

# Strategic and Tactical Aerial Reconnaissance in the Near East

by [Charles P. Wilson \(/experts/charles-p-wilson\)](#)

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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**D**uring the Cold War, the United States used several intelligence platforms to help secure its interest in the Middle East. Reconnaissance aircraft and satellites played a crucial role in various Arab-Israeli wars, the Iran-Iraq War, and Operation Desert Storm. In fact, UAVs were first used by the United States on a large-scale basis during the latter conflict. Finally, U-2 aircraft played an important role in supporting United Nations weapons inspection in Iraq that followed the 1991 Gulf War.

The Washington Institute is pleased to publish Col. Chuck Wilson's study on the role aerial reconnaissance plays in dealing with the challenges of the post-Cold War Middle East. A U-2 pilot who commanded a U-2 squadron in Saudi Arabia, Col. Wilson brings both extensive personal experience and analytical expertise to the inaugural publication in The Washington Institute's Military Research Papers series.

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