

# UAE-Backed Forces Capture City Amid Saudi-Emirati Rivalry in Yemen

SEIYUN, Yemen (Dispatches) — Forces aligned with the UAE-backed Southern Transitional Council (STC) captured the city of Seiyun in Yemen's Hadhramaut province on Wednesday, escalating a bitter proxy struggle between Saudi and Emirati-backed factions in a country already devastated by years of foreign military intervention.

The STC, a secessionist movement seeking to carve out a UAE-influenced state in southern Yemen, announced the takeover under the codename "Promising Future," claiming it was responding to decades of "terrorist operations, security disturbances, smuggling, and injustice" in the province.

Seiyun, the second-largest city in Hadhramaut, is strategically located in Yemen's largest province, which contains rich oil and mineral reserves and a 450-kilometer coastline.

An anonymous STC official told Reuters that the group now aims to "control all of Hadhramaut" and crush any opposition. STC spokesman Anwar al-Tamimi accused local tribal leader Amr bin Habrish of ties to Daesh and Al-Qaeda, framing the offensive as a mission to "secure this strategic area" and prevent Ansarul-lah influence, despite no evidence of the Sana'a-based resistance movement's presence.



*A fighter loyal to the Southern Transitional Council (STC) holds a separatist flag, symbolizing the group's territorial claims amid escalating conflict in southern Yemen.*

The operation underscores the dangerous rivalry between Riyadh and Abu Dhabi, which, under the guise of supporting local autonomy, are competing to dominate Yemen's resources and ports.

While Saudi Arabia supports the fugitive Presidential Leadership Council (PLC), the UAE has embedded itself in southern Yemen through the STC, often employing foreign mercenaries and extremist fighters.

The STC now controls much of Marib, Shabwa, and the southern coast, while PLC forces attempt to maintain footholds in northern Hadhramaut.

Observers warn that Hadhramaut is on the verge of violent collapse. The Hadhramaut Tribal Alliance, aligned with the PLC, has mobilized the Hadhramaut Protection Forces to defend the province's oil reserves and transport routes, warning of a "clear attempt to control the governorate" by "external forces." Analysts say the conflict risks turning the province into a battleground between two foreign-backed factions while ordinary Yemenis suffer.

Yemen's ongoing fragility is compounded by Israeli and Western military campaigns, including airstrikes and broader destabilization, which

have left the state weakened and fragmented.

Critics accuse the UAE and Saudi Arabia of pursuing neo-colonial ambitions, exploiting Yemen's instability to control its natural resources and strategic locations, while humanitarian catastrophe continues unabated.

The capture of Seiyun highlights how foreign powers are deepening Yemen's fragmentation, turning the province into a testing ground for regional influence, and sidelining the Yemeni people in a war increasingly defined by the ambitions of outside actors rather than domestic governance or reconciliation.

This latest escalation demonstrates that Yemen remains a theater for a broader proxy war, with Saudi and UAE forces jockeying for control over territory and resources, even as the country endures unprecedented humanitarian and military pressures from external powers.

The UAE has also coordinated closely with Israel to consolidate its foothold in Yemen, particularly across strategic islands and key southern provinces.

This partnership has enabled Emirati-backed STC forces to establish a quasi-occupation, controlling ports, airstrips, and resource-rich areas while sidelining Yemen's federal government.

## Hundreds of Israeli Police Warn of Violence if Netanyahu Pardoned

OCCUPIED AL-QUDS (Dispatches) — Hundreds of retired Israeli police officers have delivered a pointed warning to president Isaac Herzog, urging him to reject prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu's request for a pardon in multiple high-profile corruption cases.

Netanyahu, facing charges of bribery, fraud, and breach of public trust across three separate cases, formally submitted his plea for clemency on November 30, framing it as a step necessary to "heal divisions" in Israeli society.

In a scathing letter, roughly 400 former law enforcement officials — including ex-commissioners and deputy commissioners — condemned the pardon request as morally indefensible, noting that it contains "not even a hint of admission of guilt."

They warned that granting clemency without confession or genuine remorse could spark widespread unrest and "ignite severe violence" in an already deeply polarized society.

The retired officers invoked historical precedent, pointing to 1984 when Herzog's father, former president Chaim Herzog, granted clemency to officers involved in the Bus 300 affair only after they had confessed, expressed alleged

remorse, and resigned.

The letter stressed that Netanyahu's pardon would represent a politically motivated escape from accountability.

The controversy takes on added weight amid international scrutiny. Netanyahu is the subject of an arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) over war crimes against Palestinians in Gaza.

ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan confirmed in 2024 that warrants were being sought for Netanyahu and his former war minister, Yoav Gallant, intensifying calls for accountability.

Adding a provocative dimension, U.S. President Donald Trump, himself embroiled in multiple legal cases, has reportedly written to Herzog recommending that Netanyahu be pardoned, drawing sharp criticism from settlers and legal experts who see the move as inappropriate interference.

The standoff underscores broader chaos in Israeli occupied territories amid corruption, lack of accountability, and the erosion of judicial norms.

Netanyahu's bid for a pardon, critics argue, risks transforming Israel's legal system into a tool of political survival.

## Gaza Families in Shock as Mutilated Bodies Returned by Israel

GAZA CITY (Dispatches) — Palestinian families are grappling with grief and uncertainty as they receive bodies of relatives returned by Israel following the October ceasefire, many bearing signs of mutilation and missing body parts.

The handover has left families with partial answers, while raising new questions about the treatment of their loved ones in Israeli custody.

The Palestinian Ministry of Health in Gaza has received 345 bodies, yet only 99 have been identified. Most arrived frozen, some with hands and feet bound, stitched incisions, or missing fingers and toes.

Palestinian forensic doctors say they are unable to conduct full examinations due to a lack of equipment such as DNA testing facilities and 4D CT scanners. Khalil Hamada, director general of forensic medicine, said, "Handling the bodies is extremely difficult. Many remain unidentifiable and are buried without names."

Muhammad Ayesh Ramadan, from Deir al-Balah, identified his 37-year-old brother Ahmed after days of searching. "The body was burned, extremely stiff, completely frozen. There was a stitched incision from his chest downward. My brother had never had surgery before," he said, noting multiple gunshot wounds and missing toes.

In Beit Hanoun, Zeinab Ismail Shabat identified her 34-year-old brother Mahmoud, whose hands were tied, legs bound, and body stripped. He had a fractured skull, gunshot

wounds, and marks consistent with restraint. "It was clear he was martyred while restrained," she said.

Other families reported similar conditions: amputated fingers and toes, burns, shrapnel wounds, and fractured bones. Many relatives are identified mainly through clothing and distinctive features, with photos of the remains displayed at Nasser Hospital and online for those unable to attend.

Palestinian doctors say Israeli authorities remove parts of bodies, such as thumbs or toes, reportedly for DNA testing, complicating identification. Israel does not provide names, condition reports, or cause-of-death information to Gaza authorities, limiting their ability to comprehensively investigate or confirm the circumstances of each death.

Forensic teams are forced to rely on visual markers, clothing, and personal effects to help families identify their loved ones.

"Without proper documentation or internal examinations, we can only verify a few distinguishing features," said Khalil Hamada, director of forensic medicine in Gaza.

This lack of information leaves many bodies unidentified, forcing mass or anonymous burials, and deepening the anguish of families who remain uncertain about the fate of their relatives.

The ongoing limitations underscore the broader humanitarian and logistical challenges faced by Gaza's health system in handling the aftermath of the war.

## Trump Mulls Arming Kurdistan Sparking Sovereignty Concerns in Iraq

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) — U.S. President Donald Trump said Washington is considering providing advanced air defense systems to Iraq's semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region, following last week's attack on the Khor Mor gas field in eastern Sulaimani province, a move that risks inflaming tensions with Iraq's federal government and neighboring Turkey.

Trump made the remarks during a White House Cabinet meeting, in response to questions about the attack, in which eight rockets targeted the gas field, halting production for four days.

No casualties were reported, and local authorities attributed the strike to certain militias. U.S. officials have invested in the field, making the protec-

tion of these facilities a stated priority.

Providing sophisticated defense systems to the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) is highly sensitive. Iraqi officials have long warned that arming the region independently could undermine Baghdad's sovereignty and embolden separatist ambitions. The potential transfer of U.S. military hardware risks further alienating Ankara, which views Kurdish militarization along its southern border as a direct security threat.

The development follows recent U.S. troop movements, with over 2,000 personnel repositioned to Kurdistan under the guise of a broader withdrawal from Iraq. Analysts say these deployments, combined with potential weapons transfers, treat the KRG as effectively

independent from Iraq, provoking Baghdad and regional powers alike.

Trump framed the move as part of a broader strategy to counter Iranian influence. "Iraq has been much different in terms of us than they were prior to us taking out the nuclear capability of Iran," he claimed, referring to the June strike with B-2 bombers.

Trump also claimed that Iraqi Prime Minister Muhammad Shia' al-Sudani and 78 other countries nominated him for the Nobel Prize, a comment widely seen as self-aggrandizing amid escalating U.S. provocations in the region.

The attack on the Khor Mor gas field has been condemned internationally. Critics say Washington's rhetoric and potential weapons transfers risk undermining Iraq's sovereignty, destabilizing

an already volatile region, and escalating tensions with Iran and Turkey.

Iraqi resistance leader Sheikh Akram al-Kaabi denounced Trump's envoy, calling U.S. involvement in Iraq a "shameless" violation of sovereignty and accusing the United States of looting Iraqi resources.

The comments highlight deep domestic opposition to Washington's handling of Iraqi security and the perception that Kurdistan is being treated as separate from Iraq.

As the U.S. weighs providing air defense systems, analysts warn that the move could exacerbate internal Iraqi divisions, heighten Turkish security concerns, and further entrench U.S. influence in a region where sovereignty and stability remain fragile.

## Report: Israeli Soldiers Serving in ICE During U.S. Immigration Crackdown

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) — Shocking new social media revelations state that scores of former Israeli soldiers are embedded within the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), highlighting a disturbing militarization of immigration enforcement and raising concerns about foreign influence on domestic operations.

An account on X, "Project Constitution," claims that at least 121 ex-Israeli operatives are serving as ICE agents in Chicago alone, suggesting a deep Israeli footprint within the agency.

The account further alleges that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), which oversees ICE, has maintained operations from Tel Aviv since 2008, effectively treating the United States as occupied territory.

The allegations come amid widespread criticism of ICE's aggressive tactics under President Donald Trump's deportation push, including raids on workplaces, masked operations in un-

marked vehicles, and violent arrests of migrants and asylum seekers.

Human Rights Watch documented similar raids in Los Angeles during summer 2025, with arrests often targeting individuals with no criminal record. Videos from New York and Chicago show agents using excessive force, tear gas, and vehicular intimidation to coerce "voluntary departures," terrorizing Latino and immigrant communities nationwide.

The prospect of hiring private bounty hunters to track undocumented migrants further underscores the growing privatization and militarization of U.S. immigration enforcement.

The social media claims also draw a parallel to Israeli occupation practices, noting that Israel operates its own version of ICE across the occupied Palestinian territories, enforcing deportations and raids in Gaza and the West Bank.

Critics argue that embedding former Israeli troops in U.S. immigration operations imports the same oppressive tactics, raising questions

about accountability and respect for civil rights.

Leaked emails from the Handala hacking group reveal additional Israeli influence in U.S. media through advocacy networks like the now-defunct Act for Israel, which coordinated interviews, media trips, and messaging campaigns to shape coverage in favor of Israel.

The leaked documents indicate that Israel's so-called ministry of foreign affairs worked directly with U.S.-based organizations to influence public perception and counter international criticism, particularly regarding Gaza and Iran.

Experts say the efforts, including funding and orchestrated media appearances, should have been registered under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA).

Critics warn that these revelations expose the troubling fusion of foreign military influence and domestic law enforcement in the United States, raising questions about sovereignty, accountability, and the use of paramilitary tactics against vulnerable communities.