemen varied between training members of the Yemeni army on American intelligence devices and equipment, to operate the intelligence programs that the United States of America provided to the Yemeni armed forces. The experts were distributed among team leadership, communications experts, reconnaissance experts, naval experts, and experts to support the programs that they transferred to Yemen, with the aim of developing the capabilities of the Yemeni army forces in confronting terrorist elements.⁽³²⁾

The above demonstrates that the work of American experts contributed to the following:

1. Establishing an operational liaison room between the Yemeni Armed Forces and the US Central Command in the Middle East.
2. Training Yemeni personnel on new US technologies supplied to the Yemeni Armed Forces.
3. Increasing the effectiveness of the Yemeni Armed Forces in combat missions required by the various battlefields they undertake.
4. Providing military advice to the Yemeni Armed Forces in various areas they require from the US side.

US military censorship of Yemen:

The United States tightened its control over weapons entering Yemen. The US Navy intercepted a strategic weapons shipment in December 2002. The shipment consisted of a group of missiles

purchased from North Korea. The missiles were detained by US forces at sea and were quickly released by US forces after Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh contacted the US leadership, stating that it was a legitimate deal concluded by the Yemeni government in previous periods, for a purely defensive purpose and that Yemen had no aggressive intention through it. The US side understood this and immediately took the initiative to release it, so as not to affect the joint cooperation relations in the field of combating terrorism between the two countries, in addition to the fact that the Republic of Yemen is one of the countries friendly to the United States of America.⁽³³⁾ .

The United States of America continued to monitor the armament of the Yemeni army, as WikiLeaks documents showed that Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh pledged to the United States of America, in early 2004, to cancel all end-user certificates for weapons, and promised to transfer the licensing authority for light weapons to the Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In line with American monitoring efforts to prevent the spread of weapons, the latter expressed, through its ambassador, its dissatisfaction with the lack of change in the Yemeni government's policy regarding the purchase of weapons from a third party. In line with this American seriousness ⁽³⁴⁾ ,The US ambassador to Sana'a reported that his country's government had requested the government of Serbia and Montenegro to cancel a deal to sell 10,000 M-caliber automatic rifles to Yemen. The Yemeni president expressed his objection to this American approach, and the ambassador responded that this was in line with political measures to prevent the flow of weapons to Yemen, especially since the Eastern European countries supplying these weapons began to lose confidence in Yemen. In the face of American pressure, the Yemeni leadership yielded and issued official directives to cancel all arms deals made by traders to the Yemeni government. Documents leaked from the WikiLeaks website revealed that the United States of America highlighted the latter's monitoring of the weapons of the Yemeni army and the weapons circulating among Yemeni citizens. The Yemeni News website published details of a document leaked by WikiLeaks, which is a message issued by the US embassy in the capital, Sana'a, on March 12, 2005, dealing with the proceedings of a meeting between Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh and the US ambassador, Thomas. The document dealt with the Yemeni president's criticism at the beginning of the meeting of the American ambassador's move to criticize an American report that included criticism of human rights in Yemen. Then, in the middle of the meeting, President Ali Abdullah Saleh changed his tone and admitted to the American ambassador that the Yemeni government had about fifty different arms deals that it had concluded with a group of arms dealers before, but it had canceled these deals. The American ambassador intervened and said: His country learned of the arms deal coming to Yemen from Serbia, amounting to (10,000 M92 automatic rifles), after it was on its way to Yemen, so it was stopped. The Yemeni president pledged in this regard not to conclude any arms deal except through the Yemeni Ministry of Defense. The Americans' excuses for preventing this deal from reaching Yemen, despite the fact that it was light weapons, were to prevent it from reaching the hands of terrorists who prefer it for its advantages and the intensity of its fire when fired. The picture appeared as if the Yemeni army did not need weapons of this type.⁽³⁵⁾ .

The US military interest in Yemen is accompanied by many fears that the failure of the Yemeni state will make it a dangerous region, and may become a new Afghanistan, from which Al-Qaeda could launch attacks on the United States, whose security concerns regarding Yemen have steadily increased.⁽³⁶⁾ .

The documents showed that President Ali Abdullah Saleh asked the American ambassador to inform the Saudi Interior Minister, Prince Nayef bin Abdul Aziz, to help in purchasing weapons present in the Yemeni markets, so that there is no danger of their spread. The Yemeni president explained that the merchants will sell weapons to whoever buys them. He also explained that if the United States of America and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are concerned about weapons, you can help the Yemeni government in cleaning the markets of them. As a result, the American ambassador explained that the interior ministers of Yemen and Saudi Arabia are scheduled to sign a security protocol on March 11 or

12, 2005, for this purpose, and that an amount of (\$200 to \$300 million) will be specified as the value of the weapons that Saudi Arabia will purchase from the local Yemeni markets.⁽³⁷⁾

It appears that American efforts are focused on achieving the following:

1. Obligating the Yemeni government to take clear policy measures regarding the purchase of small weapons, officially restricting them to the Yemeni Ministry of Defense exclusively.
2. Preventing the acquisition of small weapons through arms dealers, as this contravenes the end-use certificate for the weapon.
3. Ensuring that these small weapons do not fall into the hands of terrorist organizations active in Yemen.
4. Cooperating with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to purchase the quantities of weapons available on the Yemeni market, with the aim of drying up the sources through which al-Qaeda obtains the weapons it needs for its operations against US government interests.

US military targeting Yemen:

Since 1991, Yemen has experienced periods of varying degrees of security stability and lack thereof. This was nothing but a violent form of the ruling political elite's practice, and the United States' practice of hegemony over Yemen ⁽³⁸⁾. Through the implementation of the American military strategy, in carrying out direct intervention in Yemen under the so-called war on terror, November 2002 witnessed the first intervention of the American army in Yemen to target elements of Al-Qaeda, against which the American military action developed inside Yemeni territory ⁽³⁹⁾. In a related context, President Ali Abdullah Saleh stated that Yemen has been subjected to great American political pressure since the bombing of the USS Cole in the port of Aden, and then the September 11, 2001 attacks that shook American territory. In light of this, the Yemeni president stated that the American side was dealt with clearly, and that the side rejected any information about an American presence inside Yemeni territory, but indicated the existence of intelligence coordination, without the presence of the American army on Yemeni territory. In the midst of these pressures, Yemen made clear to the American side its displeasure with some provocative actions that Yemen does not accept, such as the entry of helicopters belonging to the US Navy into Yemeni territorial waters without permission. The Yemeni leadership also indicated in July 2003 the existence of joint coordination with the American army to strike some Al-Qaeda targets, and that Yemeni-American relations are proceeding within the framework of joint cooperation to combat terrorism ⁽⁴⁰⁾. On December 18, 2003, the United States of America expressed its great satisfaction with the joint security cooperation with Yemen. The American side expressed its gratitude to the Yemeni government, during President Ali Abdullah Saleh's reception of the US leadership envoy to Yemen, Ambassador Barbara Bodine, at the presidential palace in Sana'a, who conveyed to the Yemeni leadership the greetings of the US administration and its appreciation for the level of security cooperation between the two countries (). In this regard, Yemeni documents showed the extent of the interest of the United States of America in joint military cooperation with the Yemeni armed forces, through the US Central Command in the Middle East, with the aim of maintaining security and stability in the region since 2004 ⁽⁴¹⁾. As the US forces continued to enhance their interest in Yemen through successive visits by US military commanders in the US Central Command in the Middle East to Sana'a, to discuss aspects of joint coordination with the Yemeni military leadership in areas of military cooperation, and to push them towards new horizons in Yemeni-American military and security cooperation, especially the continuation of cooperation in the field of combating terrorism.⁽⁴²⁾

Military and security cooperation between Yemen and the United States has increased, as joint efforts have contributed to the arrest of the terrorist cell that blew up the USS Cole in Aden. A trial has begun in Yemen for those involved in the bombing, and the Yemeni government announced, within the framework of joint cooperation, its readiness on July 8, 2004, to hand over those accused of the bombing to the United States as part of cooperation in combating terrorism.⁽⁴³⁾

In a related context, leaked documents from the WikiLeaks website revealed that the US Army bombed some areas in southern Yemen with missiles in December 2009, causing a number of casualties and killing dozens of Yemenis. Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh confirmed to the US military command in 2010 that the targeting of these areas was by the Yemeni army, not the US army. The leaks revealed the contradiction, as the Yemeni Deputy Prime Minister explained, during his summons by the Yemeni Parliament in Sana'a, that the targeting of some areas of Abyan Governorate and Shabwa Governorate in southern Yemen was American-made, and that the Yemeni government was the one who used them. The Director General of the Middle East and North Africa Program at Amnesty International stated that the document clearly confirms what the organization has concluded, that the strike that targeted the governorates of southern Yemen was carried out by the US Army, and not what was said about the Yemeni government claiming that it carried it out. It was claimed that the strike targeted an Al-Qaeda camp, while the Yemeni parliamentary investigations revealed that the strike left forty-one dead. Fourteen women and twenty-one children were killed in this attack, along with fourteen members who were alleged to be from Al-Qaeda, while the American side announced that the attack only resulted in the deaths of three civilians ⁽⁴⁴⁾. This comes at a time when the United States has increased its military intervention and prevented the spread of small arms into the hands of Al-Qaeda ⁽⁴⁵⁾.

After the US intervention to strike terrorist elements in Yemen, the political regime in Sana'a tried to invest in this file, by expanding the horizons of joint cooperation between them, and exchanging visits, other than those made by Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh to the United States of America, or those made by a number of US military officers to Sana'a, which were dedicated to discussing the alliance in combating terrorism. The Yemeni side exploited this investment in order to attract American and European support, in building security and military institutions more loyal to the president ⁽⁴⁶⁾.

Amnesty International was provided with photographs in June 2010 of the aftermath of the bombing in Abyan Governorate, including remnants of US-made cluster munitions and Tomahawk cruise missiles used in the bombing. The organization had asked the US Department of Defense for information about the extent of the US military's involvement in the bombing and the precautionary measures it had taken to avoid large numbers of casualties. The US Department of Defense did not respond to the request, but a press report issued by a US Department of Defense spokesperson stated that the latter had no comment on the strike and that questions related to operations against al-Qaeda should be directed to the Yemeni government. On December 17, 2009, the Yemeni government claimed responsibility for the bombing that targeted Shabwa Governorate in southern Yemen, and that it had targeted al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula. The leaked document showed that President Ali Abdullah Saleh explained that US air strikes were better than inaccurate missiles. He expressed his concern to the US side about the large number of civilian casualties and suggested that the aircraft remain fixed-wing bombers belonging to the United States. The US is hovering in the skies near Yemen, ready to engage targets when intelligence information becomes available. The United States has used drones as part of the US military strategy to fight Al-Qaeda in Yemen, to kill suspected Al-Qaeda members. This military strategy has not been without errors, with many civilian casualties. In each incident, the Yemeni government promised to investigate these incidents carried out by drones, and that the investigation would determine whether the target was Yemeni or American forces. Despite promises to investigate, the results of the investigation into these operations have not been reported. However, Amnesty International called on the United States to investigate these serious allegations of the US military's use of these drones to kill individuals in Yemen. It also called on it to restrict its military assistance to Yemen with these deadly weapons ⁽⁴⁷⁾.

The above demonstrates the following:

1. The United States exploited the war on terror to directly intervene in Yemen with the government's approval.

2. The convergence of common political interests between the United States and the Yemeni government to strike at common adversaries.
3. The Yemeni government, led by Ali Abdullah Saleh, exploited the US intervention in the country to strike at its political opponents.
4. The Yemeni government achieved some financial returns from the United States' investment in counterterrorism in Yemen.

Arms orders from the Yemeni government:

The American side continued its interest in military cooperation with the Yemeni government, and President Ali Abdullah Saleh received the US Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs, Lincoln Bloomfield, in Sana'a on September 2, 2004. Bloomfield conveyed to the Yemeni leadership the good news of the United States lifting the ban on the supply of American equipment and weapons to Yemen. The American decision came based on its desire to continue aspects of bilateral relations, including cooperation in the military field and combating terrorism. In this context, a military delegation from the US Department of Defense will discuss in the capital, Sana'a, cooperation in the defense and security fields, and ways to develop this cooperation in all its technical, training and rehabilitation aspects, and the exchange of expertise, information and other topics related to aspects of combating terrorism ⁽⁴⁸⁾.

This comes after the Yemeni government pledged to the United States not to purchase weapons from a third party, and that weapons purchases would be through the Yemeni Ministry of Defense⁽⁴⁹⁾.

Yemen has requested a number of weapons orders from the United States of America to supply some units of the Yemeni army with them, as follows:⁽⁵⁰⁾

Type, New Order, Purpose, Date	Type, New Order, Purpose, Date	Type, New Order, Purpose, Date	Type, New Order, Purpose, Date
17 armored vehicles for training were granted to the Republican Guard in 2008	17 armored vehicles for training were granted to the Republican Guard in 2008	17 armored vehicles for training were granted to the Republican Guard in 2008	17 armored vehicles for training were granted to the Republican Guard in 2008
12 helicopters to supply three brigades to support the Republican Guard forces in 2009	12 helicopters to supply three brigades to support the Republican Guard forces in 2009	12 helicopters to supply three brigades to support the Republican Guard forces in 2009	12 helicopters to supply three brigades to support the Republican Guard forces in 2009
Training and military equipment - 2009	Training and military equipment - 2009	Training and military equipment - 2009	Training and military equipment - 2009

One of the documents shows a military order for the Yemeni army, which is to purchase a number of fixed-wing tactical aircraft, numbering (12 aircraft), for training for the Yemeni Air Force. The American company (Lockheed Martin) pledged to complete this order within (31) weeks ending in January 2012, to deliver them to the Yemeni Air Force, after the US State Department began to obtain the final licenses for the end user, Yemen. They will be delivered by the US Embassy office in Sana'a, within the framework of joint military cooperation between the Yemeni government and the US government. The following deal and equipment were linked:⁽⁵¹⁾

Option Description Condition Value	Option Description Condition Value	Option Description Condition Value	Option Description Condition Value
New/Used Base Offering \$39.8 million	New/Used Base Offering \$39.8 million	New/Used Base Offering \$39.8 million	New/Used Base Offering \$39.8 million
Option 1: 12 Unused Spares \$2.45 million	Option 1: 12 Unused Spares \$2.45 million	Option 1: 12 Unused Spares \$2.45 million	Option 1: 12 Unused Spares \$2.45 million
Option 2: 24 \$2.68 million	Option 2: 24 \$2.68 million	Option 2: 24 \$2.68 million	Option 2: 24 \$2.68 million
Option 3: 36 \$2.91 million	Option 3: 36 \$2.91 million	Option 3: 36 \$2.91 million	Option 3: 36 \$2.91 million
Option 4: Support Equipment \$1.52 million	Option 4: Support Equipment \$1.52 million	Option 4: Support Equipment \$1.52 million	Option 4: Support Equipment \$1.52 million
Option 5: 3 Pilot Training	Option 5: 3 Pilot Training	Option 5: 3 Pilot Training	Option 5: 3 Pilot Training

One of the documents sent by the military attaché of the US Embassy in Yemen to the Yemeni Ministry of Defense shows that the United States of America, in accordance with Article 1206 of the US National Defense Act, released all military equipment belonging to the Yemeni Special Forces, which was being held in Washington, and will be handed over to the Special Forces for use in combat missions related to terrorism, which is the greatest threat facing Yemen and American interests in Yemen and the region in general, especially with the growing strength of Al-Qaeda in some areas of Yemen.⁽⁵²⁾

From the above, we conclude the following:

First: The Yemeni government, led by President Ali Abdullah Saleh, is exploiting the distinguished military relations between Yemen and the United States to modernize the Yemeni Armed Forces with modern and advanced American military equipment.

Second: The United States desires to strengthen its military influence in Yemen by expanding the use of modern American weapons by the Yemeni Armed Forces in their combat missions.

Third: Developing areas of military cooperation between the Yemeni and American governments within the framework of joint strategic cooperation in combating terrorism and limiting the spread of extremist organizations in Yemen, which could threaten the vital interests of the United States in Yemen and neighboring countries.

Fourth: Utilizing the advanced technical and professional capabilities provided by the United States to develop the expertise of personnel and officers of the Yemeni Armed Forces, across its various security, land, naval, and air forces.

Yemeni-American military cooperation 2011-2012:

The political scene in Yemen became complicated in 2011, as demonstrations swept through the capital, Sana'a, demanding political change at the top of the power pyramid. The political situation became tense to the point of military clashes between units of the Yemeni army, which was divided between supporters of President Ali Abdullah Saleh and supporters of the opposition movement in the street. This increased the fears of the United States of America, regarding Al-Qaeda exploiting these conditions and working to organize itself in the country, especially with the division of the army and the deepening of politically motivated rifts that threatened the stability of the country, after the

political crisis reached a dead end between the political opponents, especially after matters became likely to enter into a civil war.⁽⁵³⁾ .

The crisis ended with a Gulf initiative led by Saudi Arabia, which led to the resignation of President Ali Abdullah Saleh at the end of 2011, and the assumption of power by his deputy, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi. The United States blessed this transition in Yemen. In March 2012, the new Yemeni president expressed Yemen's displeasure with Iranian interference in Yemeni affairs. The American side responded to Yemen by increasing the pace of military cooperation to prevent and thwart Iranian arms shipments from reaching Yemen. The pace of American-Yemeni cooperation continued, reaching its peak with the participation of American advisors in planning and attacking Al-Qaeda strongholds in some southern Yemeni governorates. About 20,000 Yemeni soldiers participated in the operation, and Saudi Arabia financed this military campaign. The campaign also received intensive air support, in which the American Air Force participated with drones. The campaign aimed to expel Al-Qaeda from the areas it controlled in southern Yemen.⁽⁵⁴⁾ .

The situation required reorganizing the Yemeni armed forces, which had been divided and had multiple loyalties as a result of the political division. Despite the measures taken in this direction by the new political leadership, they did not prevent the interference of external parties in reorganizing and restructuring the army, in cooperation with military advisors from the United States of America, whose efforts were focused on organizing the Ministry of Defense, while the European Union moved to organize the Ministry of Interior.⁽⁵⁵⁾ However, despite the great American efforts and its huge investment in training and qualifying Yemeni counter-terrorism units, the political division and the large rift between the political forces prevented the Yemeni government from investing in American support to eliminate terrorism. On the one hand, the Yemeni-American cooperation in allowing the latter to strike Al-Qaeda opened the door for Al-Qaeda sympathizers to recruit in what was known as the jihad against the Americans in Yemen, and made it an arena for jihad and the recruitment of new elements from various neighboring countries.⁽⁵⁶⁾ .

Conclusion

After completing this research, I reached the following conclusions:

1. The beginning of the 1990s marked the true beginning of the emergence of the United States' military presence on the regional political scene following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, which the latter used as a pretext for the entry of its military forces into the region, despite the Republic of Yemen's opposition to US intervention in the region due to the risks it posed to Arab national security.
2. Yemen's political rejection of military intervention in the region during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was based on its conviction that the problem must be resolved within an Arab framework, thus eliminating any pretext for the US, which was eager to enter the region under the pretext of expelling Iraq from Kuwait. Yemen's rejection was accompanied by fears that the United States would disrupt the military balance in the region in favor of the Zionist entity.
3. The war on terror was one of the most prominent pretexts America used against the Yemeni government to interfere in Yemen's internal affairs under the pretext of cooperation in the fight against terrorism. The American side became firmly convinced that Yemen ranked second only to Afghanistan in terms of terrorist presence. This led the United States to exert significant political pressure and blackmail on Yemen, until it was able to secure intelligence coordination that paved the way for direct intervention by American drones to violate Yemeni airspace under the pretext of striking Al Qaeda camps in the country.
4. Military and security cooperation between the United States and Yemen resulted in Yemen obtaining several important benefits, including American assistance to the Yemeni army in training, rehabilitation, and arming of some Yemeni military units to combat terrorism, including the Central Security Forces and Special Forces. It also contributed to the construction, training, and arming of the Yemeni Coast Guard, with the aim of protecting Yemen's long coastline and preventing Al Qaeda members from infiltrating Yemen to attack American interests in Yemen and the region.

5. The United States tightened military controls on the arrival of various weapons to Yemen, citing fears that these weapons would fall into the hands of al-Qaeda members in Yemen, posing a real threat to American interests in Yemen and the rest of the Gulf states.
6. The joint security and military cooperation between Yemen and the United States contributed to alleviating the latter's concerns regarding the arms embargo, which the United States lifted after strengthening security and military cooperation between the two sides. This prompted the Yemeni leadership to purchase some weapons, equipment, and technology from the United States, which supplied it with what it needed and supported Yemen with military experts and consultants, both to train and qualify the Yemeni army and to provide advice on counterterrorism and strengthening ties between the two armies.

Footnotes

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