

"LITTLE SPARTA": THE U.S./UAE MILITARY ALLIANCE AND THE WAR IN YEMEN

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The U.S. relationship with the United Arab Emirates has received relatively little attention, despite the fact that it involves billions of dollars in weapons and training that have been used to prosecute a brutal war in Yemen. The U.S.-backed Saudi/UAE -led coalition in Yemen has taken actions that have contributed to the deaths of over 60,000 people and sparked the world's worst humanitarian crisis. It is long past time to subject the UAE's military actions in Yemen – and the U.S. role in enabling them – to closer scrutiny.

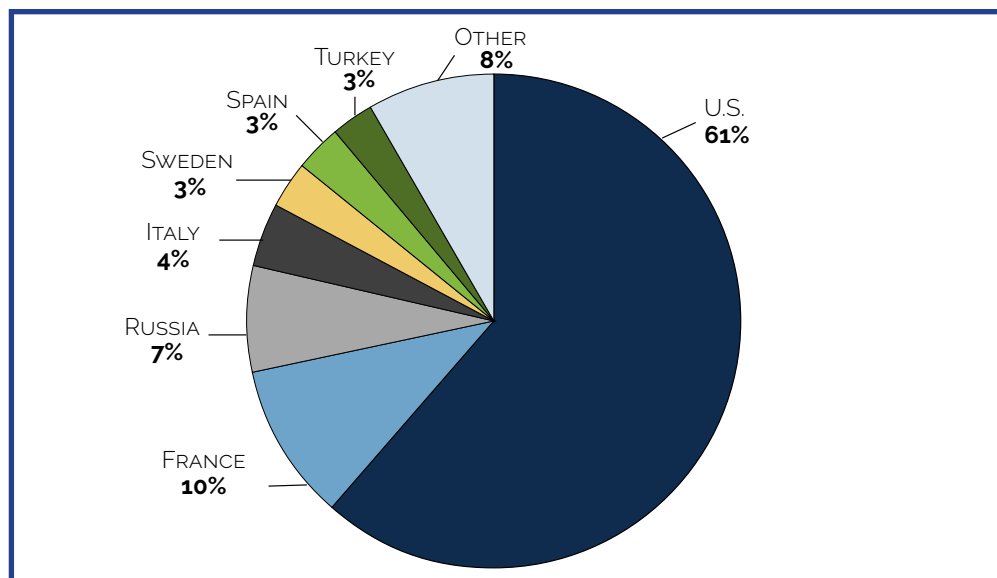
Major findings:

- The United States has made offers of over \$27 billion worth of weaponry to the UAE under the Pentagon's Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program since 2009, in 32 separate deals.
- More than one-quarter of the offers made since 2009 – \$7.2 billion worth – have been for bombs such as the Paveway and Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) and tactical missiles such as the Hellfire that have been used both in the war on ISIS and in the Yemen conflict.
- The United States is the largest arms supplier to the UAE, accounting for over 60% of weapons delivered there since 2009, followed by France (10%) and Russia (6.8%).
- U.S. military training has been provided to over 5,000 UAE troops since 2009, including personnel from the UAE Navy, Army, Air Force and Special Forces. And according to internal Air Force documents acquired by investigative journalist Nick Turse, the United States is training UAE pilots "for combat operations in Yemen."
- The UAE – which has deployed thousands of its own troops to Yemen – has also trained and financed a series of private militias and foreign mercenaries operating in Yemen, including child soldiers and members of the infamous Janjaweed militias from Sudan.
- The UAE has been the driving force behind an on-again, off-again series of assaults on the area in and around the port of Hodeidah, which is the main point of entry for food, medicine, and humanitarian aid coming into Yemen. Attacks on Hodeidah have been halted for the moment as a result of a United Nations-brokered ceasefire. Humanitarian aid groups have warned that a resumption of fighting there could put hundreds of thousands of lives at risk even as it tips the whole country into famine.

- An investigative report by CNN has found that Saudi Arabia and the UAE “have transferred American-made weapons to al Qaeda-linked fighters, hardline Salafi militias, and other factions waging war in Yemen, in violation of their agreements with the United States.” And a new [report](#) from Amnesty International notes that “Emirati forces receive billions of dollars’ worth of arms from Western states and others, only to siphon them off to militias in Yemen that answer to no-one and are known to be committing war crimes.”
- According to press accounts and reports by independent human rights organizations the UAE and its allies have engaged in extreme acts of torture in a network of secret prisons in southern Yemen since at least 2017. A recent [report](#) by the Daily Beast cites claims by former detainees in UAE-run prisons in Yemen that U.S. personnel may have been present while they were being tortured by their UAE captors.

The United States should withhold further arms, training and military support until the UAE confirms it will sustain the ceasefire, negotiate in good faith for a peaceful settlement of the war, and account for the abuses committed by its own forces and those that it has armed, financed, and trained.

SHARE OF ARMS DELIVERIES TO THE UAE, BY COUNTRY, 2009-2017



SOURCE: CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL POLICY, CALCULATED USING DATA FROM THE STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE



A copy of the full report can be accessed on the Center for International Policy's web site at internationalpolicy.org