

Trump's Renewed Focus on Houthis Amid U.S. Strikes in Yemen

March 20, 2025 • vajiramandravi.com



Trump's Strategy on Houthis

What's in Today's Article?

- Trump's Strategy on Houthis Latest News
- Latest Trigger for U.S. Attacks on Houthis
- Trump's Objectives in Targeting the Houthis
- Houthi Resilience and Strategic Positioning
- Trump's Strategy on Houthis FAQs

Trump's Strategy on Houthis Latest News

- The U.S. launched over 40 precision strikes on Houthi-controlled areas in Yemen, including Sanaa, Sadaa, and Hodeidah Port, targeting Iran-backed militants.
- Former President Donald Trump warned the Houthis and Iran, stating that Houthi attacks must stop and that Iran would face consequences for its support. He emphasized that any attack by the Houthis would be

considered an attack from Iran.

- In response, the Houthis escalated rhetoric and claimed multiple missile strikes on U.S. warships in the Red Sea.

Latest Trigger for U.S. Attacks on Houthis

- The Houthis' actions are linked to the Gaza conflict, which escalated after Israel resumed military operations in Jabalia recently, violating a ceasefire.

Red Sea Shipping Disruptions

- Since December 2023, Houthi attacks on Red Sea shipping lanes have forced vessels to reroute via the Cape of Good Hope, significantly increasing insurance costs and disrupting global trade.

U.S. Policy and Naval Operations

- **Biden's Approach (2024):** Listed Houthis as Specially Designated Global Terrorists but did not reclassify them as an FTO (Foreign Terrorist Organization).
- **Operation Prosperity Guardian (2023):** U.S. Navy-led mission to protect shipping lanes and ensure freedom of navigation.
- **Trump's Actions (2021 & 2025):** First designated Houthis as an FTO in 2021, then re-designated them in 2025.

Trump's Renewed Focus on Houthis

- Trump's recent Truth Social post emphasized that any Houthi attack is considered an attack by Iran, reinforcing the U.S. commitment to countering threats to global shipping and maritime security.

Trump's Objectives in Targeting the Houthis

- **Shift in U.S. Military Focus**
 - Since 2015, the U.S. has supported the Saudi-led Operation Restoring Hope against the Houthis.
 - During Trump's first term (2017-2020), U.S. military actions in Yemen primarily targeted Al Qaeda and ISIS, not the Houthis.
 - Houthi attacks in the Red Sea over the past 15 months have drawn the U.S. into direct military action against them.
- **Strategic Balancing: Targeting Houthis, Avoiding Iran War**
 - Trump's military strikes on Houthis serve as a warning to Iran while avoiding direct confrontation.
 - His social media posts reinforce pressure on Tehran, signaling potential nuclear negotiation leverage.
- **Official U.S. Justification and Arab States' Stance**
 - The White House statements focus solely on protecting Red Sea shipping from Houthi attacks.
 - Arab states, including Saudi Arabia, have distanced themselves from U.S. military actions, with Riyadh advising restraint since January 2024 and denying logistical support for U.S. strikes.

Houthi Resilience and Strategic Positioning

- The Houthis have endured over 20,000 airstrikes from the Saudi-led coalition (2015–2023).
- They use mobility and modular combat units, similar to Hezbollah's asymmetric warfare strategies.

Shift to Missile and Drone Warfare

- Before 2015, the Houthis did not use missiles but had already survived six wars (2004–2010) against Yemen's government.
- Since 2015, they have focused on drones, rockets, and missiles, mirroring Hezbollah's 2006 strategy against Israel.
- Despite continued U.S. and coalition airstrikes, the Houthis maintain operational capabilities, evident in ongoing attacks on Red Sea shipping.

Iran's Role: Influence vs. Independence

- Iran is the Houthis' main but not sole backer.
- Trump claims Iran controls the Houthis, but Tehran officially maintains that Ansar Allah operates independently.

Broader International Support: Russia & China

- China indirectly funds the Houthis by buying 90% of Iran's oil exports (2024).
- Russia provides intelligence and is reportedly expanding small arms and missile sales to the Houthis.
- Many Houthi anti-ship missiles are based on old Chinese C-802 designs.

U.S. Strikes: Limited Effect on Houthi Capabilities

- American analysts agree that sporadic U.S. strikes will dent but not eliminate the Houthis' military power.
- Diplomatic and military support from Iran, Russia, and China ensures the Houthis' continued resilience in the conflict.

Trump's Strategy on Houthis FAQs

Q1. Why did the U.S. strike Houthis in Yemen?

Ans. The U.S. launched airstrikes to stop Houthi attacks on Red Sea shipping lanes and global trade routes.

Q2. What is Trump's stance on Iran in this conflict?

Ans. Trump warns Iran, stating any Houthi attack will be treated as an attack by Iran, signaling potential retaliation.

Q3. How do the Houthis remain resilient?

Ans. They adopt mobile warfare tactics, rely on drones and missiles, and receive support from Iran, China, and Russia.

Q4. What role does China and Russia play in this conflict?

Ans. China indirectly funds Houthis via Iranian oil, while Russia provides intelligence and possibly arms.

Q5. Will U.S. airstrikes eliminate the Houthi threat?

Ans. Analysts believe sporadic strikes may weaken but won't eliminate Houthis due to their continued external support.

Source: IE | BBC

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/trumps-renewed-focus-on-houthis-amid-us-strikes-in-yemen/>

© Vajiram & Ravi. For personal use only.