

US actions in Yemen fuel regional instability

By Zhang Yuan
& Mohammad Hossein Vahedi*

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

The Red Sea is a vital corridor for international trade and energy commerce. Its security and stability are also crucial components of peace and stability in the Middle East. The Red Sea crisis is one of the spillover effects of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. At the heart of the unresolved Palestinian issue lies the absence of international justice. What the US air strikes on Yemen have truly damaged is Yemen's local infrastructure — paid for with the lives, health, and property of its people. America's military actions against Yemen have escalated tensions in the Middle East, and the intensifying armed clashes between the US and the Ansarullah (Houthis) reflect Washington's attempt to suppress Iran's regional influence. However, the US and its allies' military operations against the Houthis in Yemen are unlikely to achieve their stated objectives unless the root causes of the Middle East's security dilemma are resolved. The best approach to addressing the Yemen issue is to insist on political dialogue and consulta-



A ship fires missiles at an undisclosed location, after US President Donald Trump launched military strikes against Yemen's Ansarullah (Houthis) over the group's attacks against Red Sea shipping, in this screengrab obtained from a handout video released on March 15, 2025.

● REUTERS

tion. All stakeholders should enhance diplomatic efforts rather than resorting to military sabotage. China emphasizes the importance of upholding the right to freedom of navigation for all countries in the Red Sea and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait in accordance with international

law. China has consistently supported the UN-led Yemeni peace process and urged all parties to adhere to the UN Charter and international law. China's proposed solution to the Yemen crisis is for all parties to work together under international law to ensure the safety

of shipping routes in the Red Sea while respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of coastal states. Moreover, full implementation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions should be promoted to secure an immediate cease-fire and end the war.

The Red Sea remains a critical passage for global trade. Recently, US President Donald Trump has called for the Suez Canal to be "free for America," which could signal another move against Yemen's Houthis. From the outset, the slogan of the Houthis has been resistance

against American and Israeli imperialism — a stance that gained greater traction after October 7, when they vowed to reduce maritime exports to Israel to zero. Their actions took a new turn when they launched attacks on US and British warships. Upon returning to power, Trump swiftly moved to eliminate them, even ordering heavy air strikes on Saada, the Houthis' stronghold. Yet, despite these efforts, the Houthis remain undefeated, having successfully destroyed 20 US drones and preserved key missile sites. The US has already spent \$3 billion, but the Houthi movement continues to operate.

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Ansarullah's bold air siege sends shockwaves through Israel

PERSPECTIVE

May 4, 2025, was anything but a routine day in Tel Aviv. The moment the sound of missiles broke out, panic swept through the city, and as a missile struck its target — sending thick smoke billowing into the sky and images circulating worldwide — Israelis were left on edge. This incident, carried out by Yemen's Ansarullah (Houthis), serves as a wake-up call: seeing such plumes of smoke in the heart of the occupied territories is no longer a rare sight, especially near airports, which could force international airlines to call off flights to Israel. In this vein, Ansarullah has threatened to impose a full air blockade on the occupying regime.

Advanced defense systems knocked out

For the first time, a missile from the Yemeni resistance group got through and hit home inside Israel, laying bare the failure of Israel's advanced defense systems to intercept the attack. Experts on Israeli affairs believe Ansarullah's success in breaking through Israeli air defenses and threatening Ben Gurion Airport marks a game-changer in the rules of engagement. Israel now finds itself facing unprecedented threats from Yemen. The power of Ansarullah's offensive — and Israel's inability to fend off these missiles and protect its critical infrastructure — has raised eyebrows and fueled concerns over the shortcomings of advanced defense systems like

Israel's Arrow 3 and the US-made THAAD.

Following the attack, Ansarullah announced that Ben Gurion Airport and other targets in southern and central Israel had been hit, with missile ranges stretching as far as Eilat, the Negev, and the Red Sea.

Ripple effects of Yemeni strike

Hebrew media, quoting official sources, reported that the Ansarullah missile left eight people injured, including two who were making for shelters. The attack also brought air traffic to a standstill and prompted several international airlines to scrap flights to Tel Aviv.

Crucially, data analysis has brought to light over 40 disruptions to international flights at Ben Gurion Airport since Israel resumed its brutal offensive on Gaza on March 18, 2023.

General Yahya Saree, Ansarullah's spokesperson, declared after the airport attack that the Yemeni resistance group would keep up its strikes on airports



— especially Ben Gurion — in a bid to tighten the screws on Israel. He urged all international airlines to pull out of Israeli airports to guarantee the safety of their aircraft.

Ansarullah's declaration of a comprehensive air blockade — by targeting airports — brings with it several consequences:

- Airports will be singled out as primary targets, not just Ben Gurion.
- International flights could grind to a halt for an extended period.
- Undoubtedly, Ansarullah's at-

tack on Ben Gurion Airport raises security red flags and exposes Israel's vulnerability in protecting its vital facilities.

- This is not just another episode in the Yemen-Israel standoff; it signals an escalation in threats from the Yemeni front.
- The strike raises pressing questions about the effectiveness of Israeli and American defense systems if tensions flare up and new fronts open up. In fact, the attack served as a reality check for Israelis, and

Israeli security forces inspect the site where the Israeli military said a projectile fired by Yemen's Ansarullah (Houthis) landed in the area of Ben Gurion International Airport near Tel Aviv, on May 4, 2025.

● OHAD ZWIGENBERG/AP

failure to weather this storm could heap social and political pressure on their cabinet.

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Passengers stand around waiting at Ben Gurion Airport, near Tel Aviv, on May 4, 2025, after a missile strike by Yemen's Ansarullah (Houthis) disrupted flights.

● CHAIM GOLDBERG/FLASH90