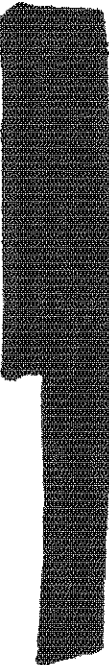




Fwd: Breaking News Update: The Arab Coalition is Making Progress Against Extremists in Yemen, By Ambassador Yousef Al Otaiba
1 message

Hagir Elawad <shagir@uae-strategies.com>

Thu, Sep 13, 2018 at 7:27 AM

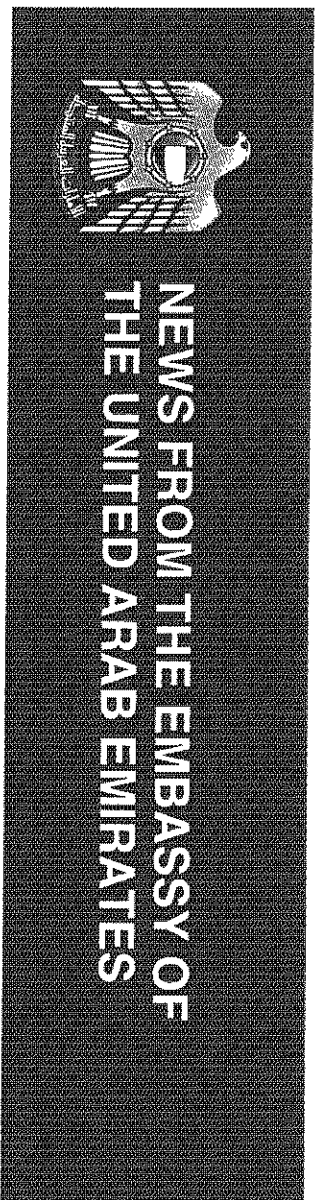


Good morning Joe,

Please see the op-ed below that Ambassador Al Otaiba wrote in the Washington Post describing the efforts made against extremists in Yemen.

I would appreciate if you make sure Congressman Visclosky sees it before this afternoon's meeting.

Kind Regards,
Hagir



BREAKING NEWS September 13, 2018

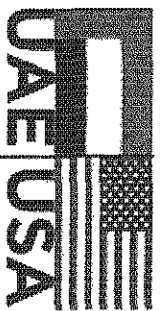


The Arab Coalition is Making Progress Against Extremists in Yemen. By Ambassador Yousef Al Otaiba

In the Washington Post, UAE Ambassador to the US Yousef Al Otaiba writes about the progress being made in Yemen against Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and the Iranian regime-backed Houthi militia. He affirms the UAE's strong support for the efforts of UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths to end the war in Yemen and achieve a lasting solution.

Ambassador Al Otaiba underscores the close cooperation between the UAE and US to create a more peaceful Middle East region, and remarks that "while the UAE is a leader in the fight against extremism and aggression, others are enabling and prolonging it."

Click [here](#) to read Ambassador Al Otaiba's commentary which was published September 12, 2018 in the Washington Post.



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Global Opinions

The Arab coalition is making progress against extremists in Yemen

By Yousef al-Otaiba

September 12

Yousef al-Otaiba is ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to the United States.

Last month, it was confirmed that al-Qaeda master bomb-maker Ibrahim al-Asiri was **killed** by an airstrike in Yemen. Al-Asiri was the plotter of attacks against international and U.S. targets, including the 2009 plot of the “underwear bomber” who tried to take down a U.S. airliner. **According to** former CIA acting director Michael Morell, it was the most significant removal of a terrorist from the battlefield since the killing of Osama bin Laden.

This was the latest success in Yemen against al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) by a closely coordinated intelligence and military operation between the United Arab Emirates and the United States. Led on the ground by the UAE, this intensive campaign has removed more than 2,000 hardcore militants from the battlefield, improved security, and delivered humanitarian and development assistance to the port city of Mukalla and other liberated areas.

Just three years ago, AQAP was riding high in Yemen. It had seized a third of the country, was terrorizing Yemenis and was plotting more attacks against American and international targets. Today, AQAP is reduced to its weakest point since 2012.

Unfortunately, AQAP is not the only major threat in Yemen. The other is Iran and its Hezbollah-like proxy group, the Houthis, who triggered the current political and humanitarian crisis in Yemen. Representing barely 5 percent of the country’s population, the Houthis violently overthrew Yemen’s legitimate government in 2014-2015, and seized the capital, other large cities and the entire Red Sea coast. The first line of their adopted call to arms is “**Death to America.**”

Iran is providing the Houthis some of most sophisticated weaponry and know-how ever obtained by a nonstate actor. As documented in detail by the United Nations, the United States and independent experts, the Houthi **arsenal includes** anti-ship missiles and remotely guided explosive boats launched at naval vessels and commercial oil tankers; hundreds of **ballistic missiles**, rockets and armed aerial drones targeting cities and civilians in Saudi Arabia; and more than half a million **landmines** and improvised explosive devices indiscriminately placed with devastating consequences to the Yemeni people.

With a [mandate](#) from the United Nations, the UAE, as part of a larger Arab coalition, is making significant progress against the Houthis. Large parts of southern Yemen have been liberated. Much of the Red Sea coast is secured with the focus now on Hodeida, the last major port under Houthi control. This calibrated offensive has reduced the danger to international shipping, applied additional pressure on the Houthis to negotiate and, in what has always been the most critical priority, maintained the flow of humanitarian assistance.

While the UAE is a leader in the fight against extremism and aggression, others are enabling and prolonging it. As the United States [tightened sanctions](#) last month on Iran for its interference in Yemen and across the Middle East, Qatar again showed itself as the favored benefactor of Islamic extremism. Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad al-Thani, the emir of Qatar, called Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to [offer Qatar's support](#) with expanded maritime cooperation, investment incentives and construction contracts.

Qatari complicity goes deeper. As The Post reported in April, Qatar made [ransom payments of hundreds of millions of dollars directly](#) to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and other extremists to free kidnapped Qatari royals. In Yemen, Qatar's flagship Eid Charity [lavished millions on](#) designated AQAP ringleader Abd al-Wahhab al-Humayqani, who previously worked in Qatar's ministry of religious affairs. Its state-owned and -funded Al Jazeera media network is the region's extremist bullhorn, while terrorist moneymen designated by the United States, the United Nations and others enjoy haven in Doha.

In glaring contrast, the UAE and the United States fight hand in hand against AQAP in Yemen, just as we did against the Taliban and al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, al-Shabab in Somalia and the Islamic State in Syria.

For now, the priority must be ending the war in Yemen. The UAE believes a political process offers the only lasting solution and strongly supports the efforts of U.N. special envoy for Yemen, Martin Griffiths — efforts that the Houthis [rejected just days ago](#) by skipping scheduled talks in Geneva.

The security risks on and around the Arabian Peninsula proliferate. The Houthis are defiant and dangerous, reliant on their Iranian lifeline. AQAP remains a persistent threat as long as Yemen is without effective governance and security. These stateless actors terrorize nations and global commerce with Iranian-supplied ballistic missiles and weaponized drones. They produce suicide bombers capable of blowing up airplanes over the American homeland.

The Middle East is a complicated and dangerous place, but the UAE is absolutely clear about our vision of the region and the partners who share it. While some hedge their bets with Iran, the UAE is fighting its most dangerous proxy. While others enable and encourage the extremists, the UAE stands with the United States on the front line to defeat them. It is difficult and deadly work, but the UAE, the United States and the international community are safer because of it.

Read more:

[Michael Morell: Trump's team just took out one of the most dangerous terrorists since Bin Laden](#)

[Sheikh Meshal bin Hamad Al-Thani: The United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia are aiding terrorists in Yemen](#)

[David Ignatius: The brutal war in Yemen may be moving toward a tipping point](#)

[Letters to the Editor: The Houthis are the main obstacle to peace in Yemen](#)

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