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Soft Security in the Gulf

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After the September 11, 2001 terror attacks, hard security issues such as terrorism came to the fore, while soft security issues like organized crime, drug and human trafficking got sidelined. However, just as terrorists have begun to operate globally using sophisticated means, so have organized crime groups. Both use similar means and methods to pursue different objectives. GRC sheds light on the potential areas of cooperation between organized crime groups and terrorist groups, such as collaboration in human trafficking and arms smuggling, money laundering or the trade of WMD material. Finally, we explain the impact of the linkages between organized crime groups and terrorists on the global war against terrorism.

Another topic in this edition focuses on border security issues between Yemen and Saudi Arabia. The Saudi-Yemeni border agreement of June 2000 was considered by many to be a milestone in Saudi-Yemen relations. The security agreements between the two countries that followed, promised to provide effective tools to increase border security, and counter weapons smuggling and illegal immigration which directly related to the counter terrorism task. However, the course of Saudi-Yemeni cooperation has not been very smooth. The article on Saudi-Yemen border security analyzes the underlying reasons hindering effective security collaboration between the two countries.

Drug trafficking constitutes a major security challenge for governments throughout the Arab World. The Gulf states, in particular, are concerned about drug trafficking and drug abuse issues. Due to their strategic geographical location, several states end up as transit zones for Afghan narcotics destined for African and European markets. Until now, many Gulf states lacked effective and efficient policies to combat drug trafficking and deal with the consequences of drug abuse. For that reason, GRC decided to launch a research program dealing with issues of drug and human trafficking in the Gulf region. The program includes an in depth study identifying the trafficking routes of Afghan narcotics which pass through Pakistan and Iran towards the Gulf States. The study also seeks to analyze the effects of drug trafficking and drug abuse on the Gulf societies and outlines recommendations for more effective policies that the governments can take to combat the problem.

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In This Issue

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Organized Criminal Groups and Terrorist Groups
The New Phenomenon of "Narcopolterrorism"

Dr. Mustafa Alani

Two invisible, yet formidable, wars are in progress in the world today. They are classified as low intensity wars and characterized by an unconventional, protracted confrontation through a combination of methods, including military, intelligence, and political methods. First, there is the old yet continuing war, that is 'the war on drugs' which was officially declared in 1971 by then US President Richard Nixon and has expanded to become part of the international community's war against the activities of organized crime. Secondly, there is the recently declared war, 'the global war on terrorism' which was officially launched by the US after the September 11, 2001 attacks. Both these wars have not achieved decisive victory as yet and, for the foreseeable future, it seems unlikely they will.

Organized criminal groups dealing with narcotics as well as terrorist groups are non-state actors. They are leading a war against states, or the international community, and they operate on a transnational level. Therefore, a state acting on its own is not able to play a decisive role in the progress of these wars. This article tries to shed some light on the possible collaboration between organized criminal groups dealing with drugs, and terrorists, and thereby seeks to explore the linkages between the two global wars – the war on terrorism and the war on drugs.

"Organized criminal groups dealing with narcotics as well as terrorist groups are non-state actors. They are leading a war against states, or the international community, and they operate on a transnational level."

In February 2004, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the main international organization in charge of counter narcotics, stated that "fighting drug trafficking equals fighting terrorism." This statement was not an attempt to establish a direct link between the two invisible wars; rather the director was expressing concern that the recently declared war against terrorism has taken precedence over, and could be taking away much needed resources from, the war against drugs. The director emphasized that equal effort should be directed towards the war against drugs. However, the Afghan political leadership saw a means to serve their self interest by supporting the view that a link exists between the drug trade and terrorism activities. Afghan President Hamed Karzai, for example, asserted in September 2004, that there is a direct relationship between security and drugs. He blamed three factors for insecurity in Afghanistan: terrorism, foreign support for terrorism, and opium cultivation, which, he said, also promotes terrorist activities. President Karzai has cautioned the international community categorically by asserting, "either we kill poppies, or poppies will kill us."

Thus the question of priority comes to the fore: Should the war on terror take precedence over the war on drugs or vice versa? The Afghan government attempted to implement a poppy eradication program with the support of the international community. But, the program was not supported by Afghan farmers. On the contrary, the government's 'war on narcotics' led to noticeable dissatisfaction among Afghan farmers resulting in increasing support for the Taliban and al-Qaeda insurgents. Indeed, the government's eradication program seemed to have a negative impact on the war against terrorism. It demonstrated that the war on narcotics serves the interests of terrorists and affirmed the argument that there is a direct linkage between the war on drugs and the war on terrorism.

The term 'narcoterrorism' was coined during the last two decades, especially to describe the violent activities of the Latin American drug cartels which aimed at influencing governments' policies as well as societal attitudes. Narcoterrorism refers to the violent and intimidation techniques employed by drug barons and mafias in support of their narcotics production, trafficking, and distribution activities. However, narcoterrorism has nothing to do with politically or ideologically motivated terrorist activities. Violent activities are an integral part of the narcotics business, and associated violence is as old as the narcotics trade itself. However, during the last few years, and more precisely since the 9/11 attacks, a new phenomenon has drawn the attention of counter-terrorism and law enforcement authorities, that is the presumed institutionalized cooperation or alliance

between “narcotics terrorism” and “political terrorism” or “ideological terrorism”. So far there is no single term to describe this new phenomenon. However, in this article, we will refer to this phenomenon as ‘Narcopolterrorism.’

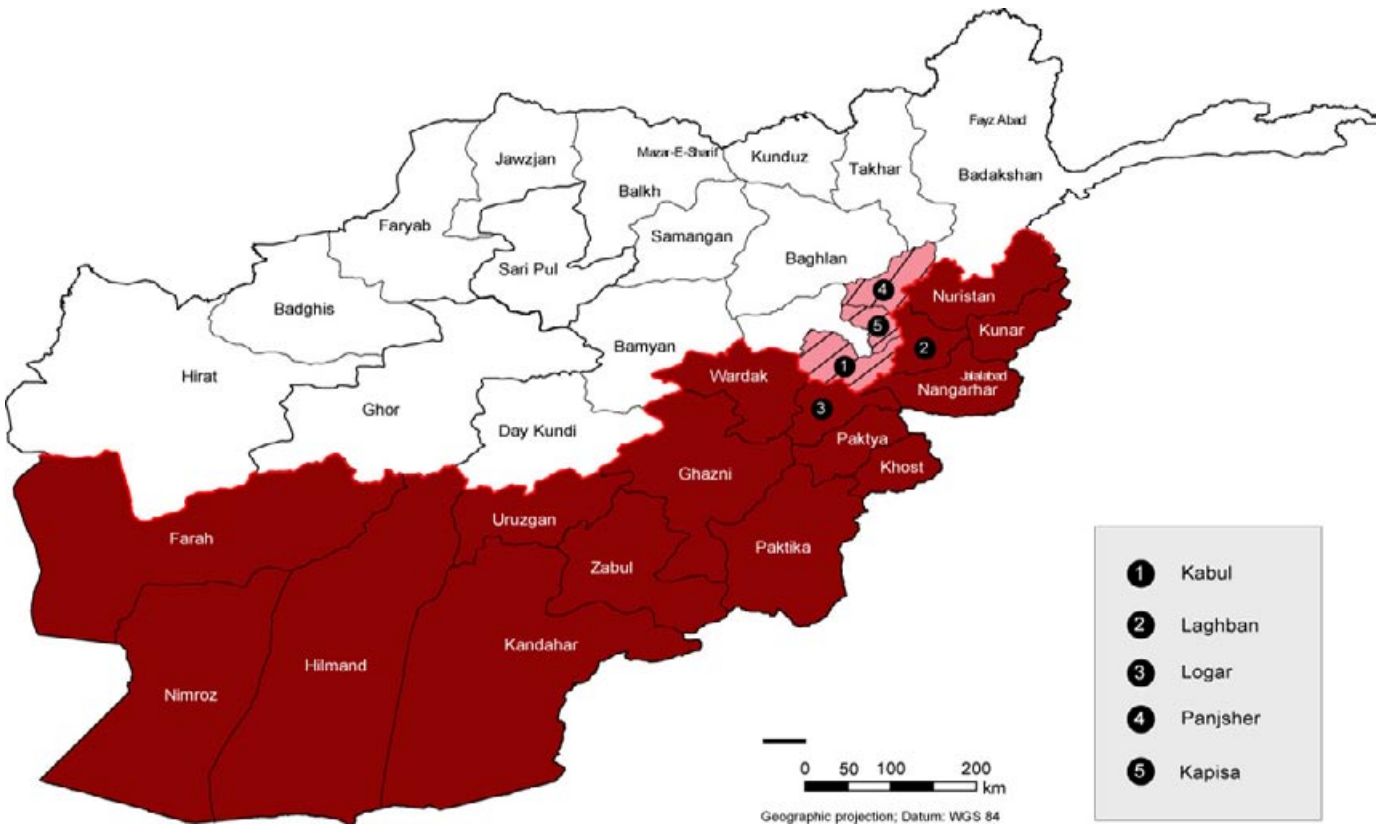
In many reports and publications on terrorist groups, particularly in the political and academic literature published in the aftermath of 9/11, there are references to the “multiple links” that exist between resistance/terrorist groups and organized crime syndicates. They focus in particular on the drug lords and the assumed links between them and warlords. In fact, it is only in Latin America that evidence could be found proving the presence of strong relations between the narcotics producers/traffickers and some terrorist or militia groups, such as the Marxist FARC, AUC and ELN in Colombia and the Shining Path in Peru.

In the Middle East, hardly any writer or journalist has offered credible evidence or solid facts to prove the links between terrorists and drug lords.

Nevertheless, since 9/11, some writers on terrorism, as well as official reports produced by western government agencies or by semi-official institutions, have advanced arguments implying links between the illicit drugs trade and Islamist resistance/terrorist groups. To give one example, the Taliban movement in Afghanistan as well as its ally, the al-Qaeda, has been linked with the narcotics trade and production. While it is difficult to prove, it is a fact that the areas in which the Taliban has a strong presence, mainly in the provinces of Helmand, Kandahar as well as the Pashtun heartland in the south and the south-west/east region of the country, are also the areas which are infamous for the cultivation of opium.

Some reports have even tried to link Hezbollah of Lebanon to hashish production and trafficking. Their claims about the organization’s involvement in the drug trade are based on the fact that Hezbollah militias enjoy strong influence in and control over the main hashish production areas in southern

Taliban’s Area of Operation (October 2006)



Lebanon and the Bekaá valley near the Lebanon-Syrian border. However, apart from this geographical linkage, there is no accurate information or credible evidence to prove the truth of such claims.

Shared tactical objectives, diverging strategic goals

> *A solid common ground and shared interests have existed between the two groups at the tactical, short term and operational levels.*

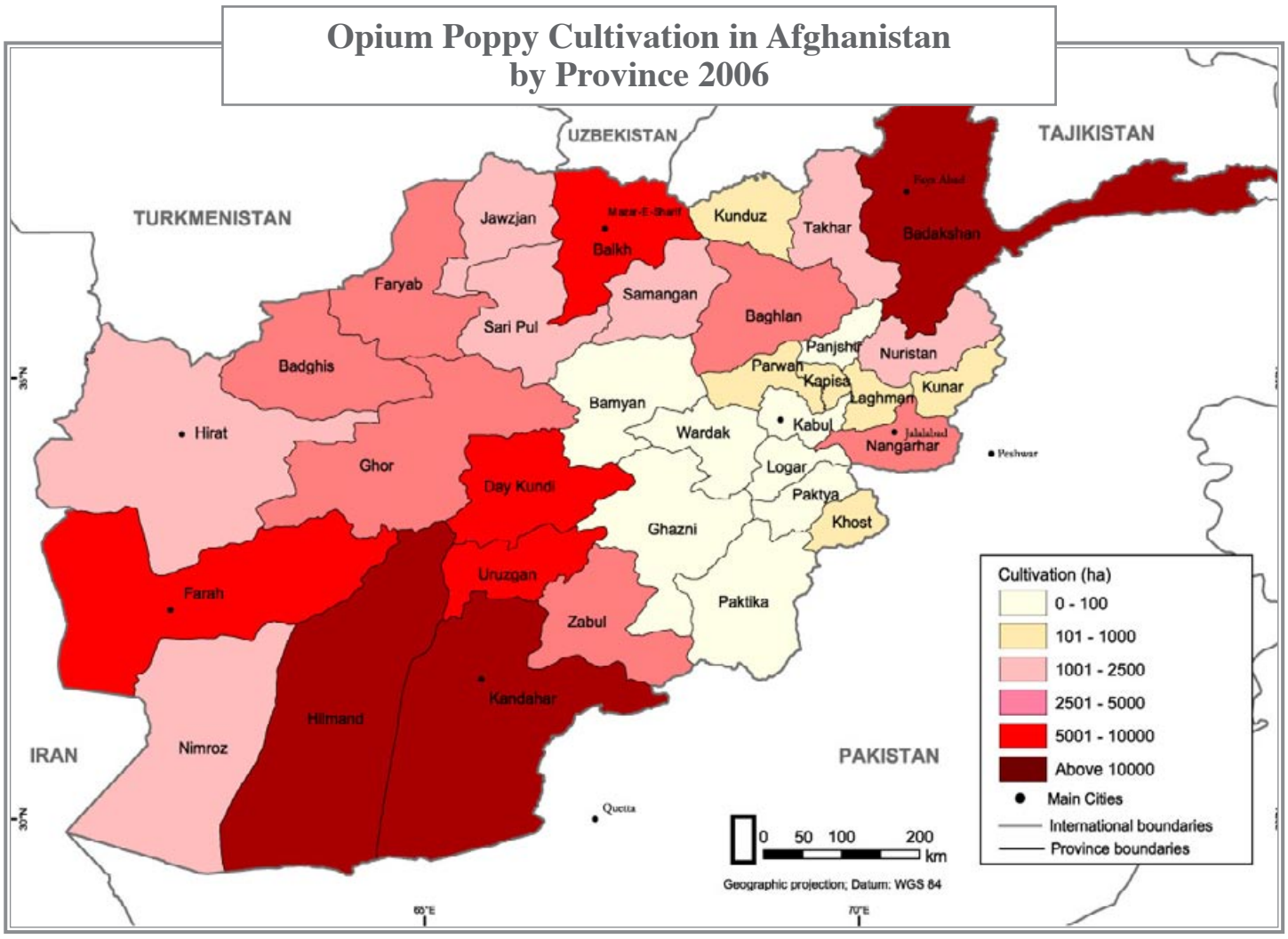
Although the final objectives of organized criminal groups on the one hand, and terrorist groups on the other hand, differ, nonetheless a solid common ground and shared interests have existed between the two groups at the tactical, short term and operational levels.

First, interests converge when both groups are operating against the established authorities (or states) and the international community or the existing world order.

Secondly, both groups have an interest in undermining the power and the control of the legitimate authority, weakening state institutions and law enforcement, and operating across state borders, threatening international security.

Thirdly, both groups have an interest in generating funds; while the objective of the criminal groups is to make financial gains, the terrorist groups need funds to finance their operations and achieve their political and strategic objectives.

Fourthly, the nature of their transnational activities makes the two groups work closely and encourages the exchange of services and experience. Thus the cooperation between the two groups is, under certain circumstances, regarded as mutual necessity.



Source: MCN - UNODC Afghanistan Opium Survey 2006
Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

As a general rule, drug production and narcotics trafficking has increased in the areas which are under the control of terrorist groups and vice versa. A terrorist group's involvement in the narcotics trade could be motivated by the following factors:

1) Monetary aim: Terrorist groups, directly or indirectly, get involved in drug production and marketing for financial gains which constitute a major source to fund their activities and support the group's survival.

2) Political aim: Terrorist groups could, politically and strategically, justify dealing in drugs as a means to undermine the integrity of the 'enemy society' of the 'targeted state(s).' This political objective could be achieved by providing protection and support, directly or indirectly, to drug cultivation, processing, smuggling, and marketing the illicit drugs in the 'enemy society' at cheap, affordable prices, through a wide distribution network with the ultimate aim of encouraging the drug habit among the youth of the targeted state(s). This would amount to a deliberate attack targeting the integrity and basic values of the 'enemy' society, and undermining the state's authority and law enforcement.

3) Logistical and technical cooperation: Terrorist groups can utilize the illegal activities of the drug traffickers, and their experience in operating against the law, to facilitate their activities and serve their objectives. By

> *"Terrorist groups can utilize the illegal activities of the drug traffickers, and their experience in operating against the law."*

their very nature, organized criminal groups and terrorist groups are both illegal and pursuing clandestine activities. Consequently, both are targets of law enforcement forces. As a result, the groups learn techniques to counter these forces. Terrorist groups, as well as armed groups, offer protection and a safe haven for drug groups.

The interdependence between the two groups could potentially encourage the establishment of closer ties based on practical and mutual benefits. Cooperation between the two groups could come as a result of the lack of government authority in isolated enclaves and regions (mostly near international borders or in difficult and inaccessible terrain). In certain instances, terrorist groups or drug gangs decide to turn a blind eye to each other's activities, allowing both sides to operate freely and in a secure environment. In some cases, organized drug gangs were already established in specific geographic regions when terrorist groups came, took advantage of the situation, and decided to establish themselves in that

> *"The potential alliance between organized criminal groups and terrorist groups is based on mutual need and benefits. Terrorist groups could outsource or subcontract activities and logistics needs to the organized crime groups."*

area where the government had already lost its authority and control. In other cases, terrorist groups were already in control of a specific geographic area when drug barons took advantage and established their illegal criminal activities, taking advantage of the existing safe havens, established networks and existing infrastructure.

Areas of possible cooperation

The potential alliance between organized criminal groups and terrorist groups is based on mutual need and benefits. Organized crime groups could provide the underlying conditions that terrorists seek to exploit by offering expertise and valuable services at a highly proficient level to facilitate the activities of terrorist groups. Terrorist groups could outsource or subcontract activities and logistics needs to the organized crime groups; by doing so, terrorist groups can enjoy several advantages. They could distance themselves and avoid detection by law enforcement authorities; or, they could have the means of ensuring a better rate of success of a particular operation by obtaining logistical support from the organized crime groups that are adept at running such operations professionally. This sort of 'farming out' policy would allow terrorist groups to concentrate their efforts on military and political activities such as recruitment, training and political propaganda. The potential areas of cooperation could be summarized as follows:

1) Trafficking in arms, ammunitions, explosives and trade in WMD material and exchange of know-how. This could be done by bartering drugs with weapons or other required material.

2) Human smuggling and trafficking activities which could be utilized by terrorist groups to infiltrate international borders and smuggle terrorist elements in while avoiding border control.
3) Contract assassinations, kidnapping and victim transfers.
4) Money laundering and illegal funds transfer.
5) Terrorist groups could utilize organized crime-related corruption to provide linkage with corrupt officials and law enforcement.
6) Sub-contracting documents for forgery and counterfeit.
7) Sub-contracting information and intelligence gathering.

To conclude, the links between the war on drugs and the war on terror are evident in certain cases but not clear or proven in other cases. The involvement of Islamist resistance/terrorist groups, in particular, in the narcotics trade remains unclear. This article attempted to explore the possible links between organized crime groups and terrorist groups, based on the argument that cooperation between the two could be instituted on the basis of mutual needs and benefits. The article illustrated the argument by listing the areas of possible or potential cooperation between the two groups.

We, hypothetically at least, assume the reality of such cooperation and the development of tactical or ad hoc alliances between drug organizations and terrorists, based on the plausible assumption that both groups are united in fighting common enemies

> *"Both groups are united in fighting common enemies though sharply divided on strategic and final objectives."*

though sharply divided on strategic and final objectives. Law enforcement and intelligence authorities still lack authentic evidence to support the argument that links exist between organized criminal groups and terrorists. The main premise of such an argument rests on facts that focus on the similarities between the two groups, the hostile environment in which they operate as well as on the nature of their transnational activities.

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Counter Terrorism and Weapon Smuggling:
Success and Failure of Yemeni-Saudi collaboration

Nicole Stracke

Border security is among the major security challenges facing any state. This challenge centers around the question of how any state can secure its borders with neighboring states from illegal activities in the border area and illegal movements of human beings and goods across the border line. Various factors contribute to the complexity of border security problems: many borders are either "disputed" or "unsettled" in terms of demarcation or delineation; other problems are related to the geographical nature of the border land, or to the political difficulties existing between two neighboring states. The Saudi-Yemen border issue suffers from all these complexities, and more.

The signing of the border agreement between Yemen and Saudi Arabia, in Jeddah, in June 2000, was considered by many to be a milestone in Saudi-Yemen relations,

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raising expectations on both sides about finally settling territorial disputes and improving security cooperation. The September 11 terror attacks in the US, and the attack on a housing complex in Riyadh in May 2003 which was followed by other serious bombings, besides the attack on USS Cole and the French oil tanker in Yemen, put the security cooperation between US, Saudi Arabia and Yemen into stronger focus, and pushed the three states to collaborate on hard and soft security issues, mainly terrorism and border security.

In the years following the 9/11 attacks, Yemen received international assistance to fight terrorism. According to the US State Department, US security assistance to Yemen amounted to $11,749 million in 2005 and $10,204 million in 2006. The US Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) trained Yemeni soldiers and equipped the Yemeni counter terrorism unit. Yemen and Saudi Arabia began to cooperate closely. In June 2003, the Saudi and Yemeni governments underlined their cooperation by signing a security agreement to organize border authorities between the two neighboring countries.

Yet, the security forces in both countries have not been successful in preventing smugglers and militants from crossing the border. Frequent clashes between tribes and security forces have culminated repeatedly in a deterioration of the relationship between the Saudi Arabian and Yemeni governments. The escape of the 23 al Qaeda prisoners from a top security prison in Sana'a in February 2006 – two of them were later involved in the September 2006 terror attacks on oil facilities in Marib and Hadramaut – casts doubt on the effectiveness of counter terrorism efforts of the Yemeni government. Against this backdrop, the article will detail the problems challenging Saudi-Yemeni cooperation.

Special characteristics of the Saudi-Yemen border

The problem of border security between Saudi Arabia and Yemen can be attributed to a wide variety of factors which contribute to the complexity of the issue, and hinder the two states from establishing an effective control over their common border.

1) Geographical Factors

Northern Yemen's rough mountain landscape, the length of the two states' land borders (1,458km), and the lack of sufficient infrastructure in the border lands makes it difficult for security forces to monitor the border, and easy for smugglers and militants to cross the border unnoticed.

The financial costs of monitoring such difficult terrain are high, and with its limited financial resources, Yemen's government only invests a modest amount of money in border security. On the other hand, the Saudi Arabian government has been trying to secure its southern borders through considerable financial commitments. In February 2004, Saudi authorities decided to build a fence – consisting of metal pipe and concrete pillars, and supported with technological equipments along its border with Yemen. However, the project was cancelled after strong protests from tribal leaders in the border area as well as members of

the Yemeni government. Meanwhile, the Saudi authorities employed other technological means to impose some control over illegal movement of people and goods across its border, using special aero planes for monitoring the key illegal crossing points, infrared cameras, detection sensors, and a large number of fixed and mobile patrol units from the Border Guards forces.

2) Demographic Factors and Social Institutions

Yemen's border region with Saudi Arabia has special demographic characteristics; first, it is densely populated on both sides of the border, which encourages regular human movement across the common border. Besides, tribal influences run deep in Yemen's border's provinces and this significantly reduces the central government's authority over the inhabitants and their economic and social activities. The tribal nature of this region is reflected in the large amounts of weapons and explosives that are circulated within these provinces for personal and commercial purposes. The lack of Yemeni government authority in the border areas, and in the tribal areas in particular, such as in the governorates of

> *"Tribal influences run deep in Yemen's border's provinces and this significantly reduces the central government's authority over the inhabitants and their economic and social activities."*

Sa'ada, Marib, Jawf and Abyan, facilitate weapon smuggler networks and undermine security measures. To be in possession of weapons is an essential part of social traditions in Yemen. The Yemeni man considers the possession of personal weapons as part of his traditional costume, and a vital part of his character as a tribesman. Weapons are widely available and regularly sold throughout the country. There are five major regional markets in the country, mainly in Jehannah, Sa'ada, Al Baydah, Al Jawf, and Abyan, and the number of weapons in these markets is estimated to be about 30,000. Many kinds of weapons are available, and they are generally easy to purchase – it is just a matter of time, networking and price. The prices are remarkably low in comparison to western standards, and even regional standards, ranging from $300-350 for a Russian AK-47, to as little as $3 for a hand grenade, and a mere $500 for a Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG-7's). Until today, Yemen remains one of the most heavily armed societies in the world, with, on average, around 40 guns per 100 people.

3) Political Factors

Political relations between Yemen and Saudi Arabia are characterised by a long history of tension and confrontation. Indeed, both governments perceive each other with mistrust. This negative political environment has significantly contributed to the intensification of the border control problem. The difficult political relations between the two states had discouraged successive governments in Yemen from taking seriously the threats perceived by Saudi Arabia, and prevented them from dealing decisively with the issue of arms and human smuggling across the border.

With the signature of the Jeddah border agreement in 2000 between Saudi Arabia and Yemen, both states finally reached a settlement of their long disputed border issue. The agreement had a tangible impact on the two states' cooperation in the field of border security, and contributed to the improvement of Saudi-Yemeni political relations.

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4) Economic Factors

The enormous disparity between the economies of Yemen and Saudi Arabia, and the considerable gap in the standard of living in the two countries, are among the major factors contributing to the complexity of the Saudi -Yemen's border security problem. The shortage of employment opportunities in Yemen, and the availability of employment alternatives in the Saudi labour market, is causing illegal movement and illegal emigration of the Yemeni work force to Saudi Arabia. Hence, the authorities in the two countries face many obstacles in preventing weapons smuggling and illegal human movement across the border. Besides the impermeable geographical landscape of the border hinterland and its tribal population, it is Yemen's low performing economy and complex socio-political landscape that makes it easy for smugglers and terrorists to operate.

Terrorism, Arms and Human trafficking

Arms and weapons smuggling from Yemen is one of the main points of conflict between the Saudi Arabian and Yemeni border security forces. Even though both governments have increased security cooperation on the border, the majority

of illegal arms, weapons and explosives smuggled to Saudi Arabia still come from Yemen. Saudi officials believe that most of the weapons and explosives used in terror operations in their country are smuggled in from Yemen. That proved to be correct as the Saudi investigation of the terror attack on US military facilities in the Kingdom in

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November 1995 proved that the terrorist group had obtained the explosives, used in the attack in Auliya district of Riyadh, from Yemen. In a more recent case, the Saudi security forces, while tracing the origin of two AK 47 weapons, found that they had apparently has been stolen from state stocks in Yemen, and were then smuggled to Saudi Arabia and used in a terror attack on the US consulate in Jeddah, in December 2004.

The state's control over small arms possession and use is limited in most of the rural areas which are governed by tribal authorities. Tribes in Yemen place much importance on political autonomy. They have their own tribal laws running parallel to state laws, and some tribes possess their own private armies. Besides, arms trade and weapons smuggling constitute an important income source for Yemenis, especially in rural areas. Hence, tribal weapons amount to 5,577,597 and the Yemeni tribes are well equipped to fight the government's security forces which are believed to be equipped with 1,500,000 weapons. (Small Weapons Survey, 2005). The Yemeni government itself has provided tribes with weapons. During the civil war in the 1990s, the government equipped the tribes with weapons, mainly of Russian origin, to fight against the secessionist south. After the war, these weapons remained in the possession of the tribes. Additionally, some members of the Yemeni government provided tribal leaders with financial aid and weapons to ensure their support which is necessary to maintaining government stability which, in turn, is based on a political alliance among different tribes, army, and members of the political parties.

Nevertheless, there have been several initiatives in the past from the government to close down arms markets in Al-Talh in Sana'a province, 242 km north of the capital, and

Arms and Explosives seized by Saudi authorities on the borders with Yemen between 22 February 2004 and 9 February 2005.

KSA border Provinces	Total	Jayzan	A'sir	Najran
Arms	599 Kalashnikovs	536 Kalashnikovs	7 Kalashnikovs	55 Kalashnikovs
	39 various rifles	20 various rifles	4 various rifles	–
	8 machine guns	2 machine guns	1 machine guns	1 machine guns
	41 hunting rifles	18 hunting rifles	2 hunting rifles	–
	170 pistols	27 pistols	25 pistols	5 pistols
	1 mortar	1 mortar	–	–
	30 mortar capsule	30 mortar capsule	–	–
	104 small guns	83 small guns	21 small guns	–
Explosives	2 mines	2 mines	–	–
	27970 explosives components	17165 explosives components	10790 explosives components	15 explosives components
	14kg explosive materials	–	9kg explosive materials	5kg explosive materials
	28045 dynamite sticks	17130 dynamite sticks	10900 dynamite sticks	15 dynamite sticks
	149 bombs	100 bombs	19 bombs	30 bombs

Source: Ministry of Interior, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

in Jehannah, 40 km outside the city, or to buy the weapons back. According to Foreign Minister Abu Bakr al Qirbi, "Yemen spent 8 billion riyals [$43.7 million] to purchase weapons from the tribesmen in 2002." Officials believe that the two markets are now "completely finished", but they also admitted that some individual weapons trading activities are still going on.

Between 1992 and 2005, the government promoted several initiatives to limit weapons sales by declaring a ban on weapons in public. Even though the government's initiative had been affirmed by the cabinet, it met with resistance in the parliament which is structured along tribal lines. However, the central government has had some success in controlling the sale of weapons within the capital, and was able to de-weaponize (at least in public) the main cities, Sana'a and Aden.

Besides the fact that arms sales and weapons smuggling constitute an important income source for tribes, Yemeni culture prevents the people from surrendering their weapons to the state authorities. The possession of weapons is part of the Yemeni national character, and weapons are linked more to tribal lore, traditions, and identity, than to violence and killings. Weapon sellers even rent weapons for occasions such as weddings or funerals. As one Yemeni pointed out: "Just as you have your tie, the Yemeni will carry his gun."

> *"Between 1992 and 2005, the government promoted several initiatives to limit weapons sales by declaring a ban on weapons in public."*

On the other hand, there are members of the political elite who are undermining the states' policies to limit weapons sales. Members and allies of Yemeni political parties have been repeatedly accused of supporting, and being involved in, weapons smuggling through the black market as well as legitimate and military purchases. Most small arms and weapons equipment appear to be imported legally from foreign suppliers, including Argentina, Brazil, China, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, and the United States. Some observers claim that weapons destined for Yemen are diverted to other countries, including countries under arms embargo, such as Somalia. (Small Arms Survey, 2005)

Given all these facts – that weapons are an important element of Yemeni culture, smuggling is an attractive income source, and individuals within the political structure support the weapons smuggling to gain personal benefit – it will be difficult to prevent illegal transfers of weapons across the border, and so, this issue will continue to be a matter of concern for Saudi Arabian security.

Another point of conflict between Saudi Arabia and Yemen relating to security is the illegal movement of people across the common border, and the links of some of these illegal immigrants to militant Islamists and terrorist activities in the Kingdom.

For example, during a period of eight months between February and September 2005, over half a million illegal migrants (545,384, according to official Saudi statistics) were caught trying to cross the border from Yemen illegally. Several incidents in the past have underlined that there are links between militant Islamists in Saudi Arabia and Yemen, and that terrorism does not stop at the state's borders. Terror attacks in Yemen, such as on the USS Cole in October 2000, the French oil tanker Limburg in October 2002, and the capture of a number of Saudi terrorists hiding in Yemen, gives the Saudis the impression of Yemen being a safe haven for terrorists. Repeatedly, the Saudi security services have arrested Yemenis under suspicion of being members of al Qaeda and handed them to the Yemeni authorities. Nine of the 23 prisoners who escaped in February 2006 from the main security prison in Sana'a were originally arrested by Saudi authorities inside the Kingdom. There are also strong links between Yemen and the Saudis caught in Yemen on suspicion of being terrorists, or being involved in terror attacks, such as the Saudi born Hamdi Sadiq al Ahdal, who was reportedly involved in attacks on USS Cole and Limburg, or Fawaz Yahya al Rabi'i, who was put on a FBI wanted list for terror suspects in February 2002 and later killed by Yemen's security forces in October 2006.

> *"During a period of eight months over half a million illegal migrants were caught trying to cross the border from Yemen illegally."*

Another example proving that militant Islamists do not stop at state borders is the fact that about 17 percent of foreign fighters in Iraq are Yemenis. Yemenis are one of the top three nationalities being held in Guantanamo Bay prison, after prisoners from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan. Finally, the spectacular prison breakout of 23 Yemeni prisoners in February 2006 in Sana'a, and the involvement of two of them in the September 2006 attacks on oil facilities in Marib and Hadramaut, makes the GCC states wonder whether the Yemeni government will be able to cope with

Smugglers and illegal immigrants captured by Saudi authorities on the borders with Yemen between 22 February 2004 and 9 February 2005.

KSA border Provinces	Total Numbers	Jayzan	A'sir	Najran
Smugglers	4553	2115 Yemenis 1317 Saudis 27 Egyptians	133 Yemeni 38 Saudis 7 Somalis	171 Yemeni 26 Saudis 1 Somali
Illegal Immigrants	545384	500966 Yemeni 570 Somalis 101 Saudis	29507 Yemeni 332 Somalis 293 Ethiopian	6779 Yemeni 658 Somalis 173 Ethiopian

Source: Ministry of Interior, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

terrorism which is not only posing a danger to Yemen, but has an impact on the security of the entire Gulf region.

It would be too simple to blame past and current terrorist activities and the presence of militant Islamists only on the Yemeni government's lack of authority, or the country's difficult geographical terrain or tribal system. During the 1980s, Yemen and Saudi Arabia had encouraged the growth of militant Islamists in the region. Many of the current Islamists in Yemen were recruited as Mujahideens during the war in Afghanistan between the 1980s and early 1990s. When the "Arab Afghans" returned home after the end of the Afghan war, the Yemeni government used their skills in the 1994 civil war against the separatist south. According to an official statement made in 2001 by Husain al-Arab, Yemen's Minister of Interior, the number of the Afghan Arabs in Yemen

> *"It would be too simple to blame past and current terrorist activities and the presence of militant Islamists only on the Yemeni government's lack of authority."*

in 1993/1994 was about 29,000. After the war, the Islamists settled in Sana'a and other main cities, as well as in main tribal areas in the north and south of the country where the government traditionally lacks authority; some became part of the political institutions as members of the Islah party, others enlisted in the armed forces, or re-integrated in the tribal system, while yet others went to settle in Saudi Arabia. Since then, Yemen has seen the growth of two home-grown militant Islamists groups, the Islamic Jihad Movement and Aden-Abyan Army. Some sources claim that the Saudi religious institutions contributed to the development of the conservative Islamists movement in Yemen. Conservative Islah members and prominent Yemeni figures received financial support and education in Saudi Arabia. Among them were Sheikh Abu Abd al-Rahman Muqbil Hadi al-Wadi'i and Sheikh Abd al-Majid al-Zindani, member of the Islah party and the presidential council, and head of the al-Iman University which enrolls students from around the globe, among them many holding BA and MA degrees. The US put Sheikh Zindani in the terrorism front row by placing his name, in February 2004, in the US Treasury Department Terrorist list, and then in the UN Security Council Consolidated List (the 1267 Committee black list). This resulted in the freezing of his bank accounts and pressurized the Yemeni government to temporarily close the al-Iman University which used to enroll many hundreds of students every year. The US claimed that al-Iman University had become a recruitment pool for militant Islamists and terrorists. At least two former students, temporarily enrolled in al-Iman University, have been involved in attacks. The first was the preacher Ali Jarallah who was held responsible for the assassination of the Socialist Party Leader Jarallah Umar in December 2002. The second, Abid Kamil, was responsible for the killing of three Americans in a hospital in Jibla (Ibb Governorate) in December 2002[1].

The other prominent Yemeni Islamist figure, who is believed to have strong links to Saudi Arabia, was Sheikh Abu Abd al-Rahman Muqbil Hadi al-Wadi'i. Al Wadi'i was born in Yemen but studied in Saudi Arabia under the late Sheikh Abd al-Aziz bin Baz until 1979. He returned to Yemen and founded, with Saudi financial support and under the protection of his tribe Wadi'a, Dar al-Hadith al-Khairiya, an Islamic institute which educated thousands of Yemenis and foreign students.

Many of his students founded their own institutions ma'ahid ilmiya and contributed to the development of the Salafiya movement in Yemen. Until 2001, there were about 400 institutes and over 250,000 students in Yemeni Islamic institutions. (Glosemeyer; 2003) Many of the students were financially supported by the Saudi Arabian al-Haramain Islamic charity foundation, especially in the north region of Yemen where the Salafiya attempted to contain the influence of the Shia Zaidis.

The fact that militant Islamists not only use Saudi Arabia and Yemen as transit countries, but are integrated in Yemeni basic institutions, tribes, religious schools, political parties and the security and military institutions, makes it difficult for Yemeni and Saudi authorities to take steps against them.

Often the tribal linkages between Yemen and Saudi Arabia have led to the ignoring of state borders and allowed unrestricted movement. Militant Islamists may be married to important tribal sheikhs who naturally tend to protect members of the family and tribe from the state's authority. Many Yemenis have "multiple identities" reflected in overlapping loyalties towards their families, tribes, and state institutions. This can result in conflict of interests and makes it difficult for a person to cooperate with the state security institutions or decide, for example, when a terror suspect has to be handed over to state authorities or when he has to be protected by the family and the tribe. That might be one of the reasons behind the success of the prison breakout in Sana'a in February 2006. The escape of the prisoners would not have been possible if they did not have massive outside support. The fact that two of these prisoners then appeared as suicide bombers in the September 2006 attacks on oil facilities in Marib and Hadramaut leads to the question: where did these two escapees hide over the seven months? With speculation rife, two assumptions can be made – the government and army lack the authority to control the movements of militant Islamists in Yemen, and cannot assure the loyalty of key allies; or the government is not strong enough to bargain with its tribal or conservative allies to find the Islamists, and prevent them from carrying out attacks. In any case, the government is in a weak bargaining position vis-a-vis tribal leaders and Islamic groups. That certainly leads the Saudi leadership to doubt whether the Yemeni government can control its internal security, army and tribes. It also makes them take another look at what the security implications for Saudi Arabia and the GCC states might be if the Yemeni government fails again to effectively protect its internal security.

"The fact that militant Islamists not only use Saudi Arabia and Yemen as transit countries, but are integrated in Yemeni basic institutions, makes it difficult for Yemeni and Saudi authorities to take steps against them."

Overall, Yemen's geography, demography, strategic location, social structure, the complex nature of its political system, the influence of religious institutions, and the country's proximity to Saudi Arabia are all important factors which are encouraging fundamentalist Islamists to use the country as a base for their militant activities. Indeed from the late 1990s, al-Qaeda has been using Yemen as a backyard for the organization's activities in Saudi Arabia. Al-Qaeda utilised Yemen's territory to support the group's operations and activities inside Saudi Arabia, including for providing logistical support, as a recruitment field and transit point for its fighters, a source of arms and explosives, and other requirements. Given this situation, and the occurrence of several terror attacks in Yemen and Saudi Arabia, cooperation between Yemen and Saudi Arabia was considered vital in the fight against terrorism in the two countries, as well as in the global war on terrorism.

Future of Saudi-Yemen relations

Cooperation in counter terrorism and border security will continue to be a critical issue for future Saudi-Yemen relations. Since the settlement of the Saudi-Yemeni border issue in 2000, border infiltration, armed clashes and kidnappings in the border region have relatively decreased. In the security agreement of 2003, both states agreed on the exchange of prisoners and security information, an important step forward towards efficient security cooperation. In June 2006, the Yemeni and Saudi governments signed two loan agreements to finance road building, two of them in the northern province Sa'ada, costing SR116 million. An additional agreement with Saudi Arabia was signed to implement a number of electricity sector projects, for which SR 375 million was allocated. Both projects are expected to foster the development of the basic infrastructure in Yemen,

1 Iris Glosemeyer, Jemen: Mehr als ein Rückzugsgebiet für al-Qa'ida, April 2003, Hamburg.

necessary to improve the security and investment climate.

The regional dynamics play in favor of Yemen. Saudi Arabia improved its relations with Yemen and no longer objects to its possible integration in the GCC. All the GCC states, including Kuwait, have entered into closer bilateral political and economic cooperation with Yemen, facilitating multilateral cooperation on a regional level. In October 2002, Yemen was admitted as a member to four affiliated institutions covering the areas of education, health care, social affairs and sports. The US and Saudi war on terror certainly contributes to closer security cooperation with Yemen underlined in several agreements between Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman and Yemen. Iran's persistence at building up its nuclear program facilitated discussion among the GCC states and Yemen about establishing a Weapon of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Gulf. The integration of Yemen in such a discussion and the signed security agreement clearly indicate the GCC states' intention of including Yemen as part of the regional dynamic and the GCC security structure.

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Narcotics Trafficking to the Gulf States

Faryal Leghari

Trafficking in narcotics is one of the main security issues facing governments worldwide and there is a need to face the issue collectively rather than individually. Drug trafficking and abuse problems in South Asia continue to pose serious and complex problems for the region in particular and the world in general.

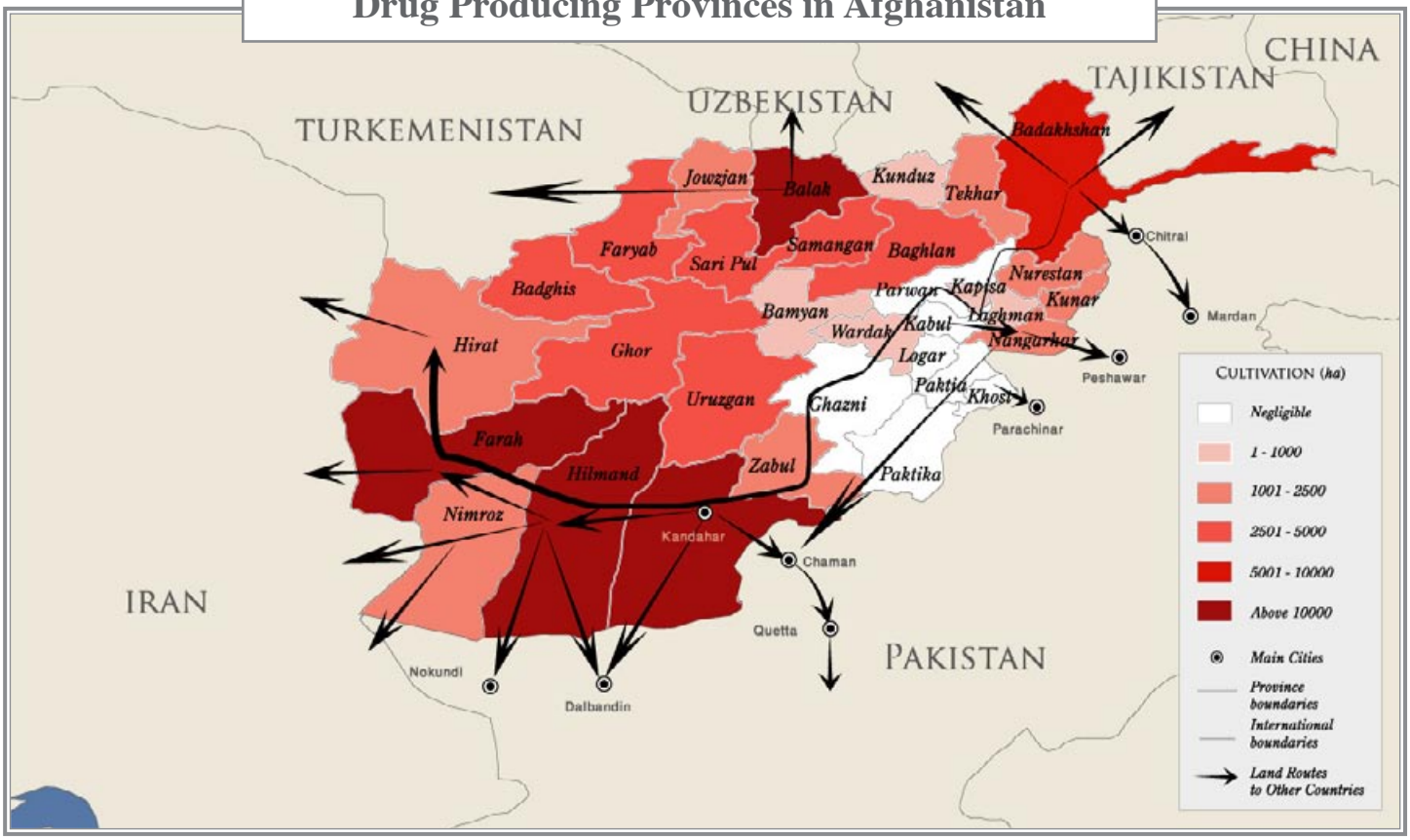
The poppy-growing areas of Afghanistan and some parts of the North West Frontier province of Pakistan are collectively known as the Golden Crescent. Afghan opiate exports (including opium, morphine and heroin) and cannabis are being trafficked across the region to reach international markets.[1] Pakistan currently has negligible opium production, confined to a few districts in the tribal belt, bordering Afghanistan.

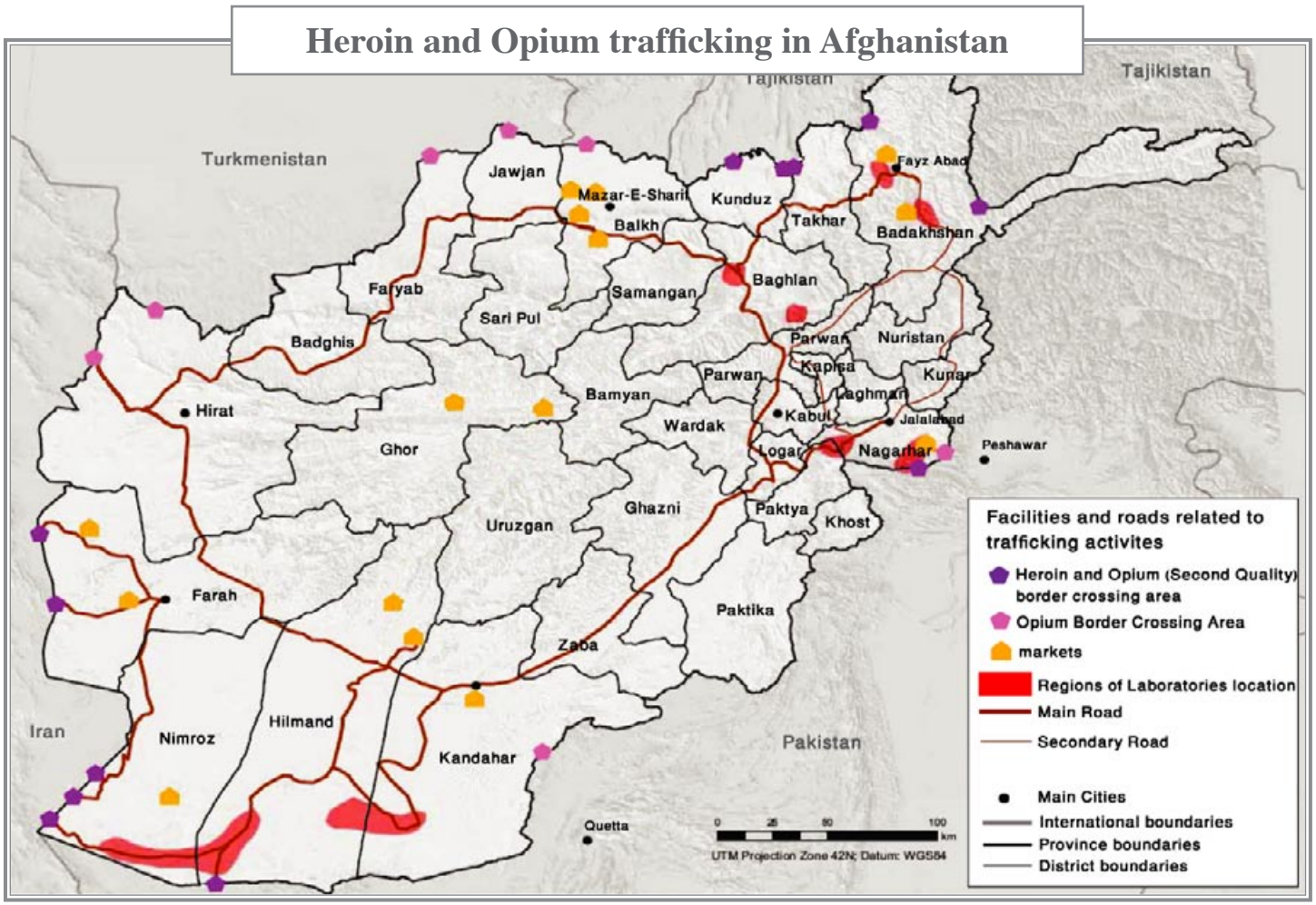
The immense monetary incentives associated with the narcotics trade are the major reason traffickers continue to operate despite stringent laws that prescribe capital punishment and severe penalties in many countries. Afghanistan remains the world's largest source of illicit opium, and continues to supply 87 percent of the world opium, despite a 21 percent decrease in opium poppy cultivation from 131,000 hectares in 2004 to 104,000 hectares in 2005.[2] The latest United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime (UNODC) report has estimated a staggering 59 percent increase for the Afghan opium crop for 2006 with a record opium harvest of 6,100 tons. Afghanistan's current opium crop from 165,000 hectares is sufficient to supply 92 percent of the world's opium and is estimated to fetch over $3 billion.[3]

Afghanistan started off as an opium producer. Heroin manufacture began there only in the mid 1990s. The increased profitability of trafficking heroin versus raw opium on a per unit basis resulted in heroin manufacturing plants being set up in Afghanistan.

President Karzai's interim administration issued a decree on January 17, 2002 which asserted that the opium problem was a matter of national security, and called for international support to solve it. The Afghan government

Drug Producing Provinces in Afghanistan





Created by Gulf Research Center. Based on the information provided by MCN-UNODC Afghanistan Opium Survey 2005

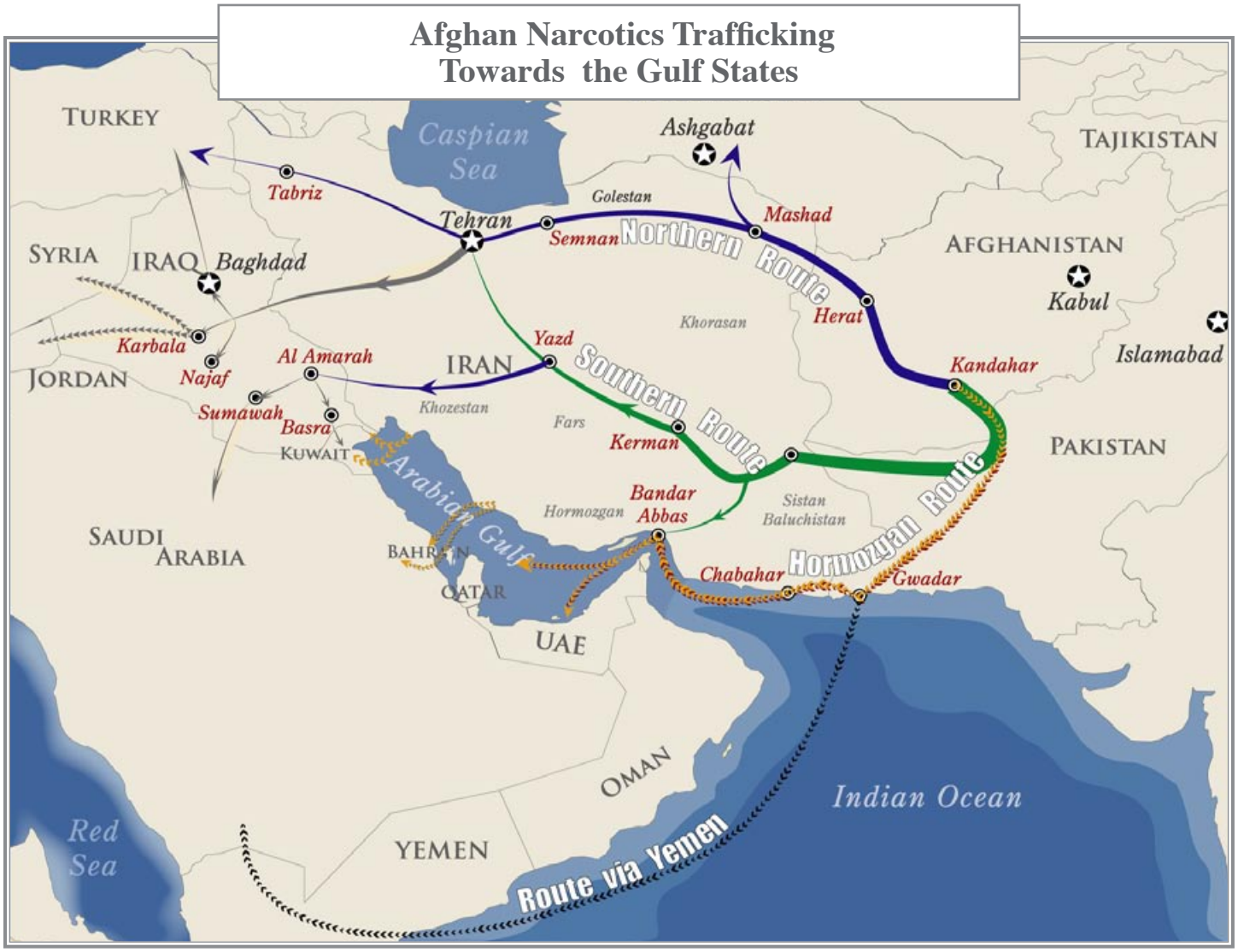
is focusing on targeting the traffickers and increasing the risk exposure of the trafficking system rather than targeting the farmers because, at this point, the government is not in a position to provide the farmers with an alternative livelihood.

Pakistan and Iran are the chief transit countries for narcotics trafficking towards the Gulf and Middle East. Most of the narcotics heading for the African and European markets are taken via the Gulf states, with some meeting growing demand in the Gulf region. The Gulf states are currently facing an immense danger of escalating drug abuse. They need to review the measures adopted by their anti-narcotics forces to combat this menace in order to devise an effective joint strategy to deter drug abuse and traffickers. An effective joint strategy on the regional level would require close cooperation not just among the Gulf states but also the governments of the concerned countries in Southwest Asia.[4]

Narcotics trafficking via Pakistan

Pakistan attained the status of poppy-free country in 2001-2002. This was a tremendous feat for a country that was a major opium producer, with over 80,000 acres of poppy cultivation in 1979-1980. However there has been a resurgence in poppy cultivation recently, with a reported 6,026 acres under cultivation in 2004-2005.

Pakistan is a transit point for narcotics shipped mainly to the United Kingdom, with nearly 80 percent of the opiates going to the UK from Afghanistan coming via Balochistan. The Middle East and Gulf, currently transit markets, are also projected as growing consumer markets in view of the increased substance abuse in the region. Airports, ports, and even cross-border land routes in Pakistan and Iran – the chief conduits for Afghan narcotics – are prime trafficking locations for destinations in the Gulf consumer and transit drug markets. There is a high degree of trafficking conducted during the extremely busy pilgrimage



Created by Gulf Research Center. Copyright © 2002-2006 Gulf Research Center.

season (Umra and Hajj) in Saudi Arabia. The increased risk of narcotics trafficking is compounded by the fact that nearly a quarter of a million out of approximately 2.5 million pilgrims come annually from Southwest Asia, Iran and Afghanistan.

Besides Karachi and Port Qasim, the principal shipping ports, smaller ports along the Pakistan's Makran Coast are used by traffickers to ship illicit consignments of opiates and hashish from landlocked Afghanistan to the Gulf states and beyond. Smaller shipments go by sea to neighboring Iran, from where they are then dispatched to ports in the Gulf and other destinations. The United Arab Emirates and Kenya are currently the most significant transit countries. Intelligence reports indicate that trafficking groups transport heroin via Dubai to East Africa, where it is warehoused before onward distribution to European countries.[5]

The Government of Pakistan, aware of the security threat posed by trafficking of narcotics drugs and psychotropic substances and the consequent repercussions on the economic, cultural and moral foundations of society, has entered into formal agreements with countries like the UAE, Kuwait, Iran and Afghanistan to counter narcotics trafficking. It has also signed extradition treaties with Iraq, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, besides a host of other countries, in order to facilitate prosecution of the persons involved.[6]

Narcotics trafficking via Iran

The Islamic Republic of Iran is part of the transit route for opiates and hashish, which are smuggled from Afghanistan through Pakistan, and on to the Gulf, Turkey, Russia,

and Europe. Iran shares long and porous borders with both Afghanistan and Pakistan and traffickers exploit this geographical advantage to carry on their illicit trafficking. Additionally Iran's 2,440 km long coastline is ideal for maritime trafficking of narcotics to other Gulf states as well as to eastern Africa.

The three main opiate trafficking routes through Iran are the northern, southern, and Hormuzgan routes. The northern route passes through the province of Khorasan, bordering Eastern Afghanistan. Drug trafficking on the southern route passes through the province of Sistan-Balochistan, and mostly consists of hashish routed onwards to the Gulf states, with Europe as the destination market. On the Hormuzgan route, the pivotal transit point is the international sea port of Bandar Abbas for outbound shipments to Europe and the Gulf, as well as for receiving shipments of chemical precursors that are used to refine opium into heroin and are destined for the heroin laboratories in the opium growing regions of Afghanistan. The identified trafficking routes in the Hormuzgan province usually either lead from Gwadar port in Pakistan to Chabahar port in Iran, or alternately from Gwadar to Bandar Abbas. Often sea and land routes are used in conjunction for some shipments.

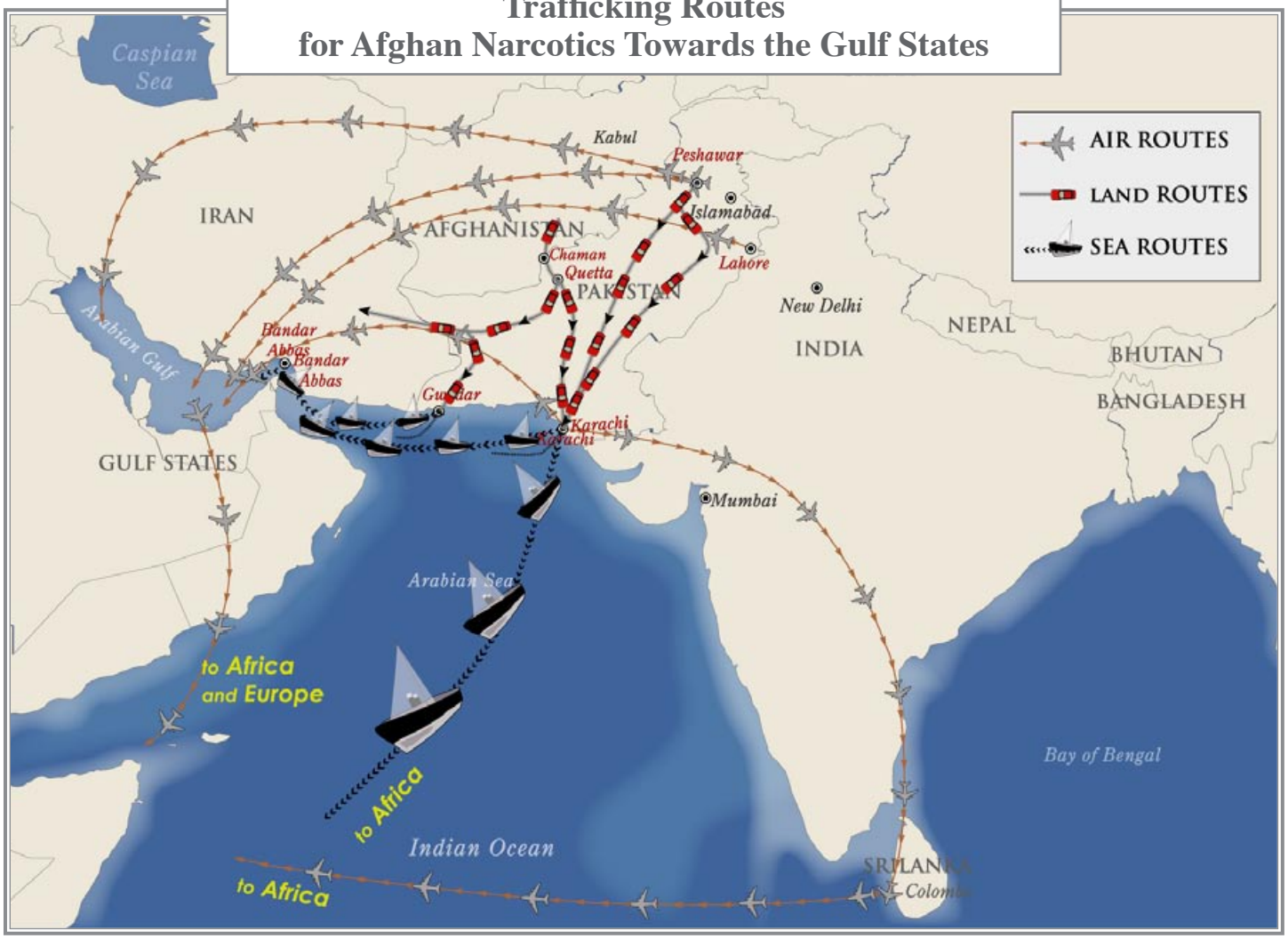
Another southern route from Afghanistan to Tehran goes into Iraq to serve the growing drug market there, and also significantly serves as a major transit route into Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, passing through Jordan, Syria, and Turkey to European markets.

The narcotics trafficking routes from Iran to Iraq that have been identified are:

Iran (Yazd) → Iraq (Al Amarah → Sumawah) → Saudi Arabia
Iran (Yazd) → Iraq (Al Amarah → Basra) → Kuwait

The other route that passes from Iran into Iraq branches off into three directions towards Najaf, Baghdad, and Karbala.

Trafficking Routes for Afghan Narcotics Towards the Gulf States



From these locations in Iraq, the consignments are then taken to the following destinations and onwards:

Iran (Tehran) → Iraq → (Najaf)
Iran (Tehran) → Iraq → (Baghdad) → Turkey
Iran (Tehran) → Iraq → (Karbala) → Syria / Jordan.

The other routes used for trafficking narcotics from Iran to the Gulf states divert from the southern route using the western seacoast of Iran.

Iran (Bandar Abbas) → United Arab Emirates
Iran (Seacoast) → Kuwait
Iran (Seacoast) → Iraq

Gulf States

The Gulf states have traditionally been a hub for the illicit transit trafficking of opiates and cannabis intended for European markets. The UAE, in particular, has become a transshipment point for heroin coming from Afghanistan via Iran and Pakistan.[7] Besides being shipped directly to European markets, transit shipments are often routed to Africa before being taken to Europe. Consignments of cannabis, opium, and heroin are trafficked via land routes in Iran and Pakistan before being shipped via Oman and the UAE to other international markets in the West.

There is growing concern about the increase in drug trafficking along Iraq's borders with Iran, Jordan, and Kuwait. This concern is substantiated by extraordinarily high levels of seizures of cannabis and psychotropic substances. Besides being a major part of the narcotics transiting to European markets via the Gulf states, cannabis is also the major drug of abuse in the region.[8] Captagon or Fenetylline is also one of the region's widely abused substances, particularly in Saudi Arabia. In 2005, large seizures of Captagon tablets were made at Jordan's borders with Iraq and Syria, as well as in the UAE.[9]

A lack of data, and in certain cases, even acknowledgment, of drug abuse in some Gulf countries has led to further complications. Recent initiatives undertaken by the Gulf states are significant since greater awareness about the issue, and a joint strategy to combat trafficking and abuse, can only prove beneficial in the long run. These are focused on setting up a joint 'Gulf Pol' to combat narcotics trafficking, as well as hosting regional counter-narcotics conferences and seminars.[10]

Hashish smuggled into Saudi Arabia via Iran, and by sea from Gwadar port on Pakistan's Makran Coast, has caused a major drug problem in the Kingdom. From Gwadar, hashish consignments are shipped to Yemen, which shares a long and porous border with Saudi Arabia, making it easy to smuggle in illicit contraband goods, including narcotics. Saudi Arabia also has to cope with the increased trafficking of Afghan narcotics through Iran, usually via the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman from Bandar Abbas. One emerging trend in narcotics abuse in Saudi Arabia is the influx of synthetic drugs, typically amphetamines. Captagon, usually smuggled in from Romania via Turkey, Syria, and Jordan, is the most popular drug of abuse in the Kingdom, and is followed by hashish. Though Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have not signed any Memorandum of Understanding on counter narcotics efforts, they have been working together in that capacity for the past 15-20 years. The Saudi government in appreciation of the efforts put in by Pakistan Anti Narcotics Force intends to give them smaller scanners to help them in better interdiction of narcotics.[11]

A recent surge in drug consignments interdicted in Kuwait is indicative of the increased interest of drug traffickers in making the country a favored destination in the Gulf. The country's drug abuse problem has grown significantly, with recent surveys conducted by the Amiri Hospital suggesting a population of 18,000-20,000 addicts, the equivalent of one percent of the population. Kuwait, with a per capita income of $20,000, has been the focus of traffickers ready to exploit its market potential in narcotics.[12] Unemployment and an excess of money, manifesting themselves in boredom and frustration, have led many youth to resort to drugs. As part of the government's effort to counter narcotics abuse and trafficking in the region, the First Regional Anti-Narcotics Conference was held in Kuwait in March 2006.[13] Kuwait and Pakistan, in addition to a long standing agreement to cooperate in counter narcotics trafficking efforts, took further significant measures in March 2006, including the deputation of drug liaison officers at their respective embassies to facilitate direct exchange of information instead of going through Interpol as in the past.[14]

Oman faces a major trafficking problem due to its geographical proximity to the main opiate trafficking routes originating in Afghanistan. The government of Oman understands that drug control is a fundamentally important factor in determining the peace and stability of the country and has set up an Inter Ministerial Committee to coordinate matters related to narcotics.[15]

According to an article appearing in 'Addiction,' heroin addiction became a serious problem in Bahrain in the 1980s, with

several reported deaths.[16] The current drug abuse situation in the country is quite dismal, in light of certain disclosures by a member of parliament, Shaikh Mohammad Khalid. He called for a large awareness campaign in the media to educate people about the perils of drug abuse. The fact that drugs had become readily available in secondary schools at cheap rates indicated the seriousness of the problem.[17]

The government of Qatar attaches great significance to tackling drug abuse and trafficking issues, and has been at the forefront of several regional endeavors to combat narcotics trafficking. In February 2006, Qatar hosted an international conference on border security in Afghanistan which stressed the need to increase cooperation among all the states. The participants included the interior ministers from Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, Qatar, Turkey and the UAE along with senior narcotics control officers from the United States, Britain, Russia and Norway.[18]

The United Arab Emirates has a twofold anti-narcotics strategy which seeks to reduce or curtail the supply of drugs as well as the demand. In other words, there is a focus on targeting drug abuse as well as trafficking. An article appearing in the New York Times has thrown light on the importance the UAE government is giving to the issue of drug abuse and trafficking in the region, as well as the awareness among other Gulf states, which has begun to lead to a more proactive drug control strategy. "Dubai has moved the farthest among several Arab governments paying closer attention to a growing drug problem that, officials at the UN Office on Drugs and Crime estimate, consumes 500,000 people across the region."[19] The UAE government signed an agreement with the government of Pakistan dated November 15, 1995 to counter narcotics trafficking. Additionally, the UAE also signed a landmark counter narcotics agreement with Iran in 2003, providing for cooperation against production, distribution and smuggling of illicit drugs across the UAE-Iran sea border.[20] It is felt that these formal agreements with the countries that are used as the major trafficking routes towards the Gulf states would enhance joint intelligence sharing and provide a solid framework to work towards promoting security and stability in the region.

Recent studies conducted by the United Nations Drug Control Program (UNDCP) have revealed an estimated 185 million drug addicts in the world, of which 400,000 are in the Middle East. There is an alarming rise in teenage drug abusers in the region, with more addicts among the 13-year-old bracket. Previous studies had identified the predominant group to be 16-year-olds. [21]

In the current situation, any feasible strategy geared towards combating narcotics trafficking will recognize the importance of coordinating of efforts and developing an elaborate intelligence-sharing mechanism among regional countries, as well as working together with countries producing opium and counter-narcotics forces in the chief transit countries. Though some Gulf states, as mentioned above, have entered into formal agreements to counter narcotics trafficking with the principal countries that are used as the major routes, there is a need to widen this to include other states in the Gulf as well. This would provide a platform for security cooperation among those states and prove effective in countering narcotics trafficking across the region.

To conclude, it is felt that the initiatives taken by the Gulf states are a step in the right direction. The fact that there is an increasing realization of the extent of the narcotics crisis is of paramount importance and it is hoped that the Gulf states will pay closer attention to monitoring the domestic drug abuse situation; this would also provide an indication of the volume of trafficking in the respective region as well as the size of the drug demand market.

Faryal Leghari

Researcher in the Security and Terrorism Department at the Gulf Research Center

1 Afghanistan has recently been ranked second in world cannabis production after Morocco, with an estimated 30,000 hectares under cannabis cultivation. Afghanistan Opium Survey 2005, p.46.
2 According to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, eradication led to a rise in farm gate prices for opium from $100 per kilo in October to current black market prices of about $180 per kilo.
3 http://www.unodc.org/unodc/press_release-2006_09-01.html
4 The International Narcotics Control Board's report for 2005 categorically states that UAE has become a transhipment point for Afghan opiates coming via Pakistan and Iran.
5 The Anti Narcotics Force Yearly Digest 2004-05, AR Printers, p. 10.
6 Select references from a List of MoUs signed by the Government of Pakistan, on Counter Narcotics Trafficking and Extradition Treaties with other countries. Provided by the Anti Narcotics Force, Pakistan on October 17, 2006.
7 The Gulf News, May 23, 2006.
8 International Narcotics Control Board Report for 2005, p.76.
9 Ibid. p.81.
10 Gulf News, March 28, 2006.
11 The GRC research study is based on an interview of a Saudi Drug Liaison Officer in March 2006 by the researcher who has been working closely in counter-narcotic efforts specifically on trafficking of opiates to the Gulf for the past 12 years.
12 http://www.mapinc.org/drugnews/v02.n1485.a02.html
13 Gulf News, April 1, 2006.
14 Kuwait News Agency, March 14, 2006.
15 http://www.mcmun.org/english/textFrame/committees/position.paper.view.php?papid=1062
16 Addiction 91(12), December 1996, p.1859.
17 Gulf News, April 15, 2006.
18 Doha Times, March 1, 2006.
19 Hassan M. Fattah, "Learning To Deal with Addiction", The New York Times, May 5, 2006,
http://www.iht.com/articles/2006/05/05/news/dubai.php
20 INCSR 2005, Country Report on UAE.
21 The Peninsula, March 2006

Gulf Research Center in Cooperation with the Yemeni Ministry of Planning & International Cooperation will hold a Symposium entitled:

"The Inclusion of Yemen into the Gulf Cooperation Council"

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

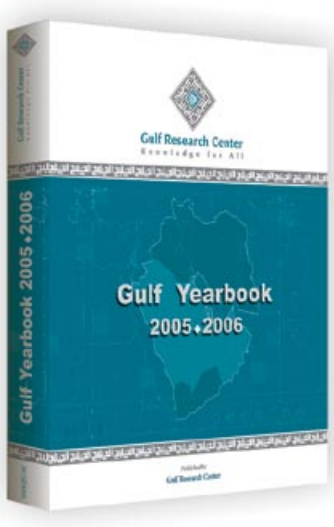
This symposium will present and discuss the various issues and developments concerning the current reality and the future of relations between Yemen and the GCC countries with special focus on the strategic, security political and economic prerequisites for the incorporation of Yemen into the GCC. Also it will discuss the importance of economic adaptation of Yemen, its mechanisms and requirements, the potential gains and mutual interests of both Yemen and the GCC states at the political, economic, and security levels.

Date: 8 - 9 November, 2006
Participation: By invitation only

Gulf Security: Views and Options

Gulf Research Center (GRC) Annual Workshop / Conference 2007

Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



The security environment in the Gulf region has dominated international headlines for over four decades. Beginning with the oil crisis in the 1970s and covering such events as the 1979 Iranian Revolution, the 1980-1988 War between Iran and Iraq, the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and subsequent liberation of Kuwait in February 1991, the rise of Islamic militancy throughout the 1990s culminating in the attacks of September 11, and then the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq, the issue of Gulf security has been at the central focus of global political attention.

Given the current political and strategic environment, the importance of Gulf security to the international community is not about to change. In fact, recent events have underlined the continued volatility of the region and how developments here can have a far-ranging impact. The continued instability in Iraq and the escalating tensions over the Iranian nuclear program are just two most obvious examples.

While there has been much policy-oriented as well as academic debate on how the cycle of insecurity in the Gulf can be broken, no structured attempt has been made to bring together the various views of regional and international actors towards the region.

The GRC is firmly convinced that Gulf security issues are a permanent preoccupation for the entire world that will continue to dominate the headlines in the coming years. Therefore, it is essential to have a comprehensive understanding of the various issues that define Gulf security in order to be able to construct a proper policy.

The workshop will be followed by the annual conference on January 19, which will be centered around the release and presentation of the GRC's annual yearbook entitled "Gulf Yearbook 2006-2007". This publication highlights the main and critical developments of the year for the Gulf region focusing on the major political, economic, security, and social trends.

The Gulf Security workshop has the following objectives:

- To make an assessment of the status of Gulf Security and to look into the key components that define it;
- To look into how both regional actors and international powers view the issue of Gulf security and where their main emphasis and interests lie;
- To explore practical realities and to look at the policy steps being implemented by the regional states;
- To identify policy approaches that might help the region in overcoming aspects of the security dilemma and see how other regions have overcome similar problem areas from a lessons-learned perspective;
- To develop an action plan for overcoming some of the more persistent Gulf security issues and promote relevant policy alternatives.

Date: January 13-14, 2007
Participation: By Invitation only

Security Issues and the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative: Furthering NATO - Gulf relations

Gulf Research Center (GRC)
Institute of Diplomatic Studies, Foreign Ministry of Saudi Arabia
NATO Division of Public Diplomacy

Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

The last event co-sponsored by NATO and the Gulf Research Center in September 2005 in Dubai sought to explore the practical possibilities of cooperation within NATO's Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) and to see how the relationship between NATO and the member states of the GCC can be enhanced and promoted. The findings of this meeting concluded that an expanded role for NATO in the Gulf could contribute to greater security and stability in the region, in keeping with the aims of the ICI which was launched at the Alliance's Summit in June 2004. NATO's aim to contribute to long-term global and regional security by offering countries of the broader Middle East region practical bilateral security cooperation is of ever-increasing importance to the Gulf countries today.

The second NATO conference will be a follow up to the last meeting and proposes to look four key areas and discuss practical ways that NATO can offer assistance to Gulf partners.

Such areas include:

- Intelligence-sharing and co-operation as part of the overall fight against terrorism
- Cooperation regarding border security in connection with terrorism, small arms and light weapons trafficking
- Joint efforts to combat illegal human and drug trafficking and developing common strategies to tackle this problematic
- Civil emergency planning, including participating in training courses and exercises on disaster assistance, civil-military coordination, and crisis response to maritime, aviation, and surface threats

Date: January 20-21, 2007
Participation: By invitation only

GRC Project:
Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Gulf (GWMDFZ)

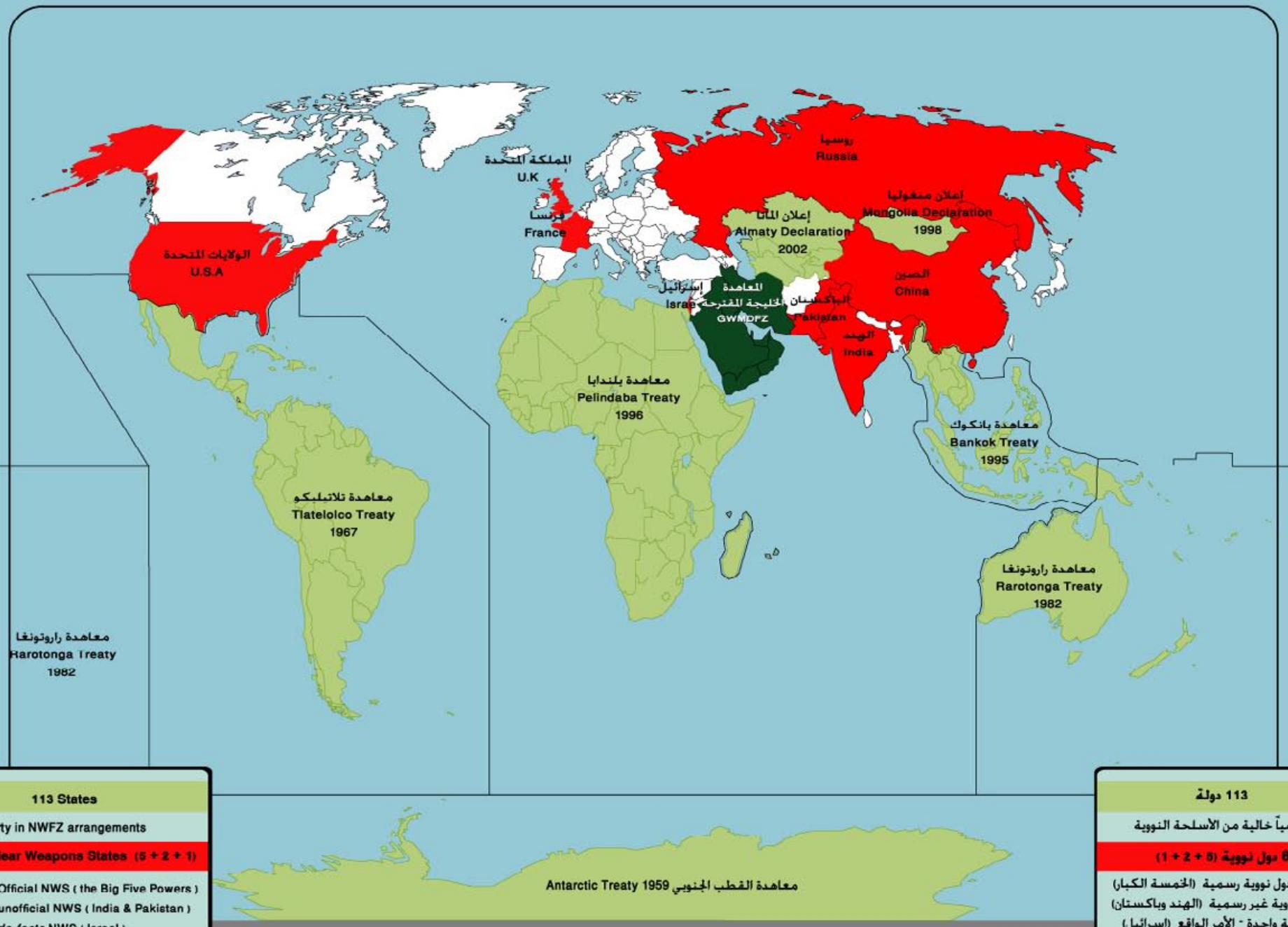
In December 2004, GRC put forward, for the first time in the history of regional diplomacy, the initiative "Declaring the Gulf region a Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Free Zone." The initiative is based on the principle of sub-regional to regional progress and the belief that a successful WMD Free Zone in the Gulf region will open the door to achieving the ultimate objective of extending such a weapons free zone to the entire Middle East region. GRC, in cooperation with other international institutions such as SIPRI and VERTIC, held three discussion meetings, involving high-level officials from the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries besides Iran, Iraq and Yemen, as well as international arms control and legal experts to discuss the possibility of establishment of a WMD-Free Zone in the Gulf.

In Spring 2006, GRC published the book "The Case for a Weapon of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Gulf (GWMDFZ)" which explores the possibilities of building upon the successful experiences of other nations in establishing nuclear-free zones, and works out a framework by which the Gulf region, in its wider geopolitical sense of nine countries, could be made a nuclear-free zone, and a region that is totally free of the lethal weapons of mass destruction.

The map on the opposite page shows the nuclear free zones (NFZs) already established worldwide, including the GRC's proposed GWMDFZ marked in dark green color.

Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear Weapon-Free Zones

المناطق الجغرافية الخالية من الأسلحة النووية



113 States
Party in NWFZ arrangements
8 Nuclear Weapons States (5 + 2 + 1)
◆ Five Official NWS (the Big Five Powers)
◆ Two unofficial NWS (India & Pakistan)
◆ One *de-facto* NWS (Israel)

113 دولة
رسمياً خالية من الأسلحة النووية
8 دول نووية (5 + 2 + 1)
◆ خمسة دول نووية رسمية (الخمسة الكبار)
◆ دولتين نووية غير رسمية (الهند وباكستان)
◆ دولة نووية واحدة - الأمر الواقع (إسرائيل)

Defense and Regional Security in the Arabian Peninsula and Gulf States, 1973-2004 (An Annotated Bibliography)

By J. E. Peterson

Abstract:
This is the most extensive annotated bibliography on the subject of Gulf security available. More than 2200 entries cover such subjects as oil security; the Iran-Iraq War; the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and subsequent Kuwait War; post-1991 policy towards Iraq and the Iraq War; and the involvement of the United States, Soviet Union/Russia, Europe, and China in the Gulf, including their bilateral relations with the Gulf states. Regional disputes and bilateral relations between littoral states are examined, as well as regional responses to security issues. The final section comprises coverage of internal aspects of Gulf security, including resurgent Islamists, Gulf military capabilities and arms transfers, and sections on each of the Gulf states. The text is accompanied by a comprehensive index of personal names and institutions.

Language: English

United States and the Regional and International Dimensions of Iraq's Security

By Ibrahim Khaleel Al-Allaf

Abstract:
After the invasion, US occupation forces were faced with two major problems. First, they had no clear-cut strategy for controlling the post-war situation in Iraq. This was especially the case in the wake of the disbandment of the former Iraqi Army and security forces and the opening of unmonitored borders with neighbouring countries. This led to widespread chaos in the political and security arenas. The second problem was the outbreak of insurgency which took different forms, including both armed and civil resistance to US occupation. Elements of Arab nationalist, Islamic militants and nationalistic Iraqis joined the various insurgency groups, and made it quite difficult for the US to carry out its aims. Having failed to crush the insurgency, the US made attempts to regionalize and internationalize the security of Iraq by various ways and means. These efforts culminated in the holding of the Sharm Al-Shaikh conference to prevent neighboring countries, especially Iran, from interfering in Iraq's internal affairs, in addition to enhancing control over Iraq's borders to prevent infiltration by potential foreign combatants.

Language: Arabic

Impact of the Disbandment of the Iraqi Army on the Security Situation in Iraq

By Mahmoud Ahmed Izzat

Abstract:
The decision by the US occupation authorities in Iraq to disband the Iraqi Army had serious consequences for the country. Despite frequent warnings by reputed US think tanks that the reconstruction of Iraq could not be achieved in the absence of security and proper control over borders with neighboring countries, the US occupation forces ignored the warnings and with a stroke of a pen, the Iraqi Army personnel were discharged.
One of the major consequences of the disbandment of the Iraqi Army was the transformation of what used to be a strong and capable army into one of unemployed soldiers. Also, the US occupation authorities in Iraq lost control over the former Iraqi army's huge stocks of weaponry. In addition, the decision to disband the army led to loss of control over borders with neighboring countries, outbreak of insurgency, spread of organized crime, social degeneration, and deep hatred towards the US. Further, it severely affected social services as well as trade, and led to a serious decline in Iraqi national income.

Language: Arabic

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