



ENDING HOUTHI ATTACKS IN THE RED SEA AND GULF OF ADEN

Applied Policy Project

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April 2025



Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my client at the National Ground Intelligence Center (NGIC), Dr. Sean Edwards, for giving me the opportunity to research a challenge within my field of interest. I am also grateful for his willingness to work with me and provide guidance over the course of the school year.

I would also like to thank Dr. Alexander Bick of the Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy for his ongoing support and frequent, detailed feedback in completing this project. I thank Dr. John Robinson for the opportunity to apply my research to National Security Policy Center projects and for connecting me with multiple experts. I would like to thank Larry Cosgriff, President and CEO of Maritime Lens LLC, for offering expert opinions and sharing many helpful resources. I am finally grateful to Colonel Daniel Moy for sparking my interest in counterterrorism studies and advising me in those pursuits over the past few years.

Mandatory Disclaimer

The author conducted this study as part of the program of professional education at the Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, University of Virginia. This paper is submitted in partial fulfillment of the course requirements for the Masters of Public Policy degree. The judgements and conclusions are solely those of the author, and are not necessarily endorsed by the Batten School, by the University of Virginia, or by any other agency.

Key Abbreviations

ASBM – Anti-Ship Ballistic Missile

ABO – Access, Basing, and Overflight

BMP – Best Management Practices

CENTCOM – U.S. Central Command

CMF – Combined Maritime Forces

COG – Center of Gravity

CTF – Combined Task Force

DOD – U.S. Department of Defense

DOS – U.S. Department of State

ESSM – Block II Evolved Sea Sparrow Missiles

FTO – Foreign Terrorist Organization

ISR – Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance

JCPOA – Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action

MENA – Middle East and North Africa

NGIC – National Ground Intelligence Center

NSC – National Security Council

OWAD – One-Way Attack Drone

SM-2 – Standard Missile-2

UAE – United Arab Emirates

UAV – Unmanned Aerial Vehicle

UNVIM – United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism

U.S. – United States

USV – Unmanned Surface Vehicle

USDT – U.S. Department of Treasury

UUV – Unmanned Underwater Vehicle

VBSS – Visit, Board, Search, and Seizures

VNSA – Violent Non-State Actor

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Executive Summary

The Houthi extremist group is attacking military and merchant ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, cutting off international access to a critical maritime chokepoint. These actions disrupt maritime freedom and international trade, destabilize the region, and threaten U.S. national security interests. This memo recommends U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) create a strengthened international maritime coalition to deter Houthi attacks and restore freedom of navigation.

Existing U.S. strategies are insufficient to counter the evolving threat of Houthi attacks. Operation Prosperity Guardian and Operation Poseidon Archer failed to deter these attacks, and the Houthis responded to the first round of Trump administration offensive strikes with a declaration of war (El Dahan et al, 2025). My client at NGIC has requested that I focus on whole-of-government solutions or avenues for interagency coordination when addressing this problem instead of providing military-specific alternatives.

My client has requested I develop a contingency plan for CENTCOM to deter or defeat Houthi attacks in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. Based on reviews of deterrence literature and relevant case studies, I identify five alternative strategies that CENTCOM could use to achieve this goal:

1. Disrupt Iranian Weapons Transfers to Houthis
2. Establish Financial Strangulation Campaign of Houthi Group
3. Make Defensive Military Presence More Sustainable
4. Strengthen a Multinational Maritime Coalition for Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Security
5. Develop Houthi-Specific Best Management Practices (BMP) for Commercial Vessels

I assess each of the alternatives based on their potential impact, risk, cost, and feasibility. My analysis suggests that a combination of **strengthening a multinational maritime coalition** and **developing Houthi-specific BMP** would most effectively respond to the problem.

While ad hoc coalitions exist, such as the Operation Prosperity Guardian, there is no fully institutionalized, multinational maritime coalition dedicated to addressing the Houthi threat in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are key partners due to their relatively advanced defensive capabilities, regional economic sway, and advantageous basing and port access. Securing the UAE's commitment could grant this coalition control over strategically located bases in Eritrea, Somaliland, and off the coast of Yemen (The Gulf Security Task Force, 2023). The recommendation also involves investing in coalition coordination, intelligence gathering, and communication technologies, increasing joint patrols of the main Houthi maritime smuggling routes, and negotiating strategic access, basing, and overflight (ABO) agreements with coalition members.

Strengthening a multinational maritime coalition offers CENTCOM the most effective approach to countering Houthi threats. By institutionalizing collaboration among partners, improving intelligence gathering and sharing, and increasing the frequency of joint maritime patrols, this recommendation can directly reduce Houthi attack capabilities.

To succeed, CENTCOM must act decisively by initiating coalition-building efforts and securing stakeholder commitments. The time for action is now- without a unified, strategic response, the risks to global trade and regional security will only get worse.

Introduction

Though the U.S. has drastically reduced its footprint in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, maintaining regional stability is still integral to core U.S. national security interests. One of the current threats to that stability is the Yemen-based Houthi extremist group, which is a member of the Iranian-led ‘Axis of Resistance.’ The Houthis began a maritime campaign in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden in October of 2023, attacking merchant and military ships that attempt to access those shipping routes and the Suez Canal. The U.S. Navy Fifth Fleet is currently defending against these Houthi attacks, along with other U.S.-led efforts against the extremist group.

This report provides background information on the Houthi group and their attack capabilities, as well as past and ongoing U.S. efforts to counter their Red Sea and Gulf of Aden attacks. It provides an overview of the impacts of this conflict on international shipping, maritime freedom, and U.S. national security interests. This product identifies whole-of-government strategies that CENTCOM could use to defeat or deter Houthi attacks and evaluates these alternatives based on criteria of impact, risk, cost, and feasibility. The report uses this evaluation to select the recommended alternative and concludes by providing a suggested implementation plan that CENTCOM can use to mitigate the risks associated with the recommendation.

Problem Statement

The Iranian-backed Houthi group is currently attacking military and merchant ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, in addition to developing and acquiring new long-range missile technologies and successfully attacking a key U.S. ally. Should these attacks continue unchecked by U.S. action, the Houthis could inspire other non-state actors to adopt similar weapons and tactics for use against U.S. forces or allies in future conflicts. Thus, the Houthi maritime attacks disrupt international trade and maritime freedom, destabilize the region, and threaten U.S. national security interests.

Client Overview

This analysis is being done for Dr. Sean Edwards, Senior Intelligence Officer at NGIC, which is the service intelligence center for the U.S. Army. My client is the Middle East and Africa division of this group, which includes the Houthi territory of Yemen and their violence within the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. The CENTCOM has encouraged intelligence agencies to analyze the Houthi threat and develop methods of response given their position on the cutting edge of long-range missile technologies and engagement with other non-state actors.

Background

This section provides the necessary context for understanding the growth and current actions of the Houthi group. It begins with an explanation of the project scope, strategic relevance, and consequences to emphasize the importance of finding a solution. It then discusses the history of the Houthis and the ongoing conflict, as well as the causes of their current maritime attacks in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

This section then provides a brief overview of past and ongoing U.S. responses to this problem before concluding with a discussion of the roles of various U.S. agencies in coordinating future responses.

Project Scope

The current Houthi attacks on Israel and the Red Sea are a localized problem with global impacts, one which is closely connected to Iran's arming of extremist Shia militia groups throughout the MENA region. Ultimately, the U.S. must develop a strategy to counter the entire Axis of Resistance and Iran's 'Ring of Fire' strategy. Because that problem is far too complex for a single study, this paper has scoped the problem from the overall Houthi and Axis of Resistance threat to the threat of Houthi attacks in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

Given my client's prioritization in military-based intelligence and defending U.S. national security interests, my APP will analyze the problem of the Houthi attacks through the national security lens. Security concerns will be the primary focus of this analysis, though this project will still consider the impact of Houthi threats to international shipping and freedom of navigation.

Strategic Relevance of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden

The Red Sea and Gulf of Aden are main access points to the Suez Canal. Anywhere from 10-15% of international maritime commerce goes through the Red Sea (DIA, 2024). Houthi attacks not only threaten the core U.S. interest of free trade, but also impose costs that will affect economies globally. This region also provides a strategic line of maritime communication between the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean.

Consequences

Houthi attacks have continued unabated despite U.S. and ally strikes on Houthi targets or weapons, negatively impacting international shipping and threatening maritime freedoms (Blanchard, 2024). These attacks threaten global economic stability, especially given the strategic relevance of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, as described above.

Houthi attacks have decreased commercial transit through the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden by 72%, most of which divert around the Cape of Good Hope instead (Chambers, 2025). These diversions add an estimated \$200,000 to \$300,000 per vessel given the increases of 11,000 nautical miles and up to 10 days travel time (Seatrade Maritime News, 2024; Osler, 2024).

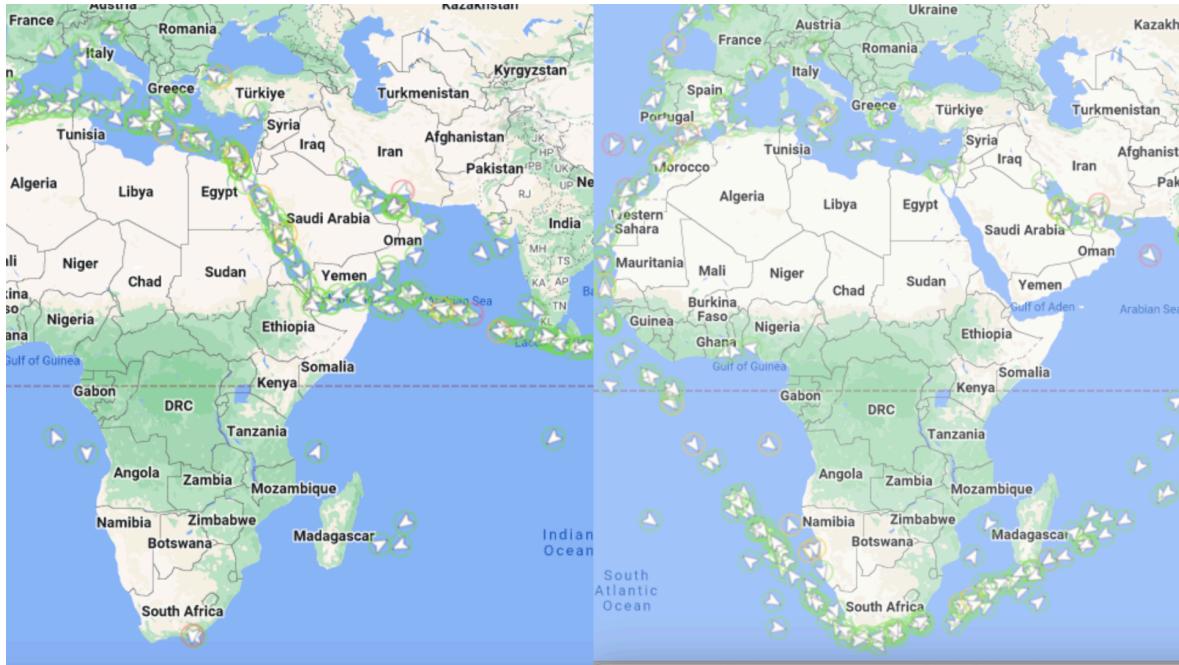


Figure 1: Vessel tracking data from before and after Houthi Red Sea and Gulf of Aden attacks
Source: Minchin, 2024.

In addition to the economic impact, the attacks are a destabilizing force for the MENA region and threaten U.S. national security interests. The Houthi group is proving that their missiles and UAV technology work against the traditionally superior U.S. forces, which could inspire other non-state actors to use similar tactics against the U.S. in the future. The Houthis have already expanded their network to include cooperation with al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, al-Shabaab, and the Islamic State in Somalia (The Soufan Center, 2024; Jalal & al-Jabarni, 2025). The al-Shabaab group has engaged in direct weapons negotiations with the Houthis and would likely use any smuggled weapons to attack U.S. bases and personnel in Somalia and perhaps even Djibouti (Karr, 2024). Houthi connections with Russia and China suggest that failing to successfully counter the Houthi attacks could have implications for the current great power competition as well, as both countries have considered weapons negotiations with the Houthi group (Abo Alasrar, 2025; Gering & Brodsky, 2025). Thus, the Houthi maritime attacks pose a substantial threat to current and future U.S. national security interests.

History

The Houthis, also known as the Ansar Allah Movement, are a Zaydi Shiite group from northern Yemen. They were founded in the 1990s in response to the existing Yemeni government's suppression of Zaidism and increasing Saudi influence in Yemen. The Houthis rose to power after starting a civil war against the Yemeni government in 2004. Iran has consistently supported the Houthis, claiming the group's actions during the Yemeni civil war as part of the Islamic Awakening movements (Glenn, 2015). The Houthis receive extensive mentoring and weapons technology due to their membership in the Iranian Axis of Resistance, maintaining close relationships with Lebanese Hezbollah and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (Knights, 2022). The group is currently led by Abdalmalik Al-Houthi and the Houthi Jihad Council. The organization of this Jihad Council demonstrates the extent of Houthi connections to Iran and Lebanese Hezbollah.

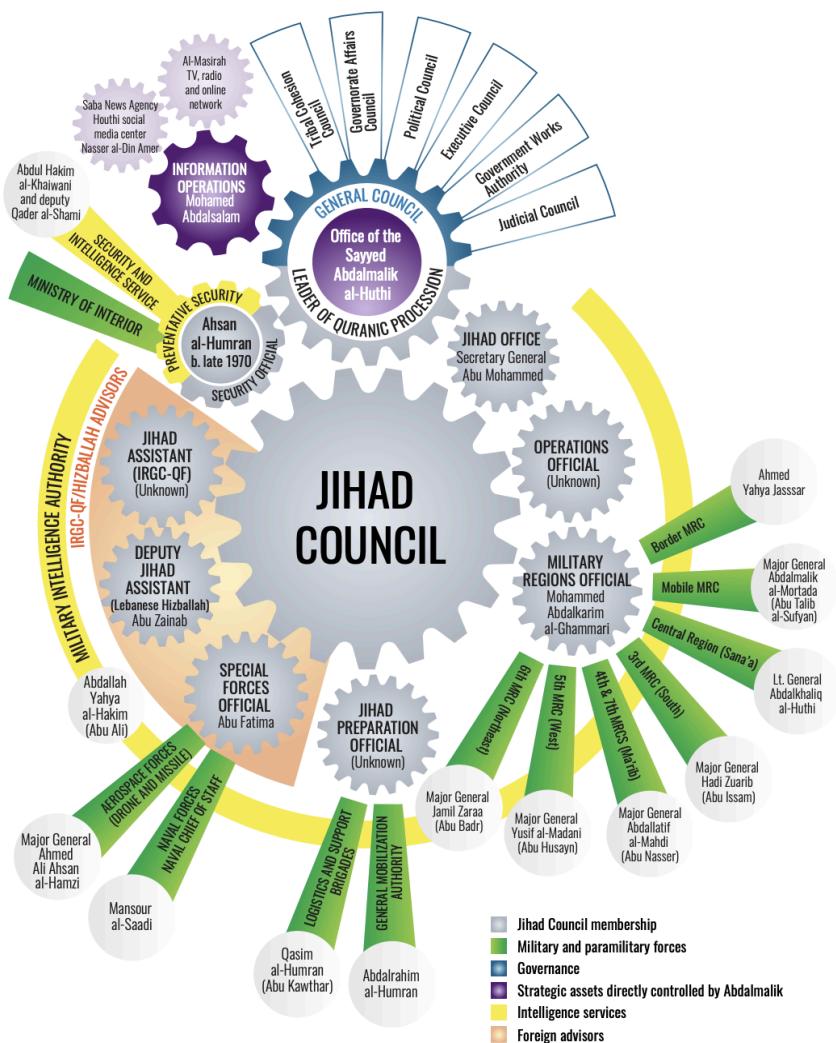


Figure 2: Organizational Chart of the Houthi Jihad Council

Source: Knights, 2022

Between November 19, 2023 and January 19, 2025 there were around 141 confirmed Houthi attacks against commercial ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden region and 81 involving CENTCOM forces. The attacks resumed on March 15, 2025 after the disruption of the Israel-Gaza ceasefire. Efforts shifted from boarding and seizing ships to sinking them in December of 2023. Though the attacks initially only targeted ships associated with Israel, the group began targeting U.S. ships as well after the start of U.S. airstrikes in January of 2024 (Knights, 2024). Appendix B provides a comprehensive overview of these attacks.

The Houthis have used a combination of missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), unmanned surface vehicles (USVs), and unmanned underwater vehicles (UUVs) in their Red Sea and Gulf of Aden attacks. These include the Sammad One-Way Attack UAV, the Waid 2 One-Way Attack UAV, the Burkan-3 Ballistic Missile, the Shahab-3 Ballistic Missile, the Hatem Ballistic Missile, the Quds-4 Cruise Missile, the Saqr Surface-to-Air Missile, and more. Most if not all of these weapons are extremely similar to Iranian versions (DIA, 2024). The current U.S. Navy's methods of defense against the Houthi maritime attacks are unsustainable, as U.S. destroyers are defending against attacks from \$2,000-\$20,000 Houthi drones with \$900,000-\$2,000,000 missiles (Fredenburg, 2024).

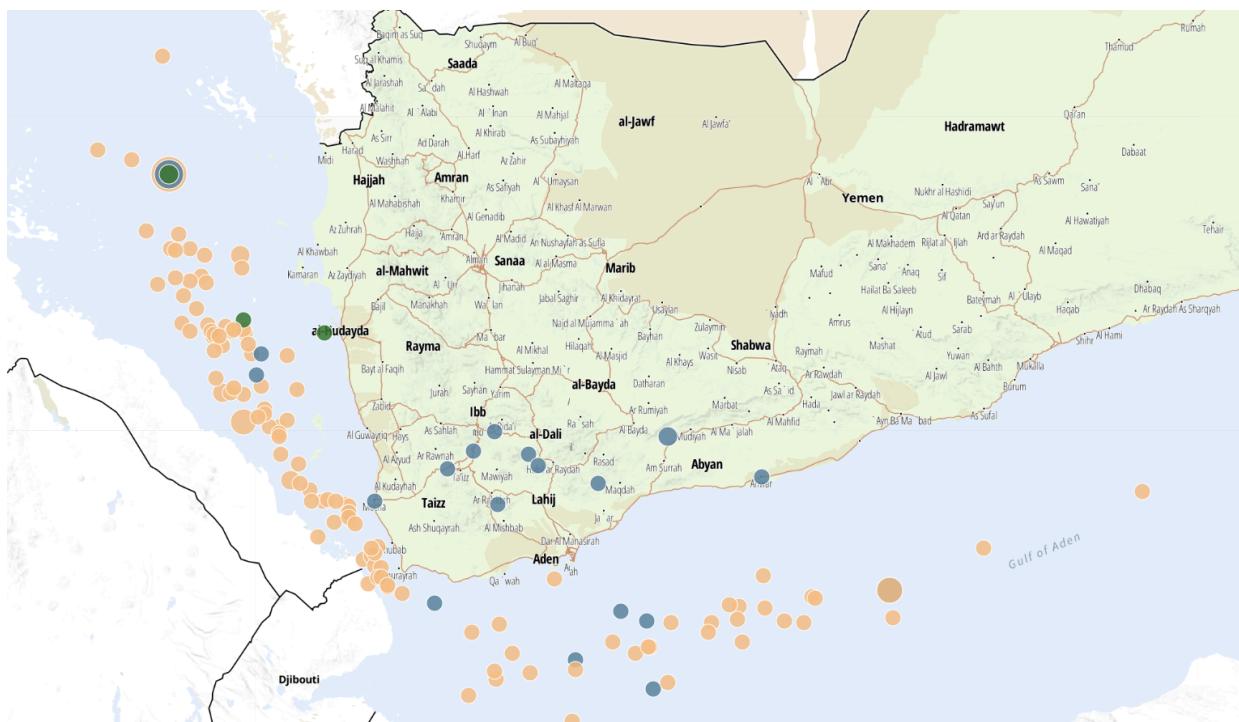


Figure 3: Conflict Tracker of Houthi Attacks in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden
Source: ACLED Yemen Conflict Observatory, Red Sea Attacks Dashboard

Causes

The first primary root causes of the current Houthi attacks on military and merchant vessels in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden are the Israeli attacks against Hamas during the War in Gaza, as well as the killing of Palestinian citizens by Israeli strikes and forces. The Houthis have stated that the attacks are in solidarity with Palestinian victims of Israeli bombings and that their attacks will stop when Israel's attacks stop (Power, 2024). Because of these public statements, I will be focusing on this aspect of the conflict as a potential avenue for alternatives. Assuming the Houthi claims are truthful, finding a way to stop the Gaza War would subsequently stop the Houthi Red Sea attacks. However, the secondary root causes of this primary root cause may make it difficult to address. Even if the U.S. is able to stop Israeli air strikes of Hamas leaders and Palestinians, the Houthis may not stop their attacks. The Houthi rallying cry is "God is great, death to America, death to Israel, a curse upon the Jews, victory to Islam," and an ideology that extreme may not be satisfied even if Israel stops their attacks in Gaza (Robinson, 2024). Additionally, it will be very difficult to create an alternative that stops the Gaza War while keeping Israeli citizens safe from the current Hamas, Hezbollah, and Houthi attacks, especially since there is no guarantee that any of those attacks will actually cease. Even if a future ceasefire between Israel and Hamas occurs and the Houthis temporarily halt attacks, their expanding arsenal of long range strike assets will continue to present a wicked military problem for both the U.S. and Israel.

A second and third primary root cause are the Houthi membership in the Iranian-led Axis of Resistance and their desire to increase their legitimacy within that alliance. If those alliances were to be disrupted, the Houthi group would lose much of their training support and weapons access. Iran and Lebanon's Hezbollah are the two main Axis groups to provide Houthi forces with military training and weapons, including many of the missiles that are currently being used to attack ships in the Red Sea (DIA, 2024). The Houthis are one of the newer and historically weaker groups in the Axis of Resistance, and these attacks could also be a way for the Houthis to increase their standing within this group (Feierstein, 2023). This root cause, specifically with regards to Iranian importance, is discussed further within the centers of gravity section of this background.

A final primary root cause is the Houthi struggle for legitimacy within Yemen and their desire to showcase their maritime war capabilities (Pollack et al, 2024). The Houthis have been in a military struggle with Saudi Arabia since the Saudi government led a military intervention in the Yemeni civil war in 2015 (Center for Preventative Action, 2024). The current attacks could be a warning to the Saudi government to discourage future intervention in Yemen conflicts by showcasing their missile and maritime military capabilities. Some believe that the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden attacks have been a powerful mobilization and recruitment tool for the Houthis, creating a common enemy for the Yemeni population and taking advantage of local support for

Palestine (Pollack et al, 2024). Though the idea of legitimacy and abilities-showcasing likely plays a large part in the Houthi attacks, it could be more deeply embedded in Yemeni society than the Axis-Houthi connection or the Gaza war. Therefore, I will explore this option to see if it lends itself to any diplomacy-based alternatives, but it will likely not be the main research focus. This root cause as it relates to the COG of Yemeni population support will be discussed more in the background.

Overview of Ongoing U.S. Responses

The U.S. announced Operation Prosperity Guardian on December 18, 2023 and issued a joint statement with allies condemning the Houthi maritime aggression on December 19, 2023 (DIA, 2024). The UN Security Council adopted the UNSC Joint Resolution 2722 on January 10, 2024 demanding that the Houthis stop their maritime aggression in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (UNSC, 2024). This helped legitimize the offensive air strikes of Operation Prosperity Guardian, which launched the first strikes against Houthi targets in Yemen on January 12, 2024 (DIA, 2024). These strikes targeted key locations such as missile, liquid fuel, and drone storage sites, training and depot sites, defense headquarters, smuggling resupply points, surveillance and communications platforms, air defense units, and operations supporting infrastructure (Knights, 2024). The U.S. designated the Houthis as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist group on February 16, 2024. This aims to disrupt the economic strength of the Houthi group by limiting their avenues of funding (Lenderking, 2024). The Houthi attacks against merchant and military ships in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden continued despite these efforts, even increasing immediately after the first U.S. air strikes in January of 2024 (ACLED, 2024).

The new administration under President Donald Trump has adopted a more aggressive Red Sea Strategy than the Biden administration, giving CENTCOM blanket permission to launch offensive strikes and promising “overwhelming lethal force” (Gambrell, 2025; Price et al, 2025).

There is little evidence that airstrikes alone will successfully degrade Houthi motivations or attack capabilities, a sentiment supported by statements from Vice Admiral George Wikoff (Seldin, 2024). The group has developed a system of trenches, bunkers, and tunnels to withstand such attacks (Ghobari, 2025). After the March 15 U.S. airstrikes, the Houthi foreign minister stated that “Yemen is at war with the US and that means we have a right to defend ourselves with all possible means, so escalation is likely” (El Dahan, 2025).

This suggests the need for the U.S. to develop strategies to respond to the Houthi threat.

Interagency Involvement

Almost every U.S. foreign policy goes through the National Security Council (NSC) Framework before receiving approval from the President. This process starts with the Interagency Policy

Committees, where experts from the Department of State (DOS), the Department of Defense (DOD), and various intelligence agencies decide on multiple possible responses to ongoing threats. The Deputies Committee and Principals Committee further refine these recommendations before sending them to the NSC. Recommendations are presented to the President during NSC meetings, and the President makes a final decision based on input from his NSC advisors (CFR, 2023).

The task of implementation then falls to the DOD and, for the purposes of action in the MENA region, CENTCOM. Military experts will develop operational plans based on the Presidential directives of objectives and strategies. The DOS would handle any diplomacy-based aspects of implementation. Each of the agencies involved in this process are integral to developing any unified response to the Houthi maritime attacks.

Evidence Review

This section briefly reviews the existing literature regarding deterrence theory and the deterrence of non-state actors. Because this literature emphasizes the importance of identifying and disrupting the main sources of operational power for the aggressor, or the center of gravity (COG), this section concludes by discussing those COGs for the Houthi group.

Theoretical and Academic Literature

Deterrence

Deterrence is a game of perceptions, or convincing the opponent that the risks of taking aggressive or otherwise undesirable actions are not worth the benefits. Because the Houthis are attacking the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden rather than U.S. territory, the conflict demands extended deterrence rather than direct, which is significantly more difficult because of increased distance and decreased credibility of threats (Mazarr, 2018). The U.S. can mitigate these pitfalls through the concept of integrated deterrence. At its most basic level, integrated deterrence is cooperating with allies and partners to jointly address a mutual threat, and it offers the benefits of burden-sharing and higher demonstrated commitment to countering that threat (Pettyjohn & Wasser, 2022).

States can deter either by denial or punishment, changing an aggressor's cost-benefit analysis by decreasing the potential for success or increasing post-attack penalties respectively (Mazarr, 2018). Denial decreases the perceived benefits of attacking, while punishment increases the perceived costs. Though exact deterrence strategies will vary based on the parties involved, success generally relies on three criteria: a clear understanding of the aggressor's motivations, a

clear statement of defender demands and punishments, and the perceived strength of the defender's capability and will to enact those punishments (Mazarr, 2018).

Deterring Violent Non-State Actors (VNSA)

The Houthis are considered a violent non-state actor (VNSA) engaging in asymmetric warfare. Because they are not officially recognized as a state, there are fewer diplomatic deterrence channels available, and the financial avenues are far more obscure. It is far more challenging to convey demands and consequences to a VNSA than an established and recognized state leadership (Shamir, 2021). Additionally, VNSAs are generally more extremist and elusive than traditional state actors (Shamar, 2021). However, the Houthis consider themselves the governing body of Yemen, they are at least partially responsible to Yemeni citizens and thus vulnerable to deterrence efforts (Sinai et al, 2019).

Deterring VNSAs, similar to traditional strategies, consists of both punishment and denial. However, the targets of these efforts are slightly different. While punishment efforts against states focus only on actors within that state, punishment of VNSAs includes any group sponsoring or aiding their actions as well (Payne, 2008). For the Houthis, this means that threats of punishment for attacks should include both the Houthi leadership and Iran. Additionally, deterrence strategies for VNSAs must emphasize intelligence and information gathering, as they must be tailored to their unique motivations, capabilities, and characteristics (Elbahy, 2017). This includes targeting the VNSA's high-value leaders or operatives, financial avenues, narratives, weapons acquisition, and external sponsorship (Shamir, 2021). Ultimately, deterrence efforts against VNSAs are possible, but they require more individualized and intelligence-based strategies than traditional frameworks.

Centers of Gravity (COG)

The literature on deterring VNSAs suggests the importance of identifying the Houthi's COGs. These are the group's main sources of power, or the characteristics so central to their continued operation that, if destroyed, the group would lose their ability to fight (Clausewitz, 1989). The Joint Publication 1-02 recognizes these as providing a group with "moral or physical strength, freedom of action, or will to act" (Gortney, 2016). This section outlines the Houthi COGs below.

Iranian and Axis of Resistance Support

Research suggests that one of the Houthi group's COGs is support from the Iranian-led Axis of Resistance. The U.S. Navy claimed to intercept five weapons shipments from Iran to the Houthis between April of 2015 and October of 2016 (Bergen. 2016). The U.S. Navy intercepted another shipment from Iran to the Houthis in January of 2024 containing technologies necessary for the medium range ballistic missiles and anti-ship cruise missiles that the Houthis use in their current Red Sea attacks (CENTCOM, 2024). Other intercepted transfers include UAVs, assault rifles,

and rocket components (DIA, 2024). Iranian arms transfers to the Houthis continue despite being outlawed by U.N. Security Resolution 2216. Though cutting off the smuggling routes between Iran and Yemen would reduce the Houthi attack capabilities, Iran has also trained the Houthis to develop their own weapons using local military and dual-use materials (Knights, 2022). It is unclear whether Houthi technological capabilities would allow them to maintain current Red Sea attack levels in the absence of Iranian support. Regardless, U.S. efforts should continue targeting Iranian resupply points and their naval supply routes to the Houthis (Knights, 2024).

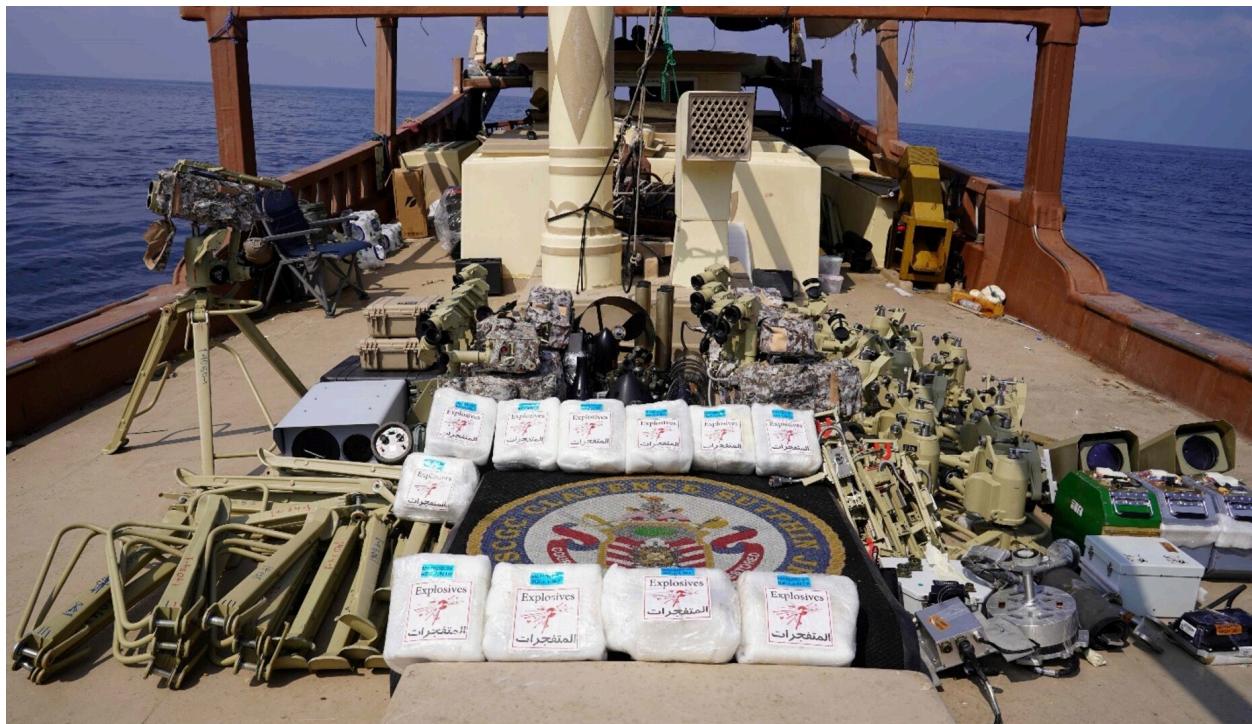


Figure 4: Image of January 28 CENTCOM interdiction of Iranian weapons transfer to Houthis
Source: CENTCOM, 2024

In addition to weapons, the Houthis receive training and mentoring from Lebanese Hezbollah and Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, which contributed greatly to the group's recent rapid development. Representatives from Iran and Lebanon Hezbollah are full members of the Houthi Jihad Council (Knights, 2022). Targeting the ideological and intellectual connections between the Houthis and Iran may be more impactful than increased focus on arms transfers, especially since Yemeni ports are already closely surveilled by American and Egyptian ships (al-Muslimi, 2017). Interrupting or mitigating Iranian support to the Houthi group is key to ending the group's attacks in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

Popular Support: Yemeni Population

Another COG for the Houthis is the support of Yemeni citizens. The Houthi movement developed in the late 1980s when the Yemeni government began enacting oppressive policies against Yemen's Zaydi Muslims, which make up about 35% the population (Johnson, 2015). Most of these nine million Yemenis view the Houthis as defenders of their religion. The Houthi also mobilized popular support through youth education systems, creating schools, after school clubs, and camps to indoctrinate children (Johnson, 2015). This support has continued despite ongoing humanitarian crises in the region due to overwhelming pro-Palestinian sentiment among the population (Knights, 2024).

Because the Houthis wish to establish themselves as the new government of Yemen, their movement requires the legitimacy and tax funding that comes from maintaining popular support. Popular support from the Yemeni population allows the Houthis to gain acknowledgement, authority, and governance capabilities, which counterterrorism experts list as three of the five main terrorist group objectives (Sinai et al, 2019). Shifting this popular support away from the Houthis could weaken the group enough to slow or stop their Red Sea attacks. This will require utilizing the diplomatic and economic tools of statecraft. Any attempts to disrupt this COG must involve partnering with a local and legitimate governing body. The lack of a strong U.S. footprint in the MENA region means that any humanitarian efforts will have to be led by local partners, NGOs, USAID, or international bodies. Because of this complexity, this report's suggestions focus more on the first COG.

Alternatives

In the following section, I outline five distinct alternatives for responding to the problem of Houthi attacks in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden. Because my client requested that these alternatives be whole-of-government rather than military specific, I do not consider more aggressive airstrike campaigns within this report. However, that is the current preferred path of the Trump administration.

Disrupt Iranian Weapons Transfers and Funding to Houthis

The first alternative involves reducing Iranian transfers of weapons and financing to the Houthis by rolling the Houthi issue into the ongoing Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) nuclear negotiations. The goal of this alternative relative to the Houthi group is deterrence by denial of future aggression, cutting off their main avenue of weapons acquisition and thus decreasing their future attack capabilities (Mazarr, 2018).

The deal expires in October of 2025, and both President Masoud Pezeshkian and Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei have expressed interest in reaching diplomatic agreements for

reduced sanctions (Davenport, 2024). The Trump administration should push for the inclusion of Houthi concessions within the final nuclear agreement. The ideal Iranian concession would be a commitment to cease all weapons transfers, funding avenues, and intelligence sharing to the Houthi group. However, a minimally acceptable concession would be for Iran to stop supplying Anti-Ship Ballistic Missiles (ASBMs), UAVs, and their respective components to the Houthis, as those were the two most common methods of reported Houthi attacks (Raydan & Nadimi, 2025).

The U.S. can incentivize Iranian agreement by offering more lenient oil sanctions and considering a staggered release of frozen funds to Iranian banks (Parsi, 2022). They could also offer a decrease in the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps' designation from a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) to a Specially Designated Terrorist Group (Parsi, 2022). The agreement should aim to deter Iranian support for the Houthi groups, both by offering incentives for compliance and threatening new sanctions or sanctions snapbacks for noncompliance (Mazarr, 2018).

Monitoring Iranian compliance of this Houthi resource blockade will require cross-organizational and multinational collaboration. The U.S. should continue funding the UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) and increase their vessel-inspection capabilities to monitor weapons transfers, as most Iranian-Houthi weapons smuggling used shipping channels in the Arabian Gulf of Aden (Knights, 2024). The U.S. should monitor financial support by increasing U.S. Department of the Treasury (USDT) surveillance of known Iranian Houthi financers and flagging identified funding networks. The U.S. should also consider using the existing Financial Action Task Force attention to Iran to monitor compliance.

Establish Financial Strangulation Campaign

The second alternative involves using the Trump administration's designation of the Houthis as an FTO to direct the USDT to be more aggressive with sanctions, as well as outreach to U.S. partners and the U.N. to match anti-Houthi sanctions. This alternative seeks to deter Houthi aggression by denial, decreasing the likelihood of success for future attacks by decreasing their access to key resources (Mazarr, 2018). In addition to the blanket designation granted by FTO, the Trump administration should increase the resources available to the USDT Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence to identify and sanction brokers, flag states, financial institutions, money changers, and any other financing nodes associated with the Houthi group (Sanner & Kavanaugh, 2025). The U.S. should also advocate for the U.N. to match Houthi-related sanctions according to UN Security Council Resolution 2140 (Bauer, 2022).

Because of similarities between ISIS and Houthi financing methods, the international component of this financial strangulation campaign should mirror lines of efforts released by the Counter ISIS Finance Group in February, 2024 (US USDT, 2024). This alternative would call upon the

international community to implement sanctions on the Houthi group itself while identifying and punishing Houthi financial proxies within their borders. Financial research institutions have identified such proxies within Oman, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and India (al-Madhaji, 2024). Given generally positive U.S. relations with those countries, the Trump administration should first diplomatically request their collaboration in targeting those proxies (Sanner & Kavanaugh, 2025). Should this fail, the Trump administration should threaten to apply or increase sanctions to those countries through E.O. 13224 derivative designations (Bauer, 2022). The Houthi FTO designation provides the necessary authorities for this, as countries knowingly allowing companies or individuals to financially support the Houthi group from their soil could be found guilty of providing material support to an FTO (Atlantic Council, 2024). The U.S. could also use E.O. 13611 as precedent for these sanctions, as being complicit in Houthi financing operations threatens “the peace, security, or stability of Yemen.” (E.O. 13611, 2012) Sanctions would be removed when the country demonstrates progress in stopping local financial support of the Houthis.

There is also evidence of direct state sponsorship or support of the Houthis by Iran, Russia, and China (Abo Alasrar, 2025; Gering & Brodsky, 2025). The Trump administration should find these countries guilty of violating the FTO designation and apply or increase sanctions on the relevant economic sectors. These sanctions should remain in place until the Financial Action Task Force determines that state-based Houthi financing from those countries has ceased.

Make Defensive Military Presence More Sustainable

The third alternative involves bolstering the U.S. Naval Fifth Fleet defense capabilities to decrease the cost of future initiatives in defense of Red Sea and Gulf of Aden maritime freedom. The U.S. should move to a mix of systems and munitions that is more sustainable over time, increasing their ability to engage in long-term maritime defense operations against Houthi automated weapons systems. The U.S. should also publicly reaffirm its commitment to countering any future Houthi Red Sea and Gulf of Aden attacks and emphasize its willingness to invest in technological developments that reduce Houthi asymmetric capabilities in an effort to increase this alternative’s deterrence potential. The goal of this alternative is a combination of deterrence by denial and by punishment, changing Houthi cost-benefit calculations for future Red Sea and Gulf of Aden attacks by demonstrating U.S. intent and effort towards preventing the disruption of international maritime trade routes (Mazarr, 2018).

One avenue for increasing defense sustainability is for Congress to reauthorize funding for the BAE Systems’ Electro-Magnetic Laboratory Rail Gun program, specifically for the developing and testing of the hypervelocity projectile (HVP) weapons (Johnston, 2024). The DOD should then prioritize acquisition of these weapons systems by the U.S. Fifth Fleet. Figure 5 shows the potential use of these munitions against various targets. The Navy Program Executive Office

Integrated Warfare Systems estimates the HPVs to cost around \$85,000 each, which is significantly less than the baseline costs of \$950,000 Rolling Airframe Missiles and \$2 million Block II Evolved Sea Sparrow Missiles (ESSM) or Standard Missile-2s (SM-2) that were more commonly used in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden maritime defense efforts (Freedberg, 2018; Rogoway, 2024).

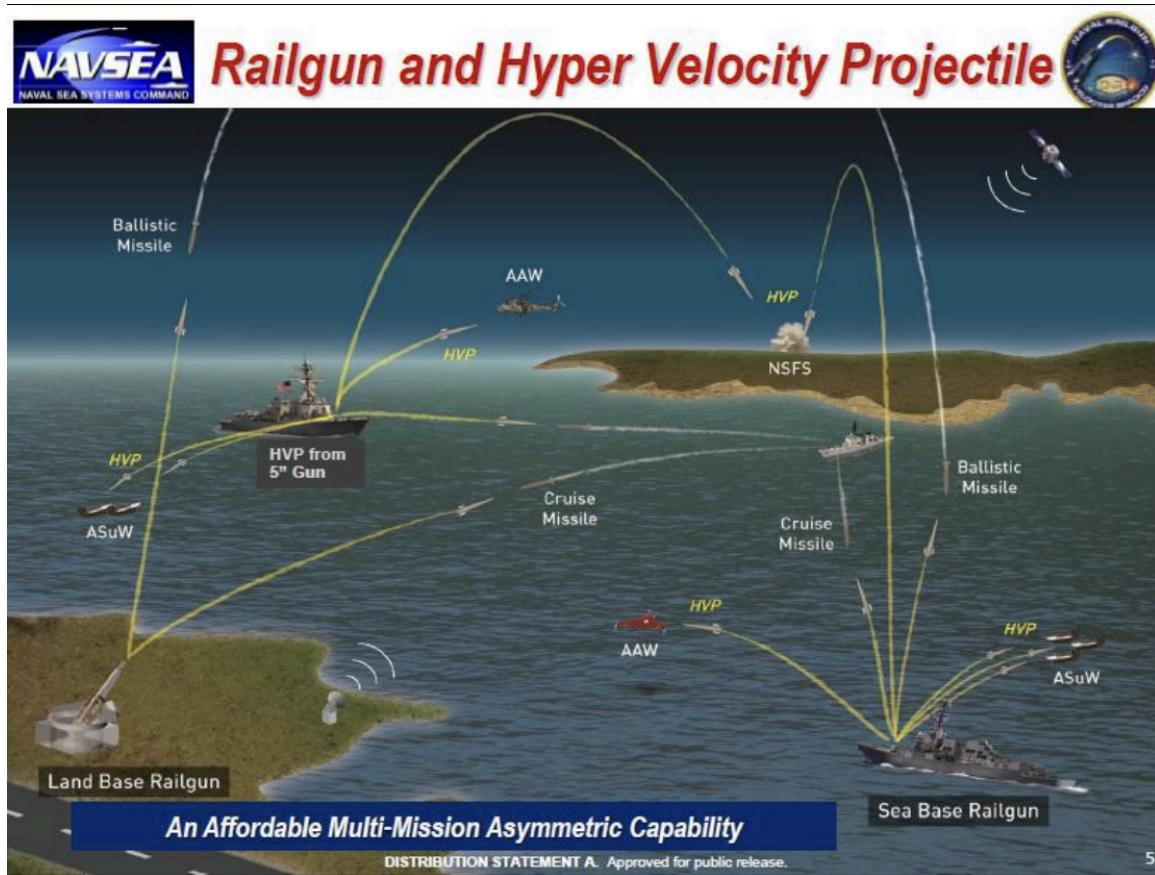


Figure 5: Slide from Navy briefing on HVP operations against different types of potential targets
Source: O'Rourke, 2017

Strengthen A Multinational Coalition for Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Security

The fourth alternative involves expanding existing multinational naval coalitions and increasing their intelligence collection avenues, communication networks, and joint-response capabilities. It also involves negotiating ABO agreements with coalition partners to increase U.S regional reach. The goal of these coalitions should be long-term integrated deterrence of Houthi attacks in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden through increasing the costs associated with future attacks, decreasing Houthi weapons and system capabilities, and signaling an international commitment to respond. This alternative also includes both deterrence by denial and by punishment (Mazarr, 2018).

This coalition must include Saudi Arabia and the UAE given their advanced defensive capabilities, regional economic sway, and advantageous regional basing and port access. With regards to basing, the UAE holds a 30-year lease for a military base in Assab, Eritrea, which provides direct access to the Bab al-Mandeb chokepoint (Gambrell, 2021). Even if the lease prohibits non-UAE foreign military assets, the UAE Navy had 157 patrol craft in 2021 and could use the base as a launch point for smuggling interdiction efforts (The Gulf Security Task Force, 2023). The UAE also has a base in Berbera, Somaliland. Their coalition membership could allow the US to benefit from this strategic location without the complications of negotiating with an unrecognized country (BBC, 2017). Finally, they are suspected to have control over Abd al-Kuri and Socotra Islands, which are positioned in the Gulf of Aden and could offer valuable coalition landing zones (Cafiero, 2022; Gambrell, 2025). Figure 6 depicts the location of these bases.



Figure 6: Shown left to right: UAE military bases at Assab, Eritrea; Berbera, Somaliland; Abd al-Kuri Island, Yemen, and Socotra Island, Yemen.

Source: Google Maps.

Saudi Arabia has fewer advantageous bases, but is more necessary for its regional influence, especially as the leader of the Council of Arab and African Littoral States of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (Beyene, 2020). However, the DOS could also negotiate basing access within Saudi Arabia closer to the Yemen border.

Countries with regional proximity to the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden have elevated interests in maintaining the security of those shipping lanes and could offer unique intelligence-collection or

monitoring positions to this coalition, even if they do not have advanced naval capabilities. The coalition should strongly consider Djibouti, Egypt, Oman, Somaliland, and Eritrea for the coalition. The benefits of these potential partnerships are outlined in Appendix A. This coalition should also call on countries with histories of maritime freedom efforts, specifically those associated with the Combined Task Force (CTF) 153 of the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) partnership. CTF-153 is the multinational naval coalition focused on maritime security in the Red Sea, Bab al-Mandeb, and Gulf of Aden (CMF, 2024). Emphasizing the protection of international maritime freedom rather than anti-Houthi efforts in coalition-building dialogues could increase the number of Arab country commitments and thus increase collective intelligence capabilities (Sanner & Kavanagh, 2025). The coalition must ensure sustained membership through formal diplomatic agreements rather than using the CMF “coalition of the willing” framework.

The U.S. should increase resources available for joint intelligence collection campaigns related to Houthi plans and capabilities, Iran-Houthi connections, Houthi internal communications, and Houthi communications with external extremist groups. This will involve updating intelligence-sharing agreements and integrating existing coalition intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) platforms (The Gulf Security Task Force, 2023). The coalition can build on the existing infrastructure of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development Taskforce, CMF-153, the Regional Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre, the Regional Maritime Information Sharing Centre, and the Regional Center for Operational Coordination for information-based collaborative efforts (Vrey & Blaine, 2024; Ochanda, 2023; IMO, 2015). The U.S. should encourage the coalition to invest in communication systems to keep all partners aware of real-time Houthi movements and secure these systems with advanced cybersecurity protections (Tachie-Menson, 2024). This coalition should also increase the frequency of joint maritime patrols of the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and Bab al-Mandeb, focusing on key Houthi smuggling routes to cut off Houthi weapons imports and finance avenues (Navarro, 2025; Nasser, 2024). Those patrols will demonstrate that the coalition has both the capability and will to respond, and the focus on smuggling routes will decrease Houthi access to the resources needed for success (Mazarr, 2018). The regular multinational naval presence in the waterways will also signal an international commitment to defending shipping lanes and maritime trade. The coalition should further signal this resolve by issuing joint warnings against disrupting maritime freedom in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden and establishing joint economic and military punishments for threatening that freedom.

Develop Red Sea Best Management Practices for Commercial Vessels

The fifth alternative is to invest in research to produce BMP for Commercial Vessels specific to the enhanced Houthi regional threat, allowing them to navigate the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden waterways more safely. While those are being developed, the U.S. should encourage commercial

vessels to abide by the BMP-5 to Deter Piracy and Enhance Maritime Security in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Indian Ocean, and Arabian Sea (BIMCO et al, 2018). This iteration of BMP can serve as the starting point for Houthi-specific guidelines, as it addresses extremist use of anti-ship missiles, sea mines, and water-borne improvised explosive devices. However, the U.S. must foster the development of BMP based on specific Houthi attack patterns from October 2023 to January 2025, including the use of autonomous weapons systems. These would be more formalized, long-term versions of the Interim Industry Transit Advice documents from February and September of 2024, which explain the current threats but do not sufficiently detail how to avoid or withstand them (BIMCO et al, Feb 2024; BIMCO et al, Sept 2024).

The goal of this alternative is to decrease the future potential impact of Houthi attacks by increasing the ability of commercial vessels to identify, avoid, and withstand those attacks.

Criteria

I evaluate each alternative based on the criteria of impact, risk, cost, and feasibility. Each of these criteria is assigned a value of High, Moderate, and Low.

Impact refers to the ability of each alternative to reduce the rate of Houthi attacks in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and Bab al-Mandeb. High impact alternatives are those that deny Houthis the ability to attack by targeting key enablers. They deny Houthis the ability to attack. Moderate impact alternatives are those that diminish Houthi will or capacity to attack. Low impact alternatives are those that raise the costs of attacks for Houthis or strengthen resilience to those attacks.

Risk refers to how much each alternative increases the vulnerability of U.S. persons or assets to Houthi attacks, directly or indirectly. It also includes the potential for escalation or retaliation by other states. High risk alternatives are likely to provoke direct Houthi retaliation or otherwise increase danger to U.S. forces or assets. Moderate risk alternatives are those that place U.S. forces or assets within range of Houthi attacks but include mitigating factors such as multinational support. Low risk alternatives are those that do not increase direct U.S. involvement or provoke a hostile response.

Cost refers to the amount of annual federal spending or significant losses from trade reduction associated with each alternative. This analysis focuses on costs to the U.S. only. High cost alternatives are those exceeding \$1 billion. Moderate cost alternatives are those between \$100 million and \$1 billion. Low cost alternatives are those below \$100 million.

Feasibility refers to the extent to which each alternative could practically be implemented, or practical feasibility, and its alignment with the priorities of the Trump administration, or political

feasibility. Practical feasibility is evaluated through cohesiveness with existing legislative and operational frameworks, as well as the presence of logistical barriers. Political feasibility is evaluated through Trump administration statements and actions, as well as administrative relations with the necessary international partners. High feasibility alternatives are those with one measure high and the other moderate, or both high. Moderate feasibility alternatives are either those where one measure is high and the other low, or where both are moderate. Low feasibility alternatives are those where one measure is low and the other moderate, or both are low.

Evaluation

In this section, I will examine my five alternatives based on the previously-described criteria. I compile the results of these evaluations within an outcomes matrix at the end of this section.

Disrupt Iranian Weapons Transfers to Houthis

The first alternative involves seeking to reduce Iranian weapons transfers to the Houthis by including the issue within nuclear negotiations. A minimally acceptable concession would be an Iranian agreement to stop supplying ASBMs, UAVs, and One-Way Attack Drones (OWAD) and their respective components to the Houthis, and the U.S. would use the UNVIM to monitor compliance.

Impact

Based on an analysis of multiple conflict-tracking databases, the majority of Houthi attacks used ASBMs, UAVs, or OWADs. Comparisons of Houthi and Iranian weapons by the Defense Intelligence Agency, as well as intercepted Iran-Houthi smuggling operations, support the conclusion that Iran is the main supplier of these weapons, specifically the ASBMs (DIA, 2024). If this option achieved Iranian compliance with the minimally acceptable concession of ASBMs, UAVs, and their related components, it would remove Houthi access to their main supply of their most commonly used weapons systems. This reduced access would diminish Houthi attack capabilities by decreasing the rate of attacks or increasing Houthi reliance on less-technologically advanced attacks such as Visit, Board, Search, and Seizures (VBSS).

Given the increased monitoring and the importance of the nuclear agreement to Iran, specifically because of sanctions relief, compliance is likely. Quarterly reports from the International Atomic Energy Committee show that Iran complied with the JCPOA nuclear terms until the U.S. withdrew from the agreement in 2018 (IAEC, 2015-2019). Throughout this period, however, Iran used funds from the sanctions relief to increase financial and weapons support of proxy groups, including the Houthis (FDD, 2022). Even complete Iranian compliance with the minimally acceptable concession would exclude financial transfers, which could mitigate the overall impact

of this option as the Houthis could use these funds to find new suppliers for ABSMs or drone components. However, it would be difficult for the Houthis to find a new supplier given the level of international attention and condemnation of their actions. Another factor that could limit the impact of this option is the size of remaining Houthi weapons stockpiles, which are unknown (Altman, 2025).

The cessation of weapons provision combined with continued funding and unknown Houthi weapons stockpiles would cause this option to have a **Moderate Impact** on the rate of Houthi attacks.

Risk

Negotiations with Iran would not directly increase the vulnerability of U.S. persons or assets to Houthi attacks. Increasing UNVIM monitoring of key Iran-Houthi smuggling routes could increase the risk to inspection vessels through higher rates of contact with potential aggressors. However, the multinational nature of UNVIM reduces the direct risk to U.S. persons or assets. This option also includes the risk of refusal or noncompliance by Iran, as well as the potential for the Houthis to find new suppliers, though these would contribute to a continuation rather than escalation of hostilities. The main risk of this alternative is that the Houthi concession impedes the nuclear negotiations with Iran, or that the demands are dropped to protect the overall negotiations. However, this would neither increase direct U.S. vulnerability nor provoke violence. Thus, this option is classified as **Low Risk**.

Cost

This option would not present major additional costs related to diplomatic personnel. This option estimates increasing the diplomatic team by one senior foreign service officer to account for the added Houthi-related discussions. The highest possible annual salary for an overseas senior foreign service officer in 2024 was \$191,900 (US DOS, 2023). This option estimates a timeline of 8 months due to the current JCPOA expiration in October 2025. I also add an estimation of \$50k to account for the frequent travel and overhead costs of this officer. Given the 8-month time period, this would come to a cost of \$177,933.

The costs of this option stem mainly from the increased investment in monitoring capabilities, primarily through UNVIM. The DOS contributed \$1 million to the United Nations Office for Project Services for UNVIM in Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21) and \$1 million in FY24 (22 U.S.C. § 287b(b) FY21; 22 U.S.C. § 287b(b), FY24). The U.S. would be asking UNVIM to take on new work and thus increase the annual contributions accordingly. Based on those past funding amounts, this alternative assumes that the cost of U.S. investment in UNVIM would be an additional \$1 million for FY25.

The total cost of this option, excluding the potential export benefits to sanctions relief, would be about \$1.1 million. This is considered **Low Cost**.

Feasibility

This option is practically feasible. Iran proposed counterterrorism cooperation among other concessions in exchange for sanctions relief and nuclear agreements in 2003, 2005, 2008, and 2009 (Davenport, 2023). Iran also agreed to end its weapons shipments to the Houthis in a 2023 diplomatic deal with Saudi Arabia (Nissenbaum et al, 2023). Though Iran did not comment directly on arms shipments given their continued denial of such transfers, Iranian officials publicly stated that they would work to end Houthi attacks against Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabian officials stated that this includes a cessation of Iranian weapons supplies (Nissenbaum et al, 2023). Additionally, Iranian support to the Houthis is more recent and less extensive than to other groups within the Axis of Resistance, and the two are less ideologically aligned (Minor, 2024). With the increased need of more established proxies in Lebanon, Gaza, and Syria, Iran may be more amenable to shifting their levels of support. However, there is also the potential that the decline of other proxies makes Iran more reliant on the Houthis as a tool against its adversaries. This suggests that discussions of ending Houthi weapons shipments have moderate practical feasibility.

However, statements from Iranian and U.S. leaders suggest that this option struggles with political feasibility. The Trump administration has expressed interest in a “Verified Nuclear Peace Deal,” but his February National Security Presidential Memorandum outlines a policy of Maximum Pressure over compromise (NIAC, 2025; NSPM-2, 2025). Iranian President Pezeshkian and Foreign Minister Araghchi have signaled openness to negotiating with the United States, but Ayatollah Khamenei and IRGC Commander Salami have historically been more skeptical of such negotiations (NIAC, 2025). Respective U.S. and Iranian demands for nuclear negotiations may also be incompatible, with Iran arguing for up front sanctions relief and economic compensation for the Trump administration's JCPOA withdrawal (Perkovich & Sadjadpour, 2022). However, Iranian officials reportedly told the Houthis to dial down their Red Sea aggression in response to pressure from the Trump administration, revealing a potential divide between the two groups that this option could exploit (El Dahan et al, 2025). Overall, escalation of the Maximum Pressure campaign combined with incompatible starting terms give this option low political feasibility, despite pro-negotiation statements from both governments.

Thus, this option is ultimately classified as having **Low Feasibility**.

Establish Financial Strangulation Campaign

The second alternative is for the USDT to leverage the Houthi FTO designation to intensify financial sanctions and disrupt key funding avenues. It also involves urging countries directly or indirectly facilitating Houthi financing to stop providing that financial support.

Impact

This would be economically similar to the Maximum Pressure campaign on Iran in 2019. In Iran, the sanctions lowered Iran's economic capacity and disrupted their ability to support extremist proxies and maintain military capabilities. It also caused a 28% decrease in the Iranian defense budget. (Noronha, 2022). This example also shows that blocking the flow of financial resources to extremist groups can decrease their attack capabilities, as the Maximum Pressure campaign led to forced downsizing by Hamas and Hezbollah (Abrams, 2020).

Iran Defense Spending 2003-2023

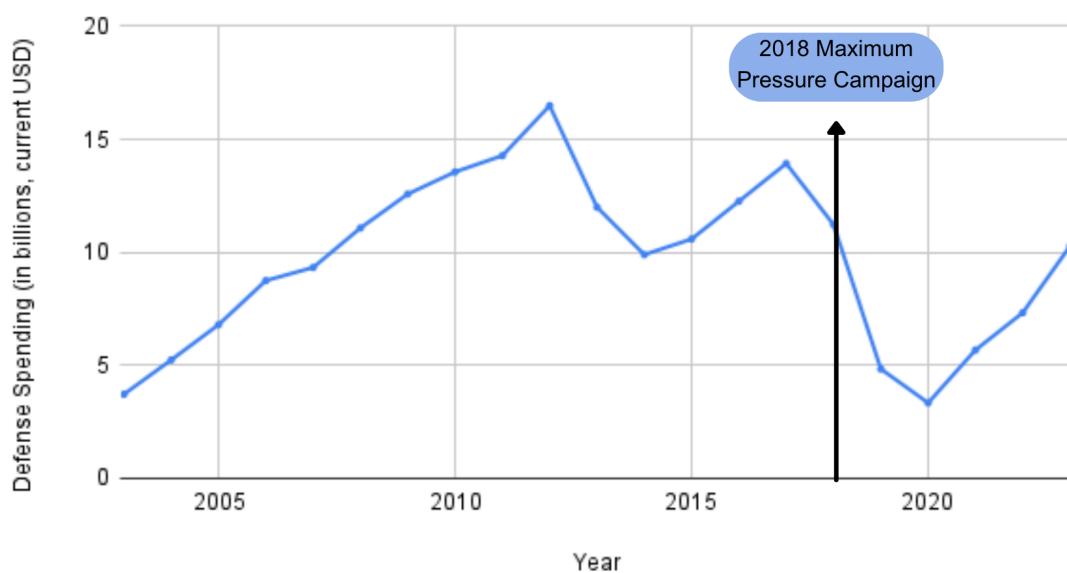


Figure 7: Impact of 2018 Maximum Pressure Campaign on Iranian Defense Spending
Source: World Bank, 2023

However, Iran relies more on the formal economy than the Houthis. Thus, this option would more closely mirror the financial component of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, or the Counter ISIS Financial Group, as both groups rely more on criminal activity and exploitation than the formal economy. Reports by the UN Secretary-General attribute significant decreases in ISIS financial reserves to efforts by the Financial Group, from estimates of \$25 to \$50 million in 2023 decreasing to \$10 to \$25 million in 2024 (UN Secretary General, 2023; UN Secretary

General, 2024). The continued financial targeting has reduced ISIS operation and attack capabilities compared to its 2014 peak (International Crisis Group, 2019).

Assuming that a finance campaign against the Houthis would be able to achieve similar international cooperation, this option would be able to reduce Houthi access to funding and lower their ability to pay for fighters or weapons. These decreased capabilities would subsequently decrease the rate of attacks, though this would correspond to the achieved international cooperation.

It is likely that Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Oman would comply with this option given the combination of incentives and potential punishments, their participation in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, and their economic and regional vulnerability to Houthi aggression. Although compliance is less likely from China, Russia, and Iran, those countries were also not members of the Global Coalition. However, the Houthi aggression is localized compared to that of ISIS, even with the global impacts to shipping. That localized nature could limit international interest in taking potentially provocative or costly actions, leading to a lower economic impact than the Counter-ISIS program. Thus, this option is classified as having a **Moderate Impact**.

Risk

The Houthi leadership responded to the FTO designation by stating any U.S. action against the Yemeni economy would be considered an act of war (Alley, 2025). This alternative could provoke violent Houthi retaliation against nearby U.S. bases or against the U.S. Fifth Fleet. Houthi connections with al-Shabaab mean that retaliation could involve attacks against American forces in Djibouti. The Houthis also conducted a successful missile strike against Tel Aviv in December 2024, which suggests that most U.S. bases and deployments in the Middle East are within range of Houthi weapons (Dean, 2024). However, these risks are tempered by the fact that previous sanctions against the Houthis have not led to significant acceleration of attacks. If states choose not to join U.S. efforts for this option, it could also risk exposing the limits of U.S. influence in the Gulf and consequently as a great power. This threat of retaliation classifies this option as **Moderate Risk**.

Cost

This option involves fully funding the USDT Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence. Based on their Congressional Budget Justification and Annual Performance Plan for FY25, this amount would be \$230.533 million.

It also includes tightening sanctions on the Houthis, which would have little to no cost. This option also involves threatening to impose secondary sanctions on states that continue to do business with or otherwise support the Houthis. Should the U.S. have to act on these threats, the

associated sanctions could lead to decreases in bilateral trade and export revenue as well as countermeasures. Thus, this alternative acknowledges the potential cost of export losses but ultimately excludes them from the overall analysis.

This option would thus have an annual estimated cost of \$231 million to maintain USDT capabilities. This is classified as **Moderate Cost**.

Feasibility

The domestic components of this alternative do well in terms of practical feasibility, as they build upon existing USDT capabilities and activities. The practical feasibility of the international component is more moderate, as it would depend on the cooperation and enforcement of sanctions by other countries. Due to the FTO designation of the Houthis, however, the Trump administration would have the legal basis to apply sanctions or other economic punishments to uncooperative countries, which makes this option highly practically feasible (EO 14175).

This option is highly politically feasible, as the Trump administration has demonstrated a willingness to use economic punishments as diplomatic tools. This is demonstrated by his multiple Maximum Pressure programs on Iran, his immediate redesignation of the Houthis as a FTO, and his plan to apply tariffs against China, Canada, and Mexico. Though the Trump administration seems to prefer tariffs over sanctions as a negotiation tool with partner countries, he has fully supported sanctions against Iran and the Houthis. The political feasibility of this option is also boosted by the Trump administration's positive commercial and business relations with Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, and Oman. However, relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council and Arab League have been weakened by the Trump administration's heavily pro-Israel stance, specifically the President's remarks about Gaza waterfront development and Palestinian displacement (Ulrichsen, 2025). This could limit the political feasibility of a purely diplomatic application of this alternative, but more punitive measures of ensuring international cooperation would still be politically feasible.

Thus, this option is classified as having **High Feasibility**.

Make Defensive Military Presence More Sustainable

The third alternative involves increasing the long-term sustainability of U.S. Fifth Fleet naval defense operations by investing in the research and development of more cost-effective weapons systems.

Impact

Due to the overall defensive nature of this option, it would result in an increased U.S. ability to engage in long-term maritime defense operations. The goal of this option is to boost the

sustainability of maritime defense operations by creating a more favorable cost exchange ratio, or by closing the cost gap between the Houthi and U.S. weapons systems (CRS, 2020). Though the option would be able to achieve that goal by decreasing the cost of U.S. defense operations from about \$950,000-\$1.49 million per round to about \$85,000 per round, it would not have a direct effect on the rate of Houthi attacks (Freedberg, 2018; Rogoway, 2024). The technological investment and public commitment to defending the Red Sea would not significantly change the Houthi cost-benefit calculations for future aggression, as they escalated the previous round of maritime attacks multiple times despite U.S. and international warnings and action (Raydan & Nadimi, 2024). The focus on defense and resilience rather than deterrence leads this option to be classified as **Low Impact**.

Risk

This option involves the presence of U.S. Fifth Fleet Forces in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, within range of Houthi attacks. While other options involve preventing attacks, this option involves defending against ongoing attacks. In this case, even a very small chance of malfunctioning of the new weapons system could have very negative results, as successful attacks could damage U.S. naval vessels, injure or kill U.S. service members, and increase Houthi morale. However, this option does not greatly increase the exposure of U.S. forces to potential Houthi attacks relative to the status quo or other alternatives, and it is not likely to provoke escalation. Thus, this option is classified as **Low Risk**.

Cost

The U.S. Navy budget submission for FY2021 requested \$6.2 million for the research and development of the HVP system. It priced the unit procurement cost of the HVPs at \$85,000. The systems would be launched from the existing 5-inch guns of Naval cruisers and destroyers, so there would be no cost of updating launching systems (CRS, 2020).

The MK 45 5-inch gun generally hold 600 rounds each. Destroyers have one gun mount per ship while cruisers have two (U.S. Navy, 2021). The U.S. Navy maintained 1-2 aircraft carrier strike groups within the Red Sea region throughout the October 2023 to January 2025 conflict. Each aircraft carrier strike group generally includes 1 cruiser and 4 to 6 destroyers (Bilmes et al, 2024). This analysis assumes a conservative estimate of 1 cruiser and 6 destroyers, which would need a total of 4,800 HVP rounds. At \$85,000/round, it would cost \$408 million to fully outfit the U.S. Fifth Fleet with the HVP weapons systems.

The total cost for this option would thus add the \$6.2 million for R&D and \$408 million for HVP ammunition. This is approximately \$414.2 million.

Additionally, this analysis compares the costing for this option to the status quo. The Navy primarily used Sidewinder and Hellfire missiles throughout the second half of the conflict, but experts believe they also used SM-2s and ESSMs in defensive operations. Aside from the Hellfire missile, which has extreme variations in estimated costs, each of these munitions has higher per unit costs than the HVP system, as shown in Figure 8.

Cost Comparison of Hypervelocity Projectile to Red Sea Conflict Defensive Systems

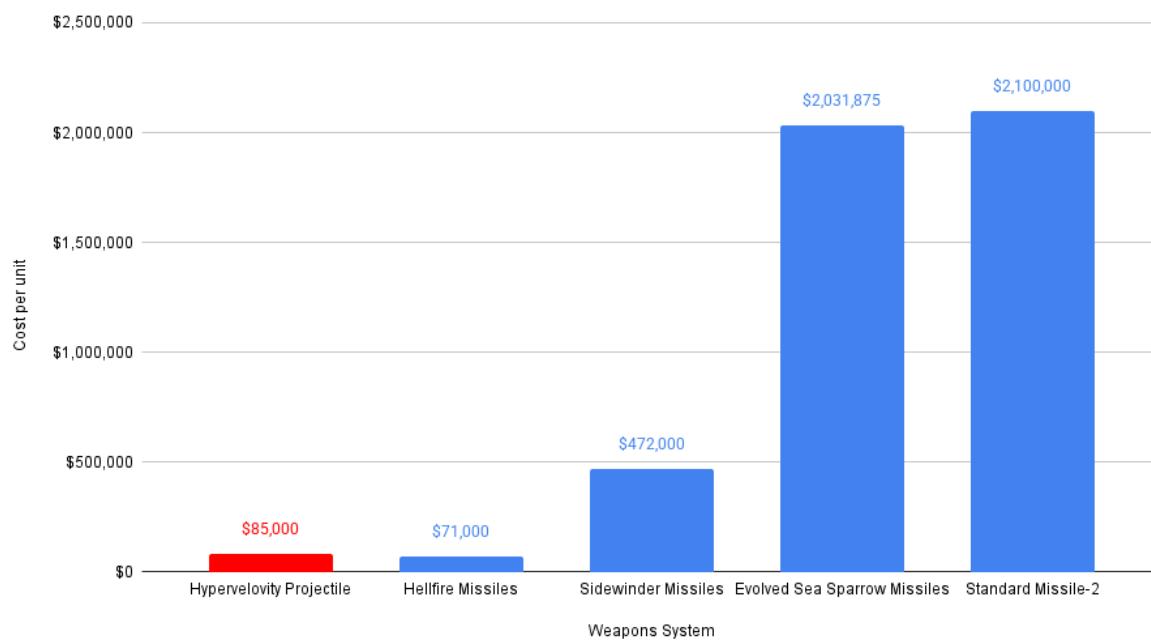


Figure 8: Cost per Unit Comparison of HVPs to Most Used Defensive Systems in Red Sea Conflict
Sources: Schogol, 2025; Trevithick, 2020; Zeynalov, 2021; Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance, 2024.

Thus, even with the cost of R&D, this option would allow CENTCOM to save money on defensive operations and is classified as having a **Low Cost**.

Feasibility

Due to earlier research and development projects, there is already a baseline product for the HVP weapons system. Tests of these weapons during the 2018 RIMPAC exercise and the 2020 Air Force's Advanced Battle Management System Onramp signal that the systems can successfully target Houthi missile and drone attacks (CRS, 2020). The U.S. Navy also resumed HVP testing in 2024 (Johnston, 2024). However, the time-consuming process of DOD new weapons acquisitions and the logistical difficulties related to getting the weapons onto Fifth Fleet ships make this option moderately practically feasible. Though the Trump administration is promoting budget cuts to the DOD, his January 27 executive order, "The Iron Dome for America," suggests a willingness to invest in weapons technologies (EO 14186). The HVPs would be included

within those, especially since they could also be used to combat Chinese autonomous technologies. Thus, this option is also moderately politically feasible.

Overall, this option is classified as having **Moderate Feasibility**.

Strengthen Multinational Coalition for Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Security

The fourth alternative involves strengthening a multinational naval coalition to enhance intelligence sharing, communication networks, and joint-response capabilities for long-term deterrence of Houthi attacks in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.

Impact

This alternative would increase coalition intelligence sharing and joint-response capabilities. The intelligence sharing component of this alternative would increase early threat detection and interdiction capabilities, enhance targeting of Houthi supply chains, and allow for improved naval coordination.

This option would reduce Houthi access to weapons through joint maritime patrols of key Houthi smuggling routes. The main routes are the Al-Mahrah Waters Route, the Al Hallaniyyat Island Route, and direct deliveries to Al-Mahrah. The main port is Hodeidah (Almansi, 2024). The patrol option would increase the multinational maritime coalition presence along those known smuggling routes. The U.S. and allied naval forces intercepted a conservative estimate of 18 Iranian weapons shipments to the Houthis between 2015 and 2024 (Wilson Center, 2024).

Increasing the number of countries involved in and the resources devoted to this interception effort would also increase the interceptions. Smuggled shipments are generally routed through other countries rather than sent directly from Iran (Almansi, 2024). By embracing the CTF 153 model rather than that of Operation Prosperity Guardian, this option would include a greater number of Gulf Countries, specifically the UAE and Saudi Arabia, which both have large fleets of naval patrol craft (The Gulf Security Task Force, 2023). Appendix A outlines the benefits associated with each potential coalition partner. These countries could use the increased intelligence technologies and resources of the coalition to monitor their ports for illicit shipments and prevent the use of their country as a smuggling transit point. This option would be able to target both maritime routes and transit points and has a high potential for successfully disrupting Houthi supply chains. Reducing Houthi access to smuggled weapons would also decrease their attack capabilities.

Additionally, part of this option involves joint warnings against disrupting maritime trade and the establishment of joint economic and military punishments for those who do not heed the warnings. These would influence Houthi perceptions of the coalition's commitment to preventing and responding to Houthi aggression, which increases its deterrence abilities (Mazarr, 2018).

This coalition invests in communication systems to ensure real-time sharing of Houthi-related information. It would operate based on lessons from collaborative anti-piracy efforts in the Gulf of Guinea, in which joint and individual patrols had permissions to act upon new information and deter piracy (Anyimadu, 2013). It also pulls from the Global Coalition to Counter ISIS, which was able to adjust efforts according to ISIS adaptations (Quanrud, 2018). The flexibility of coalitions with similar communication and intelligence networks suggests that this option would also be able to respond to changes in Houthi methods or technologies.

Finally, this option would involve negotiations of ABO rights with the coalition partners. The U.S. has close economic and security ties with Saudi Arabia and the UAE, as well as existing military bases in both countries (Nicastro & Tilghman, 2024). The conflict has economically devastated Egypt, where the U.S. also has an existing military base (Egypt Today, 2024; Nicastro & Tilghman, 2024). These countries would likely be amenable to expanding that basing access in exchange for the long-term, formal security cooperation agreements proposed by the coalition. This would grant the U.S., and the coalition as a whole, more persistent and better ISR coverage over the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and mainland Yemen, which would lead to improved target tracking of either Houthi weapons or key leaders (Edwards, 2025). Though the coalition would not necessarily involve kinetic strikes, it could use this information to increase the effectiveness of patrol and defensive operations. This information could also increase the deterrent potential of coalition joint warnings by making the publicly announced punishments more specific to current Houthi capabilities.

In addition to the above positive characteristics, multinational intelligence-sharing coalitions were proposed extremely frequently within expert literature on how to combat the Houthi threat in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (Navarro, 2025; Knights, 2023; Sanner & Kavanaugh, 2025; Nasser, 2024; Raydan & Nadimi, 2025).

This option is classified as **High Impact**.

Risk

This option includes U.S. involvement in joint maritime patrols of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, which places U.S. forces and assets within range of Houthi aggression. However, the multinational nature of these patrols creates collective security benefits that could mitigate the associated individual risk. The joint warnings and monitoring of smuggling routes have the potential to provoke the Houthi group, given their recent warnings about disrupting their economic systems (Alley, 2025). However, because the option focuses on maritime smuggling routes rather than directly targeting financial systems, this provocation is less likely. Overall, this option is classified as **Moderate Risk**.

Cost

The cost of this option is measured through past U.S. budget allocations for similar multinational collaborations. The U.S. Red Sea Expenditures from October 2023 to September 2024 were approximately \$4.86 billion (Bilmes et al, 2024). This will be the estimated annual base cost for the U.S. portion of the coalition, as this option will require similar ship and personnel numbers. Table 3 provides DOD budget allocations and requests for Operation Inherent Resolve and the European Defense Initiative from FY19 to FY25, both of which have similar collaborative qualities to this option.

Table 1: DoD Budget Allocations and Requests for Existing Programs

	Cost per year (billions)						
Program	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25
Operation Inherent Resolve	\$8.9	\$6.9	\$7.0	\$5.4	\$5.5	\$6.2	\$5.6
European Deterrence Initiative	\$6.53	\$5.9	\$4.5	\$5.4	\$4.3	\$3.6	\$2.9

Given that this option involves increasing efforts beyond the 2023-2024 U.S. Red Sea Expenditures, the minimum annual cost would be \$4.86 billion. Excluding the outlier of \$8.9 billion from Table 1, this option would have an estimated annual cost between \$4.86 billion and \$7 billion.

This option is classified as **High Cost**.

Feasibility

This option would expand existing frameworks and programs rather than create new ones. The CTF 153 is the existing multinational maritime coalition for Red Sea security and would be the organizational basis for this option. This option would pull intelligence collection and joint patrol guidelines from the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and the Gulf of Guinea Maritime Collaboration Forum. The existing maritime coalition frameworks allow this option to have high practical feasibility.

Political feasibility is limited by the more unilateral tendencies of the Trump administration. The administration emphasizes burden-sharing and reducing U.S. engagement with international organizations. However, framing the coalition as a way for Gulf States and Europe to take greater ownership of the problem instead of relying on the U.S. could overcome this barrier. The Trump administration has also prioritized the maintenance of maritime freedom and international trade through the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden through direct US engagement in the region (Burke,

2025; Goldberg, 2025). The recent leak of military communications discussing perceived European free-riding in this conflict could either reduce the likelihood of their coalition participation or increase their desire to refute that judgement through joint action. Additionally, the Trump administration has maintained close security relationships with the UAE and Saudi Arabia (Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, 2025; Fontenrose, 2025). The combination of the Trump administration's past investment in counterterrorism initiatives, recent actions, and statements give this option moderate political feasibility.

Overall, this option is classified as having **High Feasibility**.

Develop Houthi-Related Best Management Practices for Commercial Vessels

The fifth alternative is developing a set of BMP for Commercial Vessels that includes information on UAVs, OWADs, and USVs.

Impact

This option focuses on increasing the resilience of Commercial Vessels to the Houthi threat rather than decreasing the rate of attacks. It would increase merchant awareness of the different Houthi-related risks and give them techniques to mitigate potential damages. A similar approach of BMP to combat the issue of Somali piracy in the Indian ocean reportedly made hijacking of compliant ships four times less likely (Anyimadu, 2013). Expanding the latest iteration of BMP for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden to include new threat developments of OWADs, UAVs, and USVs could make damages to compliant ships in that region less likely as well. Increasing the ability of commercial vessels to identify, avoid, and withstand Houthi attacks could potentially reduce the rate of Houthi attacks by changing their cost-benefit analysis. If commercial defensive capabilities increase, then Houthi maritime attacks would not achieve the same level of economic disruption and lose the associated leverage (Mazarr, 2018). This could either deter attacks by forcing them to shift to alternative methods of achieving their goals, or it could simply motivate the development and use of new weapons technologies.

The deterrence potential of this option is mixed, but the ultimate purpose and result of this option would be a defensive path of risk mitigation. In terms of reducing the rate of Houthi attacks, this option is classified as **Low Impact**.

Risk

This option does not require a direct U.S. presence within range of Houthi aggression, and it does not take any actions that would provoke escalation from the Houthi group. By increasing Commercial Vessel readiness and ability to withstand or avoid Houthi attacks in the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, and Bab al-Mandeb, this option could actually decrease their need for U.S. naval protection. Thus, this option is classified as **Low Risk**.

Cost

The primary expenses of this option would be the research and development of guidelines. This would have to be done on an accelerated timeline given the present nature of the Houthi threat. Rather than creating entirely new BMP, the team would add guidelines for OWADs, UAVs, and USVs to BMP5. This analysis makes a conservative estimate that the process would require a team of five maritime security analysts and six months of full-time work. These analysts would likely fall between a GS-9 and GS-11 level. The hourly pay rates for those positions for 2025 range from \$25.01 to \$38.33 (OPM, 2025). Assuming a 26 week program length at 40 hours per week, this would cost between \$26,010.40 and \$39,863.20 per analyst. In total, the analyst wages for this program would cost between \$130,052 and \$199,316.

This option is classified as **Low Cost**.

Feasibility

Given that this option would build off of existing BMP frameworks and distribute the guidelines through existing shipping industry channels, this option would have high practical feasibility. This option is relatively uncontroversial, as it uses minimal resources to achieve the goal of enhancing the security of commercial shipping. If the Trump administration resists hiring new employees during its budget rebalancing, the option could rely on analysts already employed by the U.S. government. Framing the option as a way to reduce the impact of Houthi attacks on U.S. maritime trade could align it with the Trump Administration's America First Trade Policy (White House, 2025). This option would also have high political feasibility.

Based on high levels of both practical and political feasibility, this option is classified as having **High Feasibility**.

Outcomes Matrix

Table 2: Alternative Outcomes Matrix				
	Impact	Risk	Cost	Feasibility
Disrupt Iranian Weapons Transfers	Moderate	Low	Low	Low
Financial Strangulation Campaign	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	High
Defensive Military Presence Sustainability	Low	Low	Low	Moderate
Multinational Coalitions	High	Moderate	High	High

Best Management Practices	Low	Low	Low	High
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Recommendation

According to the evaluations summarized in Table 2, this report recommends **strengthening a multinational maritime coalition for Red Sea and Gulf of Aden security**. Though this option has higher potential costs and risks than the option of disrupting Iranian weapons transfers to the Houthis, it would also have a higher feasibility and impact on the rate of Houthi attacks. The impact criterion most directly relates to NGIC's goal for a contingency plan to defeat or deter future Houthi threats, which gives it more weight. The importance of impact also contributes to why multinational maritime coalitions outrank BMP and Defensive Military Presence Sustainability. However, **the low cost, low risk, and high feasibility of the BMP option suggests that the U.S. should develop those in conjunction with the coalition strengthening.** The risk of multinational maritime coalitions would be lower than a financial strangulation campaign due to the collective security benefits. Though the financial strangulation campaign is less costly, multinational coalitions achieve equal or better outcomes in all other criteria.

Because of the low cost, low risk, and high feasibility of developing Houthi-specific BMP, this report recommends that in addition to the high-impact option of strengthening the multinational maritime coalition. However, given the relative simplicity of that option compared to the coalition, this report focuses only on the coalition within the implementation section.

Implementation

The Strengthening Multinational Coalition strategy aims to deter and disrupt Houthi attacks by enhancing intelligence-sharing, coordinated interdictions, and joint naval patrols. This implementation plan outlines the key actors, necessary steps, potential obstacles, and mitigation strategies based on lessons from the Counter-ISIS Coalition and Operation Prosperity Guardian.

Key Stakeholder Roles

Identifying stakeholders and clearly assigning roles is essential to ensure unity of effort and command, a lack of which contributed greatly to the early struggles of the Counter-ISIS coalition (Carter, 2017).

This coalition will require interagency involvement and civilian-military cooperation. Following the Counter-ISIS framework, the lead coordinator should be a high-ranking military official based at the DOS who is able to liaison between potentially competing CENTCOM and DOS priorities. CENTCOM should lead the military-branch of this effort, as that is the U.S. Unified

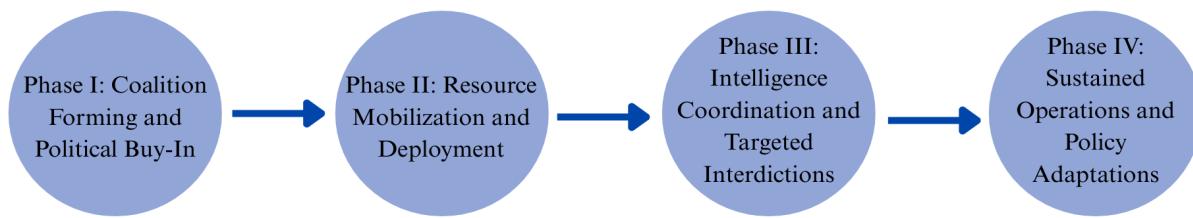
Combatant Command in charge of Red Sea and Gulf of Aden activities. The CENTCOM Commander is General Michael E. Kurilla, so it would be his responsibility to complete or delegate coalition military-specific coordination activities. This would involve establishing a command structure and integration protocols, overseeing U.S. military asset deployment, and communicating with international partners to ensure operational cohesion. These actions are consistent with the Center for New American Security framework on integrated deterrence (Pettyjohn & Wasser, 2022). There should also be a DOS representative to spearhead diplomatic engagements, such as negotiating formal partnership and intelligence-sharing agreements, ABO negotiations, and public messaging.

A second group of stakeholders are potential regional partners such as Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Oman, Egypt, and Bahrain. These stakeholders would participate in deliberations about coalition goals and progress, but their physical contributions may be limited by regional proximity to the Houthi and Iranian threat and a lack of resources (Schaer, 2023). Their role would include providing regional assets, intelligence on smuggling routes, and diplomatic engagement to increase the legitimacy of the coalition throughout the Middle East and North Africa. They would also allow coalition use of military bases within their countries, granting the coalition access that Operation Prosperity Guardian lacked (Abaad, 2024).

A third group of stakeholders would be NATO allies such as France, the UK, Italy, and Germany. Of these, France, Italy, and the UK were officially part of the Operation Prosperity Guardian coalition. These stakeholders would be able to offer naval military assets, contribute to intelligence-sharing operations, conduct interdiction operations targeting arms shipments, and negotiate diplomatic backing with European Union policymakers.

Other bureaucratic organizations within the U.S. government would also be stakeholders, specifically the U.S. Congress. Congress would authorize initial and continued funding for the coalition, as well as provide oversight through quarterly evaluations. They would also assist with developing or adjusting any legal frameworks necessary for successful coalition operations.

Steps



Phase I: Coalition Forming and Political Buy-In (Months 1-3)

One of the reasons for the failure of Operation Prosperity Guardian was the exclusion of potential partners from the planning phase. The U.S. and UK also announced the Operation before ensuring political buy-in from NATO or regional allies (Abaad, 2024). Thus, the first phase of implementation should involve meeting with government and military leaders of Gulf States and NATO allies to secure formal coalition agreements through diplomatic channels, similar to the Counter-ISIS coalition (Carter, 2017). The DOS should include resource pledges or ABO rights for the duration of the coalition within these formal agreements. Phase I could also create separate working groups within the coalition for operations, intelligence, messaging, patrols, and more to divide labor according to partner capabilities. This phase also involves establishing a joint command center under CTF 153 in Bahrain to centralize operations, increasing potential buy-in by utilizing existing structures. Finally, this phase should learn from the Counter-ISIS successful mobilization, employing consistent messaging, emphasizing shared threats, and scheduling frequent coalition meetings (Carter, 2017). These meetings should be used to define shared rules of engagement, intelligence-sharing agreements, and communication protocols to ensure strategic, institutional, and tactical integration of the coalition (Pettyjohn & Wasser, 2022).

Phase II: Resource Mobilization and Deployment (Months 4-6)

Once all coalition partners have a shared understanding of goals and frameworks for action, coalition implementation should enter Phase II. Though this estimates 4-6 months, it is critical that phases transition according to conditions rather than strict timelines (Lewis, 2017). The second phase involves allocating naval assets to strategic regional locations, specifically the Bab al-Mandeb chokepoint and the Gulf of Aden. This phase also involves standardizing communication systems and platforms to avoid the coordination failures of NATO's Operation Unified Protector (Pettyjohn & Wasser, 2022). This will require an authorization by the DOS to override the International Traffic in Arms Regulation, which limits such technical exchanges (85 FR 3819). The coalition should also deploy surveillance technologies, such as drone reconnaissance and satellite monitoring, during this phase. They should also begin conducting joint training exercises to standardize engagement tactics. Finally, this phase involves publicly announcing the coalition, issuing joint warnings against disrupting maritime freedom in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, and establishing joint economic and military punishments for threatening that freedom.

Phase III: Intelligence Coordination and Targeted Interdictions (Months 7-12)

Once communication and information-sharing systems are compatible and intelligence collection efforts have begun, the implementation should progress to Phase III. This involves implementing multinational naval patrols with the previously-agreed shared command structures and using them to secure maritime trade routes and target identified Houthi smuggling routes based on shared intelligence (Navarro, 2025). In addition to the larger patrols, this phase should also introduce rapid-response teams that can adjust to real-time intelligence updates (Lewis, 2017). This phase should also involve increasing commercial vessel escort operations, ensuring the defense of maritime trade. This phase also involves using coalition intelligence to identify and cut off Houthi financial avenues.

Phase IV: Sustained Operations and Policy Adaptations (Year 2 and Beyond)

In order to ensure continued effectiveness of operations and coalition necessity, the fourth phase involves implementing quarterly security assessments, the first one being at the end of the program's first year (Carter, 2017). These evaluations should include both CENTCOM reports to Congressional Review Boards and internal coalition meetings, outlining the ongoing successes, failures, threat adaptation capabilities, and resource requirements for continued action (Carter, 2017). If CENTCOM and coalition partners are unable to sufficiently justify continued engagement or agree that the Houthi issue is resolved during these evaluations, the program should end. This phase should also involve expanding coalition membership as needed, though CENTCOM must ensure that all partners are able to further the coalition's strategic interests (Carter, 2017).

Risks

Inability to Achieve Buy-In from International Partners

Operation Prosperity Guardian struggled to achieve political buy-in due to its overtly pro-Israel framing and regional security concerns of the Gulf States (Schaer, 2023). The likelihood of this risk is increased by ongoing disagreements over how to resolve the crisis in Gaza and greater US distancing from Europe (Ulrichsen, 2025). Implementation must include steps to mitigate this risk, as the success of this coalition depends on the involvement of as many countries as possible.

Learning from the Counter-ISIS coalition, CENTCOM can mitigate this risk by framing all coalition-related discussions through the shared interests of ensuring maritime freedom and regional stability rather than countering Houthi and Iranian influence. This language should be incorporated across U.S. institutions, especially within statements from top government officials, to establish credibility. This can also be mitigated through the frequent diplomatic engagement suggested in Phase I, where CENTCOM leaders should actively encourage partner participation and address any potential concerns (Carter, 2017). The DOS could also offer trade agreements or defense cooperation in other areas as incentives to join the coalition.

Evasion Tactics by Houthi Forces

The Houthis will likely attempt to subvert coalition goals by diversifying their smuggling routes. This would decrease the impact of the program by maintaining Houthi access to weapons supplies. The implementation seeks to mitigate this through the coalition shared communication and intelligence systems identified in Phase II. The coalition should also mitigate this by developing contingency strategies to adapt quickly to new information, such as the rapid-response teams in Phase III. The coalition should also use the quarterly evaluations in Phase IV to mitigate this risk, identifying gaps in intelligence and suggesting more frequent meetings depending on the speed of Houthi adaptation.

Risk of Retaliatory Escalation by Houthis

Coalition presence and interdictions of Houthi attacks and weapons supplies could provoke increased Houthi attacks against coalition forces and states. This risk is likely, given the escalations of Houthi attacks from November 2023 to January 2025 and recent Houthi warnings against targeting their economic activity (Alley, 2025). The coalition can mitigate this risk by avoiding initial offensive action and developing a proportional response framework that includes economic, diplomatic, and military countermeasures to Houthi escalation.

Conclusion

A strengthened multinational coalition offers the most viable pathway to reducing Houthi maritime aggression. Drawing lessons from previous multinational efforts, a phased and adaptive implementation approach—led by CENTCOM with broad international collaboration—will maximize operational success while mitigating risks. By ensuring sustained diplomatic engagement, intelligence-sharing, and military coordination, this strategy can achieve a long-term stabilization of Red Sea and Gulf of Aden security.

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Appendix A: Partnership Considerations for Gulf State Coalition Membership

Country	Basing	Resources	U.S. Relationship
Saudi Arabia	Jeddah military base along Red Sea, Jazan civilian port close to Yemen border (Sola-Martin, 2020) US current access to Prince Sultan AB and King Faisal AB military sites but no persistent bases (Nicastro & Tilghman, 2024)	<i>Navy:</i> 106 patrol craft, 6 frigates, 3 minesweepers, 5 amphibious (The Gulf Security Task Force, 2023) <i>GDP 2023:</i> \$1.07 trillion (World Bank, 2023)	Trump administration emphasizing collaboration
United Arab Emirates	Assab, Eritrea; Berbera, Somaliland; Abd al-Kuri and Socotra Islands (Gambrell, 2021; BBC, 2017; Cafiero, 2022; Gambrell, 2025) US permanent base at Al Dhafra AB, US access to Jebel Ali site (Nicastro & Tilghman, 2024)	<i>Navy:</i> 157 patrol craft, 2 minesweepers, 19 amphibious (The Gulf Security Task Force, 2023)	Trump administration emphasizing collaboration
Egypt	20 civilian ports and 4-6 military bases along Red Sea (Sola-Martin, 2020) US access to MFO South Camp military site but no persistent bases (Nicastro & Tilghman, 2024)	<i>Navy:</i> 63 patrol craft, 7 submarines, 8 frigates, 14 minesweepers, 2 amphibious <i>Coast Guard:</i> 89 patrol craft (The Gulf Security Task Force, 2023)	President Trump close to President Abdel Fattah Sisi (Webb, 2024)
Oman	US access to Duqm military site, no persistent bases (Nicastro & Tilghman, 2024) Oman Facilities Access Agreement give U.S. rights to use Omani bases (Wallin, 2018)	<i>Navy:</i> 10 patrol craft, 3 frigates, 1 amphibious (The Gulf Security Task Force, 2023)	Free Trade Agreement, history of cooperation (Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, 2022)
Somaliland	Berbera and Bosaso ports	No Navy or Coast Guard	Closer relations w US

	(Sola-Martin, 2020)	(The Gulf Security Task Force, 2023)	under Trump administration (Webb, 2024)
Eritrea	Massawa port (Sola-Martin, 2020) Renegotiate base at Kagnew Station (Haile, 2021)	No Navy or Coast Guard (The Gulf Security Task Force, 2023)	Sanctioned under E.O.13818 and E.O.14046 (Bureau of African Affairs, 2022)
Bahrain	US persistent base at NSA Bahrain, US access to Sheik Isa AB miliary site (Nicastro & Tilghman, 2024)	<i>Navy:</i> 13 patrol craft, 1 frigate, 9 amphibious <i>Coast Guard:</i> 55 patrol craft, 1 amphibious (The Gulf Security Task Force, 2023)	Major Non-NATO Ally, headquarters of US 5th Fleet, multiple defense coalitions including Operation Prosperity Guardian (Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, 2022)
Kuwait	5 U.S. bases at Ali Al Salem AB, Al Jaber AB, Camp Buehring, Al Mubarak AB, and Camp Arifjan (Nicastro & Tilghman, 2024)	<i>Navy:</i> 20 patrol craft, 8 minesweepers <i>Coast Guard:</i> 32 patrol craft, 1 amphibious (The Gulf Security Task Force, 2023)	Headquarters of Operation Inherent Resolve (Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, 2021)
Qatar	US persistent base at Al Udeid AB (Nicastro & Tilghman, 2024)	<i>Navy:</i> 11 patrol craft <i>Coast Guard:</i> 12 patrol craft (The Gulf Security Task Force, 2023)	History of security cooperation, staging ground for air operations against ISIS (Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, 2020)

Appendix B: Comprehensive Overview of Houthi Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Attacks, October 2023 to March 2025

Date	Ship Name	Ship Type	Houthi Weapons/Attack Type	Outcome	Com/Mil	Location			
11/19/23	Galaxy Leader Carrier	Carrier	VBSS	Successful Hijacking	Commercial	Red Sea			
Phase 1 Houthi's announce that any Israeli-linked ship is a target									
11/23/23	USS Thomas Hudner	Destroyer	multiple OWADs	US interception	Military	Red Sea			
11/24/23	CMA CGM Symi	Container	OWAD	Damaged	Commercial	Arabian Sea			
11/27/23	Central Park	Tanker	VBSS	US response	Commercial	Gulf of Aden			
11/27/23	MSC Ambra	Container	"drone"	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea			
11/29/23	USS Carney	Destroyer	UAV	US interception	Military	Bab al-Mandeb			
12/3/23	Number 9	Container	ballistic missile	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/3/23	AOM Sophie II	Carrier	ASBM	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/3/23	AOM Sophie II	Carrier	UAV	US interception	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb			
12/3/23	Unity Explorer	Carrier	ASBM	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/3/23	USS Carney	Destroyer	UAV	US interception	Military	Red Sea			
12/3/23	Unity Explorer	Carrier	UAV	US Interception	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb			
Phase 2 Attacks expand to all ships heading for Israeli ports									
12/6/23	USS Mason	Destroyer	UAV	US interception	Military	Red Sea			
12/10/23	Centaurus Leader	Carrier	Drone Attack	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/12/23	Strinda	Tanker	ASCM	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/13/23	Ardmore Encounter	Tanker	VBSS/ "two missiles"	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/13/23	Ardmore Encounter	Tanker	UAV	US interception	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/14/23	Maersk Gibraltar	Container	ASBM	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/15/23	MSC Palatiuum III	Container	ASBM	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/15/23	Al Jasrah	Container	OWAD	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/16/23	USS Carney	Destroyer	14 OWAD drone swarm	US interception	Military	Red Sea			
12/18/23	U.S. announce Operation Prosperity Guardian, plan to ensure maritime security in Red Sea								
12/18/23	MSC Clara	Container	Missile or OWAD	Missed	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb			
12/18/23	Magic Vela	Carrier	VBSS		Commercial	Red Sea			
12/18/23	Swan Atlantic	Tanker	OWAD, ABSM	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/19/23	US, EU, NATO, Australia, Bahamas, Japan, Liberia, New Zealand, South Korea, and Singapore issue joint statement against Houthi aggression								
12/23/23	USS Laboon	Destroyer	4 UAS	US interception	Military	Red Sea			
12/23/23	Chem Pluto	Tanker	OWAD	Missed	Commercial	Arabian Sea			
12/23/23	Sai Baba	Tanker	OWAD	Hit	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/23/23	Blaamanen	Tanker	OWAD	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/25/23	Navig8 Montiel	Tanker	Drone	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea			
Phase 3 Attacks expand to include ships linked to U.S. and Britain									
12/26/23	USS Laboon	Destroyer	12 OWAD, 3 ASBM, 2 land attack cruise missiles	US interception	Military	Red Sea			
12/26/23	MSC Unit VIII	Container	3 ASBM, 2 cruise missiles	US interception	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/28/23	USS Mason	Destroyer	1 drone, 1 ASBM	US interception	Military	Red Sea			
12/30/23	Maersk Hangzhou	Container	ASBM	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/31/23	Maersk Hangzhou	Container	Armed Clash	US interception	Commercial	Red Sea			
12/31/23	USS Gravely	Destroyer	2 ASBMs	US interception	Military	Red Sea			
1/2/24	CMA CGM Tage	Container	2 ASBMs	Missed	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb			
1/3/24 U.S. and other countries issue joint warning to Houthi's to cease maritime aggression or face military response									
1/6/24	USS Laboon	Destroyer	UAV	US interception	Military	Red Sea			
1/9/24	Caravos Harmony	Carrier	OWAD, ASCM, ASBM	(warship) interception	Commercial	Red Sea			
1/9/24	Federal Masamune	Carrier	OWAD, ASCM, ASBM	(warship) interception	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb			
1/9/24	US CENTCOM	18 OWA UAVs, 2 ASCMs, 1 ASI US interception			Military	Red Sea			
1/10/24 UNSC Resolution 2722 passed, call Houthi's to cease attacks on commercial vessels and release Galaxy Leader and crew									
1/11/24	First US CENTCOM strikes against Houthi land targets								
1/11/24	USCENTCOM forces seize transfer of Iranian resupply aid to Houthi's								
1/11/24	St Nikolas	Tanker	VBSS	hijacked by Iran	Commercial	Gulf of Aden			
1/12/24	Khalissa	Tanker	ASBM	Missed	Commercial	Gulf of Aden			
1/14/24	USS Laboon	Destroyer	ASCM	US interception		Red Sea			
1/15/24	Gibraltar Eagle	Carrier	ASBM	Damaged	Commercial	Gulf of Aden			
1/16/24	Zografia	Carrier	Quds Z-0 ASCM or ASBM	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea			
1/17/24	Biden Adminstration designate Houthi's as a SDGT								
1/17/24	Genco Picardy	Carrier	OWAD	Damaged	Commercial	Gulf of Aden			
1/18/24	Chem Ranger	Tanker	2 ASBMs	Missed	Commercial	Gulf of Aden			
1/24/24	Tomahawk	Carrier	OWAD		Commercial	Red Sea			
1/24/24	Maersk Detroit	Containers	3 ASBMs	1 Missed, 2 US intercep	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb			
1/24/24	Maersk Chesapeake	Containers	ASBMs	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea			
1/26/24	USS Carney	Destroyer	ASBM	US interception	Military	Gulf of Aden			
1/26/24	Achilles	Tanker	2 ASBMs	US interception	Commercial	Gulf of Aden			
1/26/24	Marlin Luanda	Tanker	ASBM	Damaged	Commercial	Gulf of Aden			
1/28/24	Iranian shipment to Houthi's intercepted, contains long-range optics (LOROPS) systems among other arms								
1/31/24	USS Carney	Destroyer	ASBM, 3 UAVs	US interception	Military	Gulf of Aden			
2/1/24	Koi	Container	2 ASBMs	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea			
2/2/24	USS Carney	Destroyer	UAV	US interception	Military	Gulf of Aden			

2/2/24	USS Laboon and F/A-18s	Destroyer	7 UAVs	US interception	Military	Red Sea
2/2/24	Daffodil	Tanker	UAV	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
2/6/24	Star Nasia	Carrier	3 ASBMs	2 near misses, 1 US inte	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
2/6/24	Morning Tide	Cargo	ASBM, UAV	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
2/6/24	Morning Tide	Cargo	3 ASBMs	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
2/12/24	Star Iris	Carrier	2 missiles, OWADs, or combo	Damaged	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb
2/15/24	Lycavitos	Carrier	ASBM	Damaged	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
2/16/24	Pollux	Tanker	3 ASBMs	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
2/18/24	Rubyamar	Cargo	2 ASBMs	Damaged	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb
2/19/24	Sea Champion	Carrier	2 ASBMs	Damaged	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
2/19/24	Navis Fortuna	Carrier	OWAD	Damaged	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb
2/19/24	US CENTCOM		10 OWA UAVs	US interception	Military	Red Sea and Gulf o
2/20/24	MSC Silver II	Cargo	missiles	Missed	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
2/22/24	US CENTCOM		6 OWA UAVs	US interception	Military	Red Sea
2/22/24	Islander	Cargo	2 ASBMs	Damaged	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
2/23/24	Commercial Ships		3 OWA UAVs	US interception	Commercial	Red Sea
2/24/24	Torn Thor	Tanker	ASBM	Damaged	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
2/27/24	US CENTCOM		5 OWA UAVs	US interception	Military	Red Sea
2/27/24	Lady Youmna	Tanker	"Missile"	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
2/27/24	Jolly Vanadio	Carrier	2 UAVs	missed	Commercial	Red Sea
2/29/24	US CENTCOM		UAV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
3/4/24	MSC Sky II	Cargo	2 ASBMs	Damaged	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
3/5/24	USS Carney	Destroyer	ASBM, 3 OWA UAS	US interception	Military	
3/6/24	True Confidence	Carrier	ASBM	Damaged, first fatal strik	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
3/8/24	Propel Fortune	Carrier	2 ASBMs	Missed	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
3/9/24	US CENTCOM		28 UAVs	US interception	Military	Red Sea
3/11/24	Pinocchio	Container	2 ASBMs	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
3/12/24	USS Laboon	Destroyer	close-range ballistic missile	Missed	Military	Red Sea
3/14/24	Fuxing V	Carrier	2 missiles	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
3/15/24	Pacific 01	Tanker	Missile	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
3/15/24	Mado	Tanker	3 ASBMs	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
3/15/24	Mado	Tanker	ASBMs	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
3/16/24	US CENTCOM		UAV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
3/17/24	Mado	Tanker	Missile	Missed	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
3/20/24	US CENTCOM		USV	US interception	Military	
3/22/24	Pretty Lady	Carrier	4 ASBMs	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
3/23/24	Huang Pu	Tanker	5 ASBMs	Damaged	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb
3/23/24	USS Carney	Destroyer	6 UAVs	Missed	Military	Red Sea
3/27/24	US CENTCOM		4 long-range UAS	US interception	Military	Red Sea
3/28/24	US CENTCOM		4 UASs	US interception	Military	Red Sea
4/4/24	Iranian "spy ship" Behshad leaves Gulf of Aden for Iran					
4/1/24	Crystal Symphony	Cruise	Armed Clash	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
4/3/24	USS Gravely	Destroyer	ASBM, 2 UAS	US interception	Military	Red Sea
4/6/24	Hope Island	Container	4 ASBMs	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
4/6/24	US CENTCOM		UAV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
4/7/24	Hope Island	Container	ASBM	German Interception	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
4/9/24	MV Yorktown	Container	ASBM	US interception	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
4/10/24	US CENTCOM		3 UAVS	US interception	Military	Red Sea, Gulf of A
4/11/24	US CENTCOM		ASBM	US interception	Military	Red Sea
4/24/24	Maersk Yorktown	Container	ABSM	UK interception	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
4/25/24	MSC Darwin VI	Container	TBD	Missed	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
4/26/24	Andromeda Star	Tanker	3 ASBMs	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
4/27/24	MSC Orion	Container	UAV	Missed	Commercial	Arabian Sea
4/28/24	US CENTCOM		5 UAVs	US interception	Military	Red Sea
4/29/24	Cyclades	Carrier	3 UAVs, 3 ASBMs	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
4/29/24	USS Philippine Sea, USS Laboon	Destroyer	UAV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
Phase 4 Attacks expand to all ships whose owners/operators have vessels visiting Israeli ports						
5/6/24	US CENTCOM		UAS	US interception	Military	Red Sea
5/7/24	MSC Diego; MSC Gina	Containers	2 ASBM	Missed	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
5/11/24	US CENTCOM		3 UAS	US interception	Military	Red Sea
5/13/24	USS Mason	Destroyer	ASBM	US interception	Military	Red Sea
5/13/24	US CENTCOM		UAS	US interception	Military	Red Sea
5/13/24	USS Carney		sent back to the US	235 day deployment		
5/18/24	Wind	Tanker	ASBM	Damaged	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb
5/23/24	Yannis	Cargo	2 ASBMs	Missed	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb
5/25/24	Minerva Lisa	Tanker	2 ASBMs	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
5/26/24	US CENTCOM		UAS	US interception	Military	Red Sea
5/27/24	US CENTCOM		UAS	US interception	Military	Red Sea
5/28/24	Laax	Carrier	at least 5 ASBMs	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
5/28/24	US CENTCOM		5 UAS	US interception	Military	Red Sea

5/28/24	Morea	Carrier	2 ASBMs	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
5/29/24	US CENTCOM		2 UAS	US interception	Military	Red Sea
5/31/24	US CENTCOM		4 UASs	US interception	Military	Red Sea, Gulf of A
6/1/24	Albliani	Tanker	drone	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
6/1/24	Al Salam	Tanker	drone	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
6/1/24	US CENTCOM		UAS, 2 ASBM	US interception	Military	Red Sea
6/4/24	Roza	Carrier	ASBM	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
6/4/24	Vantage Dream	Carrier	ASBM	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
6/6/24	Aal Genoa	Carrier	ASBM	Missed	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb
6/8/24	MSC Tavvishi	Container	ASBM	Italian interception	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb, Re
6/8/24	Nodemey	Cargo	1 ASBM, 1 ASCM	Damaged	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
6/9/24	Nodemey	Cargo	ASCM/ASBM	Damaged	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
6/9/24	MSC Tavvishi	Container	2 ASBMs	Damaged	Commercial	Gulf of Aden, Bab
6/10/24	USS Mason		leave for Mediterranean			
6/12/24	Tutor	Carrier	USV, unknown aerial projectile	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
6/13/24	Verbena	Cargo	2 ASCMs, 1 ASBM	Sunk	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
6/13/24	Seaguardian	Carrier	2 ASBM	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
6/14/24	US CENTCOM		2 USVs, 1 UAS	US interception	Military	Red Sea
6/16/24	Tutor	Carrier	bombs placed on stern	Sank, 1 fatality	Commercial	Red Sea
6/16/24	Captain Paris	Tanker	two missiles	Missed	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb
6/17/24	US CENTCOM		UAV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
6/19/24	US CENTCOM		2 USVs	US interception	Military	Red Sea
6/20/24	US CENTCOM		4 USV, 2 UAS	US interception	Military	Red Sea
6/21/24	Transworld Navigator	Carrier	blasts in proximity, drone boat?	Missed	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
6/22/24	US CENTCOM		3 USV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
6/23/24	Transworld Navigator	Carrier	UAV and another weapon	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
6/24/24	MSC Sarah V	Carrier	Ballistic Missile	Missed	Commercial	Arabian Sea
6/25/24	Lila Lisbon	Carrier	Missile	Missed	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
6/27/24	US CENTCOM		UAS	US interception	Military	Red Sea
6/27/24	Seajoy	Carrier	USV / WIED	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
6/27/24	Seajoy	Carrier	ASBM	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
6/28/24	Delonix	Tanker	5 missiles	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
6/30/24	US CENTCOM		3 USVs	US interception	Military	Red Sea
7/3/24	US CENTCOM		2 USV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
7/4/24	US CENTCOM		2 USV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
7/9/24	Maersk Sentosa	Container	5 missiles	Missed	Commercial	Arabian Sea
7/10/24	US CENTCOM		2 UAV, 1 USV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
7/10/24	Mount Fuji	Tanker	missile	Missed	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb
7/11/24	US CENTCOM		5 USVs, 2 UAS	US interception	Military	Red Sea
7/11/24	Rostrum Stoic	Carrier	5 missiles	Missed	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb
7/14/24	US CENTCOM		2 UAVs, 1 USV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
7/15/24	Bentley I	Tanker	2 boats, 1 USV	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
7/15/24	Bentley I	Tanker	ASBM	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
7/15/24	Chois Lion	Tanker	USV	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
7/15/24	US CENTCOM		5 UAV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
7/19/24	Lobivia	Container	2 ballistic missiles	Hit	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
7/20/24	Pumba	Container	USV, UAV, 3 missiles	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
7/20/24	US CENTCOM		UAV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
7/21/24	US CENTCOM		4 USVs	US interception	Military	Red Sea
7/30/24	US CENTCOM		3 USVs	US interception	Military	Red Sea
8/3/24	Groton	Container	ASBM and other	Damaged	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
8/3/24	Groton	Container	ASBM and other	Hit	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
8/5/24	US CENTCOM		3 UAS, USV, UAV, ASBM	US interception	Military	Red Sea
8/6/24	US CENTCOM		1 UAV, 2 ASBMs	US interception	Military	Red Sea
8/8/24	Delta Blue	Tanker	RPG from two small boats	Missed	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb
8/8/24	US CENTCOM		USV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
8/9/24	Delta Blue	Tanker	2 missiles	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
8/9/24	Delta Blue	Tanker	USV	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
8/9/24	US CENTCOM		2 UAVs	US interception	Military	Red Sea
8/13/24	Delta Atlantic	Tanker	USV	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
8/13/24	Delta Atlantic	Tanker	USV	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
8/13/24	On Phoenix	Tanker	drone/missile	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
8/13/24	US CENTCOM		2 houthi vessels	US interception	Military	Red Sea
8/16/24	US CENTCOM		USV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
8/21/24	SW North Wind I	Carrier	USV explosion in close proximity	Damaged	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
8/21/24	SW North Wind I	Carrier	drone/missile	Missed	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
8/21/24	SW North Wind I	Carrier	drone/missile	Missed	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
8/21/24	Sounion	Tanker	Armed Clash	Exchange of Fire	Commercial	Red Sea
8/21/24	Sounion	Tanker	USV, unidentified projectiles	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
8/22/24	US CENTCOM		2 UAVs	US interception	Military	Red Sea

8/22/24	SW North Wind I	Carrier	2 drones/missiles	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
8/22/24	SW North Wind I	Carrier	drone boat explosion	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
8/23/24	Sounion	Tanker	Houthi boarding & detonation	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
8/30/24	Groton	Container	2 missiles	Missed	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
9/2/24	Blue Lagoon I	Tanker	3 ballistic missiles	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
9/2/24	Amjad	Tanker	drone	Hit	Commercial	Red Sea
9/20/24	US CENTCOM		UAV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
9/24/24	US CENTCOM		UAV	US interception	Military	Red Sea
9/27/24	US CENTCOM		complex Houthi attack- cruise mi	US interception	Military	Red Sea
10/1/24	Cordelia Moon	Tanker	4 missiles	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
10/1/24	Cordelia Moon	Tanker	drone boat puncture ballast tank	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
10/1/24	Minoan Courage	Carrier	missile	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
10/10/24	Olympic Spirit	Tanker	unknown projectile, OWAD	Damaged	Commercial	Red Sea
10/10/24	Olympic Spirit	Tanker	2 ballistic missiles	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
10/10/24	Olympic Spirit	Tanker	ballistic missile	Missed	Commercial	Red Sea
10/18/24	CENTCOM report multiple precision airstrikes against Houthi storage facilities, Surface to Air Missile launcher, UAS Ground Control Stations					
10/28/24	Montaro	Carrier	ASBMs	Missed	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb
11/11/24	USS Spruance; USS Stockdale	Destroyer	at least 8 OWA UAS, 5 ASBMs,	US interception	Military	Bab al-Mandeb
11/17/24	Andalou S	Carrier	ballistic missile	Missed	Commercial	Bab al-Mandeb
11/18/24	Andalou S	Carrier	ballistic missile	Missed	Commercial	Gulf of Aden
12/1/24	USS Stockdale; USS Kane; 3 merchant vessels	Destroyer	3 ASBMs, 3 UAVs, & 1 ASCM	US interception	Military	Gulf of Aden
12/9/24	USS Stockdale; USS Kane; 3 merchant vessels	Destroyer	OWA UAS, ASCM	US interception	Military	Gulf of Aden
12/21/24	US CENTCOM Forces	Destroyer	UAVs, ASCM	Missed	Military	Red Sea
1/19/25	Israel-Hamas Ceasefire					
3/15/25	US offensive airstrikes vs Houthis					
3/16/25	USS Truman	Destroyer	11 "drones"	US interception	Military	Red Sea

This spreadsheet compiles data from ACLED Yemen Conflict Observatory, DIA Reports, Washington Institute for Near East Policy Conflict Tracker, UKMTO reports, and CENTCOM posts on X.