



2015 SAUDI-LED INTERVENTION IN YEMEN:

ORDER OF BATTLE

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Nations Pledging Combat Forces to Saudi-led Intervention:

Saudi Arabia (GCC)
Bahrain (GCC)
Kuwait (GCC)
Qatar (GCC)
UAE (GCC)
Egypt
Jordan
Morocco
Sudan

Saudi Arabia has pledged more than 100 aircraft and claims to be deploying up to 150,000 ground troops to its southern border with Yemen since launching Operation Decisive Storm on March 25, 2015.¹ The Egyptian Navy, along with the Royal Saudi Navy (RSN), has established a presence near Bab al Mandab, in the Red Sea off Yemen's coast, in order secure major shipping lanes and deter al Houthi attempts at reinforcement.²

Although Saudi Arabia announced the end of Operation Decisive Storm on April 21 after its objectives were apparently met, military operations including fixed-wing airstrikes have continued under a new operation entitled Restoring Hope.³

The following is an accounting of combat forces (air, land, and sea) currently arrayed as part of Operation Decisive Storm and its successor Operation Restoring Hope. Air operations are reportedly being commanded from Prince Sultan Airbase's Air Operations Center just southeast of Riyadh.⁴

AIR

Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF) Combat Aircraft Squadrons:⁵

2nd Wing – Taif Airbase, Mecca Region†

3rd Squadron RSAF – F-15C (air defense)‡

10th Squadron RSAF – Typhoon (multirole fighter)

34th Squadron RSAF – F-15C (air defense)

3rd Wing and 11th Wing – King Abdul Aziz Airbase, Dhahran, Eastern Province

7th Squadron RSAF – Tornado IDS (attack)

13th Squadron RSAF – F-15C (air defense)

75th Squadron RSAF – Tornado IDS (attack)

83rd Squadron RSAF – Tornado IDS (attack)

92nd Squadron RSAF – F-15S (multirole fighter)

5th Wing – King Khalid Airbase, Khamis Mushayt, Asir Region

6th Squadron RSAF – F-15S (multirole fighter)

55th Squadron RSAF – F-15S (multirole fighter)

99th Squadron RSAF – Cougar MKII (combat support)

7th Wing – King Faisal Airbase, Tabuk Region

2nd Squadron RSAF – F-15C (air defense)

Royal Saudi Land Forces (RSLF) Army Aviation Combat Brigades:⁶

2nd Aviation Brigade RSLF, AH-64A Attack Helicopters - King Khaled Military City, Eastern Province

Other Coalition Combat Air Assets:

Bahrain: Between 8 and 15 F-16 aircraft⁷

† The airbases listed denote an air wing's home base and do not account for redeployments since the start of Operation Decisive Storm, of which there are likely to be many.

‡ This list includes only aircrafts with air defense, multirole fighter, or attack roles. It does not include any logistical support aircraft or aircraft serving in other non-combat capacities. RSAF maintains at least 33 fixed-wing squadrons, of which only 12 serve in a direct combat capacity, according to IHS Janes.

Kuwait: between 15 aircraft⁸ and 3 squadrons of F/A-18 Hornet deployed to King Abdul Aziz Airbase, Dhahran⁹

Qatar: 10 Dassault Mirage 2000 aircraft¹⁰

UAE: 30 fighter aircraft¹¹

Egypt: 12 F-16 Block-52 aircraft¹²

Jordan: 6 F-16 aircraft¹³

Morocco: providing 6-10 F-16¹⁴ aircraft under UAE command¹⁵

Sudan: 3-4 Sukhoi-24 deployed to King Khaled Airbase, Khamis Mushayt¹⁶

SEA

Royal Saudi Navy (RSN) Forces Available:¹⁷

Western Fleet (participation confirmed but specific ship involvement unavailable)¹⁸

Three La Fayette Type F-3000S frigates

Four al Madina-class frigates

Two al Siddiq-class fast attack craft (missile)

One Addriyah-class (US MSC-322) coastal minesweeper

Halter-class patrol craft

Simmoneau 51-class inshore patrol craft

Two Durrance-class replenishment ships

Egyptian Naval Forces Deployed to Bab al Mandab:

At least 4 vessels,¹⁹ including:

ENS Alexandria F911 Oliver Hazard Perry-class Frigate²⁰

Sulayman Ezzat 682 Ambassador MK Class Fast Attack Craft²¹

Fuad Zakri 684 Ambassador MK III-class Fast Attack Craft²²

LAND**Royal Saudi Land Forces (RSLF) Available:**²³

Headquarters: Riyadh

King Khaled Military City, Eastern Province

45th Armored Brigade

8th Mechanized Brigade

20th Mechanized Brigade

King Faisal Military City, Tabuk, Tabuk Region

12th Armored Brigade

6th Mechanized Brigade

King Abdul Aziz Military City, Khamis Mushayt, Asir Region

4th Armored Brigade

10th Mechanized Brigade

11th Mechanized Brigade

Support Units

8 Independent Artillery Battalions

Saudi Royal Guards:²⁴

1st Battalion RG – King Faisal Military City, Tabuk, Tabuk Region

2nd Battalion RG – King Abdul Aziz Military City, Khamis Mushayt, Asir Region

3rd Battalion RG – King Khaled Military City, Eastern Province

Saudi Special Forces: (confirmed participation in Decisive Storm)²⁵

RSLF Airborne Brigade - Riyadh²⁶: 2 Parachute Battalions and 3 Special Forces Companies

RSN Maritime Security Units – deployed with Western and Eastern fleets²⁷

Saudi Arabian National Guard§ (SANG):²⁸ (mobilized April 22, intended role unclear)²⁹

Riyadh Region -Riyadh

Imam Muhammad bin Saud (IMBS) Mechanized Brigade

Prince Saad Abd Al Rahman (PSAR) Mechanized Brigade

SANG Security Forces (Presidential Security, Counter Terrorism, Military Police)

Turki Mechanized Brigade

King Khalid Light Infantry Brigade

“Al Fawj” Tribal Forces (irregular)

Eastern Region – Al Damman

King Abdul Aziz (KAA) Mechanized Brigade – Hofuf, Eastern Province

Prince Mohammed Abdul Rahman Al Saud Light Infantry Brigade

“Al Fawj” Tribal Forces (irregular)

Western Region – Jeddah

King Saud Light Infantry Brigade – Jeddah

King Faisal Light Infantry Brigade – Medina

Omar bin Kattab Light Infantry Brigade – Taif

4 Independent Light Infantry Battalions

RSN Marines (3,000)³⁰

1st Marine Battalion (Jubail, Eastern Province)

2nd Marine Battalion (Qadimah, Mecca Region)

Saudi Border Guards:

Total strength estimated by Jane’s at 15,000. Specific unit deployments are not available.³¹ The Saudi government has augmented the Border Guards since the start of Saudi military operations against the al Houthis with RSLF units and possibly others, including artillery units.³² Saudi armor has been spotted in transport multiple times, likely moving south to Yemeni border.³³

Southern Garrison Bases: Jazan, Asir, Najran³⁴

§ National Guard Forces fall under the jurisdiction of the Saudi Ministry of Interior rather than the Ministry of Defense. Although charged with internal security, SANG forces are better equipped and funded than RSLF units due to their close relationship with the Saudi royal family.

The garrison in Harth Sector, Jazan Region, under the command of Colonel Hassan Aqili,³⁵ has received reinforcements from the Saudi armed forces. According to Colonel Aqili, patrols in his sector currently cover 68km of the Saudi-Yemen border around Harth.³⁶

Notes

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¹⁷ Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment – The Gulf States, Saudi Arabia, Navy” Jane’s Information Group, July 25, 2014.

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