

American Boots on the Ground in Yemen

100 US Rangers Land in Lahj

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Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)
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“We have seen no foundry like Yemen for our soldiers. Each time we have sent an expeditionary force there, it has melted away like salt dissolved in water.”
~ [The Ottoman accountant-general in Egypt](#)

Reports have come in this morning from [Al Masirah TV](#), of a US troop build up in southern Yemen. One hundred US Rangers have landed in Lahj close to the ISIS and AQAP controlled port of Aden. This arrival was followed by the arrival of four US planes carrying military equipment and supplies.

The US mission creep began last week when a reported 8 or 10 US Rangers combined with UAE forces to ostensibly drive AQAP out of the Al Mukalla areas of southern Yemen. The western media failed to report on this intervention as it was happening. Finally on the 24th April, the [New York Times](#) published an account.



From reports on the ground and from reading this NYT report we can conclude that, despite

claims of US involvement being to combat the AQAP threat in the region, in reality the militants offered little or no resistance and simply “handed over” the Al Mukalla base to the UAE and US forces.

One comment in the NYT article gives us a very familiar insight into the potential symbiotic partnership between the Saudi Coalition, the US and their potential proxies already on the ground in Yemen.

“But in the end, hardly a shot was fired. By nightfall, the Qaeda militants had withdrawn from Al Mukalla in an apparently tactical retreat, residents said.

The militants had faced little resistance. During the war between the Yemeni government and the Houthi rebels, a Saudi Arabia-led military coalition supporting the government with airstrikes rarely, if ever, attacked Al Qaeda.”



Photo caption: [US Troops entering Lahj](#)

AQAP has been fighting alongside illegitimate President Mansour Hadi loyalists in many regions.

“A coalition of Arab states led by Saudi Arabia is fighting alongside al-Qaeda militants against Houthi rebels in Yemen, according to a report. A BBC documentary crew has filmed jihadists and pro-government militiamen fighting rebels near the southern city of Taiz, supported by UAE soldiers.” [~IBT](#)

During the 31st session of the UNHRC [Human Rights Commission], Mohammed Al Wazir, a Yemeni-US lawyer and founder of [Arabian Rights Watch Association](#) stated that:

“Before the war, Alqaida was pushed back to a small desert city port called Mukalla. Since

the war began, Alqaeda has benefited from weapons and food drops and even air cover allowing it to spread back to Aden, Lahj and Taiz”

[CBS news](#) is even more blatant:

“Coalition armoured vehicles and the army entered Mukalla and al Qaeda fighters are departing,” one unnamed witness told Reuters.

They said the forces loyal to President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi are receiving air support from the Saudi-led and U.S.-backed coalition, which until now has mainly [targeted Shiite Houthi rebels](#). The aircraft struck targets in Mukalla, an al Qaeda stronghold and the capital of Hadramawt province, they said.

We must also bear in mind that the AQAP militants had focused on control of the strategic southern coastal regions of Yemen, extending their stronghold along the 1000 mile Yemeni coastline pivotal to the Saudi and US oil projects in the region.

It is no accident that AQAP [Al Qaeda Arab Peninsula] and ISIS have seized swathes of land in the southern province of Hadramaut and the port of Aden. They seem to share the exact same strategic agenda as Saudi Arabia and its GCC allies in Yemen, so they appear to be acting as [Saudi proxy forces](#).

According to a [2008 Wikileaks cable](#), Saudi Arabia’s intent is to lay a pipeline from the oil and gas rich areas of Al Jawf and Marib in Yemen to the southern coastline, enabling them to avoid both the Straits of Hormuz and the Yemen controlled, Bab el Mandeb straits.

“A British diplomat based in Yemen told PolOff that Saudi Arabia had an interest to build a pipeline, wholly owned, operated and protected by Saudi Arabia, through Hadramawt to a port on the Gulf of Aden, thereby bypassing the Arabian Gulf/Persian Gulf and the straits of Hormuz.” ~ Wikileaks

This would liberate Saudi Arabia from the clutches of Iranian logistical control and challenge Iran’s regional hegemony head on. With Japan, India, China and S Korea representing the expanding crude oil markets, the geopolitical and economic significance of Yemen to the Gulf States becomes transparent.” ~ [21st Century Wire](#)

Are we seeing the all too familiar and lawless interventionism from the US to support its genocidal Saudi coalition allies and more importantly its geopolitical interests in the region. They have illegally entered a sovereign nation without a UN Mandate, and in alliance with an illegitimate government and a President who had resigned his position twice prior to fleeing to Riyadh to demand that Saudi Arabia re-instate him by force.

UN in Lock-Step with US Neocolonialism

Until now the UN has been supporting the Saudi coalition war of aggression against the Yemeni people by adopting and enforcing UN Resolution 2216 that is an embargo on five named individuals but has been exploited by the Saudi coalition to impose a crippling land, sea and air blockade on 27 million Yemenis with devastating results.

The illegitimacy of this resolution that is based entirely upon the disputed legitimacy of President Hadi is discussed in the article mentioned [above](#).

Suddenly on the 3rd of May, one day before the increased numbers of US Rangers arrived in Lahj, the UN announced the implementation of a UN mechanism to facilitate the “unimpeded flow of commercial goods and services to Yemen”

“Mr. Ban notes that UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) based in Djibouti should provide fast and impartial clearance services for shipping companies transporting commercial imports and bilateral assistance to Yemeni ports outside of the authority of the Yemeni Government, Spokesman Stéphane Dujarric [said](#).”

So while the Ansarullah alliance have been resisting Saudi aggression and making military advances across the southern border with Saudi Arabia, the UN has been complicit in the genocidal starvation of the Yemeni people as collective punishment for Yemen’s daring to object to the Saudi coalition hegemony.

Now, the tide has turned, and obligingly the UN has re-opened the channels of supply to ensure the US allied troops don't starve, having intentionally starved the people of Yemen prior to the arrival of the US troops. The weakening of the prey before the vulture descends.



Peace talks had reached an impasse because Saudi Arabia has created a spurious pretext to hold [Ansarullah responsible](#) for violating the ceasefire by taking an area of Yemen that was actually already in Houthi control. The area between Sanaa and Sadaa had been a “protected zone” for the Saudi coalition where they had allowed the build up of AQAP forces with little interference, effectively attempting to blockade the route between the capital Sanaa and the northern Ansaruallh stronghold.

The real violation of the ceasefire comes from the Saudi coalition that has continued its bombing campaign unimpeded by the UN, US, NATO or even the western media.

The US is seeing its agenda being thwarted in Yemen and it is reacting in the only way it understands, with illegal force and disregard for the will of the people of a sovereign nation.

What all of them are underestimating is the determination, courage and unity of the Yemeni people. Yemen is, after all, “the graveyard of invaders”

Author [Vanessa Beeley](#) is a contributor to 21st Century Wire and since 2011, she has spent most of her time in the Middle East reporting on events there - as a independent researcher, writer, photographer and peace activist. She has recently represented Yemen at the UNHRC, testifying against the Saudi coalition use of US manufactured & supplied Cluster Munitions against civilian targets in Yemen. She is also a member of the Steering Committee of the Syria Solidarity Movement, and a volunteer with the Global Campaign to Return to Palestine. See more of her work at her blog [The Wall Will Fall](#).

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