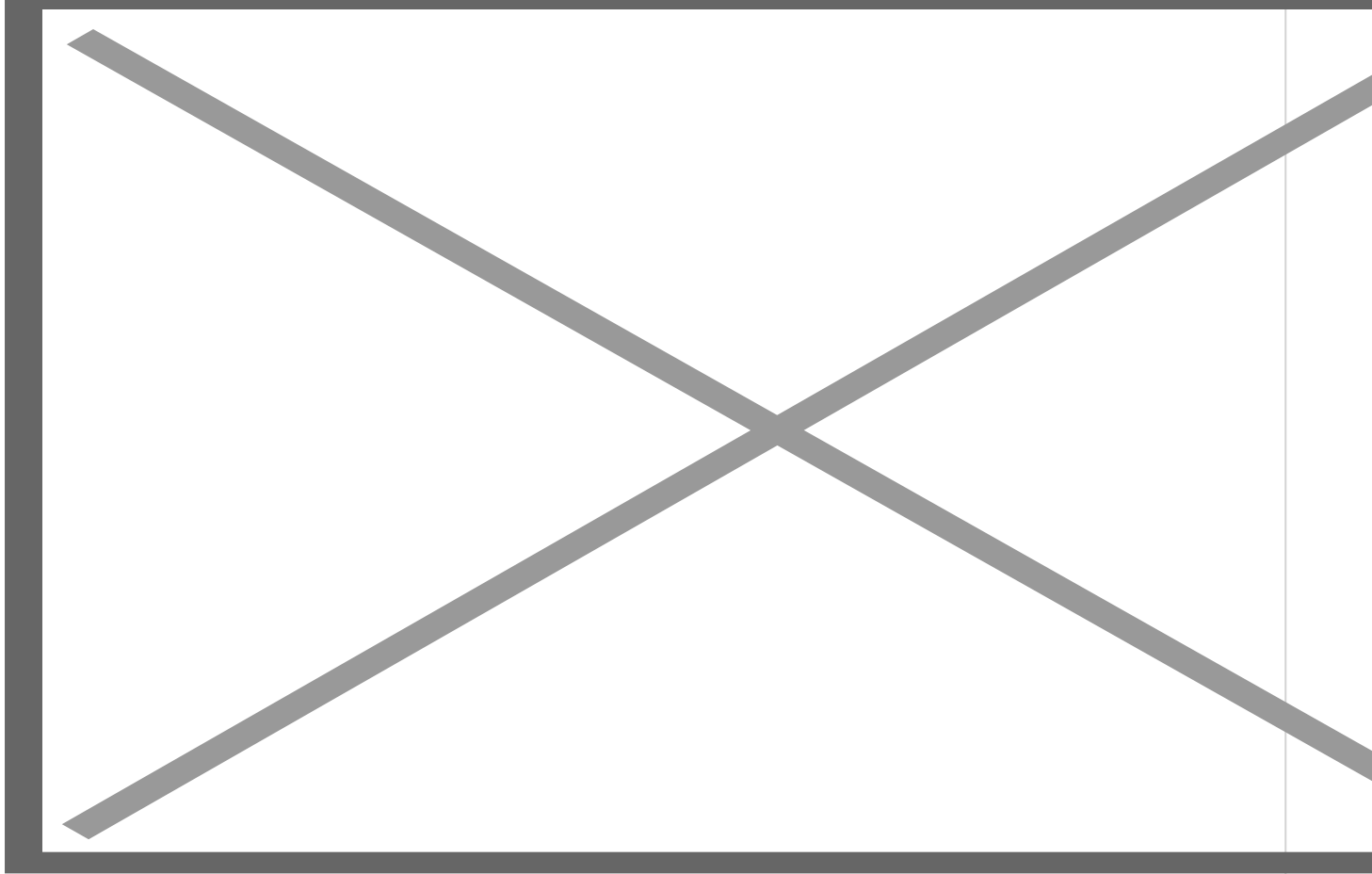


U.S. forces occupy southwestern Yemeni airbase after leaving Afghanistan

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File photo of the United States' forces as they are being transferred in Afghanistan

Kabul, July 15 (RHC)-- A group of the military forces that the U.S. has taken out of Afghanistan have been sent over to Yemen, where they have occupied a strategic southwestern airbase.

Yemen Press Agency carried the report on Tuesday, saying the forces first arrived at the Aden International Airport in the Aden Province, and were then taken northwards to the neighboring province of

Lahij. The troops were stationed in the al-Anad Airbase in Lahij afterward.

The development came after the Pentagon said 95 percent of the process of US forces' withdrawal from Afghanistan had already been completed. The U.S. has been providing strong political and material support for a 2015-present Saudi-led invasion of Yemen, the Arab world's already poorest country.

The invasion has been seeking to return power to Yemen's former Saudi Arabia-friendly officials. The war has killed tens of thousands of Yemenis and forced the entire country close to the brink of outright famine.

Washington and its allies have been lending willing arms support to the coalition, including by giving it precision ammunition that the Saudi-led invaders have been using amply against Yemeni children and others. American fuel tankers also provided aerial refueling for the coalition's warplanes during the biggest part of the war.

The Western allies have, meanwhile, been campaigning feverishly at the international organizations in favor of the impoverished country's invaders. Amid the Americans' arrival at the base in Lahij, Saudis expelled the forces belonging to the United Arab Emirates, who used to be deployed there, the Yemeni agency said. The expulsion was reportedly preceded by clashes between the Saudi and Emirati sides.

Washington has also reportedly engaged in heavy military buildup at al-Anad by transferring dozens of military vehicles, drones, and Patriot missile systems to the outpost and setting up a field operations command center there.

The U.S. forces' transfer to the airbase reportedly coincided with the al-Qaeda and Daesh Takfiri terrorist groups' defeat in a major operation in the al-Bayda Province in central Yemen. The news agency said the U.S. used to count on the groups to help it pressure Yemen.

However, the terrorists suffered a heavy defeat recently during a joint operation they had launched--together with the forces loyal to the former Riyadh-allied officials--against Yemen's defense forces, it added.

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