



## YEMEN

### Background

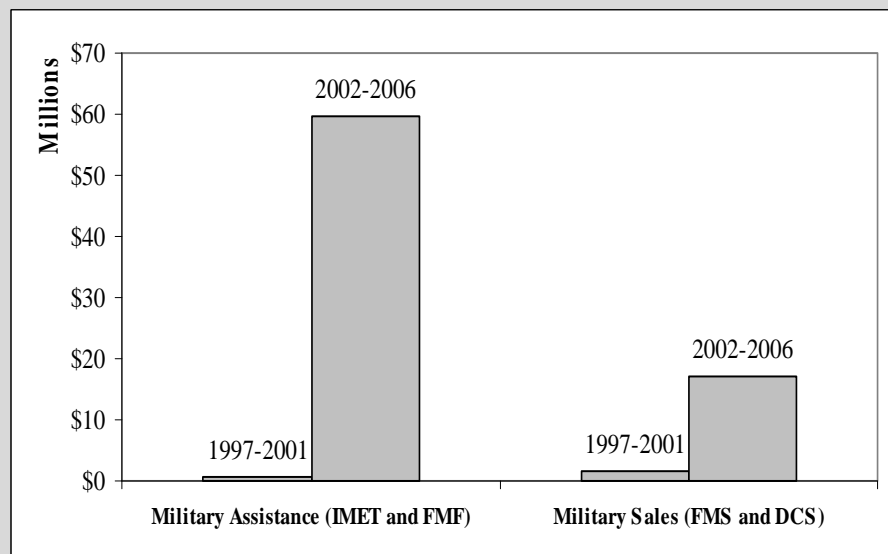
Until 1990, Yemen existed as the separate states of North Yemen and South Yemen. South Yemen was originally part of the British Empire, while North Yemen was part of the Ottoman Empire. Gaining its independence from the Ottomans at the end of World War I, North Yemen was ruled by a succession of Shiite Imams until 1962, when revolutionary forces overthrew the Imam and established the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR), an Arab nationalist state in line with Egypt.

Saudi Arabia and Jordan fought against the YAR, in support of the Imamate, but were defeated militarily and eventually officially recognized the YAR.

South Yemen remained the British protectorate of South Arabia until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the mid-1960s, two nationalist groups – the Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen (FLOSY) and the National Liberation Front (NLF) – began an insurgency within the territory to wrest control of South Yemen from the British. Unable to stop the fighting, the British withdrew from South Yemen altogether in 1967. The NLF ultimately defeated the FLOSY, establishing the People's Republic of South Yemen. Three years later, Marxist forces overthrew the NLF government and created the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY), establishing the Yemeni Socialist Party as the only legitimate political organization and allying the regime with the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba.

The unification of North and South Yemen took 18 years to fully materialize. In 1972, the YAR and the PDRY both formally approved of unification, but tensions between the two states ultimately led to

**U.S. Military Assistance and Sales to Yemen,  
Pre-Sept. 11 vs. Post-Sept. 11**



armed conflict in 1979 and shelved any immediate progress. It was not until 1988 that another formal declaration between the two countries was announced and a path towards unification was laid out. The Republic of Yemen was officially created in 1990 and the country's first constitution was ratified in 1991, establishing a multiparty democratic political system. The president of North Yemen – Ali Abdullah Saleh – became president of Yemen and the president of South Yemen – Ali Salim Al-Bidh – became vice president. Parliamentary elections were held in 1993, but the process of creating coalitions within the parliament reignited political rivalries between the former north and the former south, and the country entered into civil war in 1994. In May 1994, the former leaders of South Yemen seceded, but the territory was recaptured in July 1994. President Saleh called for a general amnesty and the Republic of Yemen was reunited.

In 1994, the Parliament elected Saleh to serve a five-year term as president and in 1999, the first direct presidential elections were held, in which Saleh was overwhelmingly elected to another term. Constitutional amendments extended his term until 2006, at which point Saleh said that he did not plan to run again for president, having served as president of Yemen – first of North Yemen and then of the unified Republic of Yemen – for nearly 30 years. However, the Yemeni Parliament nominates the candidates to be voted on by the electorate and insisted on nominating Saleh, due to a lack of qualified national candidates. Saleh received nearly 80 percent of the vote, in an election deemed “an open and genuine political contest,” by the EU monitoring mission in Yemen. The 2003 parliamentary elections were also deemed free and fair and the next elections will be held in 2009; Saleh will serve as president until 2013.

The U.S. State Department's 2005 Human Rights Report characterized Yemen's human rights record as poor, although certain human rights are respected. Security forces continue to use unnecessary force, sometimes lethal, and torture against suspects and detainees. The government allows arbitrary arrest and detention to occur with impunity. During 2005, however, 14 members of the police were disciplined for committing human rights abuses. The judiciary suffers from corruption, inefficiency, and executive interference, and judges who rule against the government are harassed or removed from their positions. Although freedom of speech and of the press are provided for by law, in practice the government imposes restrictions on these freedoms, forbidding any criticism of the government, and security force members harass journalists in order to ensure compliance. Public demonstrations require a permit from the government; these permits are issued routinely, but government informers are also present at public meetings. All branches of government are widely acknowledged to be corrupt. Although criminalized, incidents of rape and domestic abuse generally go unreported and unprosecuted.

During its history, Yemen has been involved in border disputes with Eritrea – over the Hanish islands in the Red Sea, with Saudi Arabia – over islands north of Yemen, and with Oman – over the shared border with Yemen; all have been resolved in recent years. In 2004, a rebel Shiite cleric and a militia of nearly 3,000 launched a rebellion against the government, attacking Yemeni soldiers and staging violent protests against the United States and Israel. After a month of fighting and hundreds of casualties, the government managed to put down the rebellion, arresting more than 600 Shiite militants who participated. In March 2006, the government released the prisoners after they consented to sign declarations of loyalty to the government, but sporadic fighting continues in the northwest region of Yemen, where the rebellion began. Yemen is also plagued with intertribal conflicts, which often involve armed violence and kidnappings, and which contribute to ongoing instability within Yemen.

## **U.S. Military Assistance Prior to Sept. 11, 2001**

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Beginning in 1973, the United States was a military ally of North Yemen (the YAR), but because Yemen maintained its diplomatic relations with Iraq during the 1991 Gulf War, the United States cut off its military ties to the Republic of Yemen during the 1990s, shortly after its unification.

Yemen received no Foreign Military Financing (FMF) between FY 90 and FY 01, and incurred a significant decrease in International Military Education and Training (IMET) after FY 90; IMET funding began to increase again in FY 98. During the same period, \$2.5 million worth of Direct Commercial Sales (DCS) and \$6.5 million worth of Foreign Military Sales (FMS) were concluded with Yemen, although in several years, no arms sales were concluded with Yemen at all. Between FY 90 and FY 01, Yemen received one set of grants through the Excess Defense Articles (EDA) program, in FY 00, for radio equipment.

## **U.S. Military Assistance Since Sept. 11, 2001**

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Since Sept. 11, 2001, the U.S.-Yemeni defense relationship has improved, and Congress now identifies Yemen as a “front-line state” in the war on terrorism. Despite suspending assistance to Yemen in the 1990s, the United States began funneling millions of dollars worth of military assistance to the country almost immediately after the 2001 attacks. As al-Qaida operatives were known to be in Yemen, the United States has assisted Yemen in building the capacity and capabilities to find and prosecute terrorists and militants. In 2005, Yemen successfully prosecuted six men alleged to be al-Qaida operatives that carried out the 2000 bombing of the *USS Cole*, which killed 17 U.S. sailors.

Yemen has received a huge influx of military assistance over pre-Sept. 11, 2001, levels, particularly in forms of assistance designed to train and increase the capacity of Yemeni security forces. In only four years, Yemen received \$47 million in FMF, after receiving no FMF between FY 90 and FY 01, and \$16 million more is requested for FY 06 and FY 07. Yemen has received more IMET each year since FY 02, receiving a total of nearly \$3 million between FY 02 and FY 05. \$967,000 in IMET funding was allocated in FY 05, and over \$1 million is requested for both FY 06 and FY 07. Arms sales have also steadily increased since FY 02, with more DCS and FMS concluded in the four years after Sept. 11, 2001, than in the previous 12 years combined.

Congress has specifically designated that EDA grants for Yemen be used to help the country establish a coast guard, and Yemen has received motorized life boats and a boat lift through this program since FY 02, as well as 15 M60 machine guns.

The United States has provided Yemen with several sources of counterterrorism training and funding. In FY 05, Yemen received \$200,000 through the Regional Defense Counterterrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP). Since FY 05, Yemen has received funding for counterterrorism training through the Foreign Operations budget’s Anti-Terrorism Assistance program (NADR-ATA), which is part of the Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining, and Related Activities account. Yemen received \$1.8 million in FY 05, and is slated to receive \$550,000 in FY 06 and \$1.6 million in FY 07. Additionally, Yemen was one of roughly a dozen countries to receive at least \$10 million in military assistance through the new Section 1206 authority in the defense budget.



<b>U.S. Military Assistance and Sales to Yemen, FY 90 - FY 08</b>					
	<b>IMET</b>	<b>FMF</b>	<b>DCS</b>	<b>FMS</b>	<b>EDA</b>
<b>1990</b>	\$595,000	\$0	\$0	\$639,000	n/a
<b>1991</b>	\$25,000	\$0	\$790,000	\$4,860,000	n/a
<b>1992</b>	\$0	\$0	\$3,000	\$0	n/a
<b>1993</b>	\$0	\$0	\$12,000	\$0	\$0
<b>1994</b>	\$0	\$0	\$838,000	\$0	\$0
<b>1995</b>	\$0	\$0	\$171,000	\$0	\$0
<b>1996</b>	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>1997</b>	\$52,000	\$0	\$693,000	\$0	\$0
<b>1998</b>	\$142,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>1999</b>	\$122,000	\$0	\$0	\$870,000	\$0
<b>2000</b>	\$125,000	\$0	\$0	\$25,000	\$1,443,976
<b>2001</b>	\$198,000	\$0	\$0	\$54,000	\$0
<b>1990-2001</b>	\$1,309,000	\$0	\$2,507,000	\$6,448,000	\$1,443,976
<b>1997-2001</b>	\$639,000	\$0	\$693,000	\$949,000	\$1,443,976
<b>2002</b>	\$488,000	\$20,000,000	\$1,000	\$307,000	\$0
<b>2003</b>	\$638,000	\$1,900,000	\$45,000	\$271,000	\$1,047,960
<b>2004</b>	\$882,000	\$14,910,000	\$1,842,000	\$1,069,000	\$35,000
<b>2005</b>	\$967,000	\$10,420,000	\$2,311,000	\$5,893,000	\$0
<b>2006</b>	\$924,000	\$8,415,000	\$1,155,000	\$4,123,000	\$0
<b>2002-2006</b>	\$3,899,000	\$55,645,000	\$5,354,000	\$11,663,000	\$1,082,960
<b>2007</b>	\$1,085,000	\$8,500,000	\$4,021,000	\$0	\$0
<b>2008</b>	\$1,000,000	\$4,676,000	\$16,272,000	\$0	n/a

## Sources

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