

Benzheen

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BENZHEEN. An oil-rich desert nation that was allied with the United States. Benzheen is one of the Middle East's wealthiest nations thanks to its vast oil reserves that bring in money from nations all over the world. Benzheen is ruled by the Emir.

Benzheen was thrust into war when Cobra invaded the nation from the neighboring country of Trucial Abysmia in 1991. Their goal was to take control of the nation's oil fields. When Cobra invaded, the Emir escaped in a fighter jet, just seconds before being killed. The Emir got word of the attack to the United States, and nearly the entire G.I. Joe team was sent to free Benzheen. The war that followed was a short but bloody conflict, during which many Joes lost their lives. The Emir was an arrogant man who questioned Hawk's command constantly, and seemed more interested in saving his art treasures than freeing his people. The Emir's attitude made it come as no surprise that a small faction of rebels tried to end the Emir's rule, even involving the Joes in the conflict. During the Battle of Benzheen, many Joes were killed when Cobra artillery ignited some of Benzheen oil storage tanks, causing a spectacular explosion. The Emir grew tired of Hawk's "incompetent" command and sought out Cobra Commander to make a deal to save his country. The Emir made the deal, but did so at gunpoint. Essentially, the Commander held the nation for ransom, and the Emir was forced to give huge amounts of money to Cobra. Even so, this ended the conflict and outraged the Joes. Their fight for Benzheen and the loss of their comrades were all for nothing in the end. Cobra has since left the country mostly alone, and the United States is much less willing to trust the Emir.

(GI 109-115)