

Houthis

Name: Houthis

Type of Organization:

- Insurgent
- religious
- social services provider
- territory-controlling
- violent

Ideologies and Affiliations:

- Arab nationalist
- jihadist
- Islamist
- Shiite
- Zaidi

Place of Origin:

Saada, Yemen

Year of Origin:

1990s (as the Believing Youth movement); renamed the Houthi rebel movement in 2004

Founder(s):

Hussein Badr al-Din al-Houthi

Places of Operation:

Yemen

Overview

Also Known As:

- Al-Houthis¹
- Al-Shabaab al-Mu'minin²
- Ansarallah³
- Ansar Allah⁴
- Ansarullah⁵
- Ash-Shabab al-Mu'min⁶
- Believing Youth⁷
- Believing Youth Forum⁸
- Houthi Movement⁹
- Huthis¹⁰
- Partisans of God¹¹
- Shabaab al-Mumanin¹²
- Supporters of God¹³

Executive Summary:

The Houthis—officially known as Ansar Allah (Partisans of God)—are an Iranian-backed, Shiite Muslim military and political movement in Yemen.¹⁴ Its members, who subscribe to the minority Zaidi sect of Shiite Islam, advocate regional autonomy for Zaidis in northern Yemen. The group has waged a series of bloody insurgencies against the Yemeni government since 2004, overthrowing them and seizing power in Sanaa in 2015.¹⁵ In 2016, the group announced the formation of a government.¹⁶

The Houthi movement began as an effort to maintain tribal autonomy in northern Yemen and protest Western influence in the Middle East. Today,

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the Houthis seek a greater role in the Yemeni government and continue to advocate Zaidi minority interests.¹⁷

The Houthis have received training and military equipment from Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). According to the Saudi ambassador to the United States, the "first thing the Houthis did when they entered and occupied Sanaa was to free Iranian Revolutionary Guards operatives and Hezbollah operatives from the jails."¹⁸ The Iranian ship *Jihan I* was seized allegedly en route to Yemen in 2013 with arms meant for the Houthis.¹⁹

The movement is known for its virulently anti-American and anti-Semitic rhetoric, including the group's ubiquitous slogan: "God is great! Death to America! Death to Israel! Curse upon the Jews! Victory to Islam!"²⁰

The Houthis have targeted U.S. citizens, kidnapping four Americans in May 2015 and releasing one in early June.²¹ Several of the group's leaders have been designated as terrorists by the United States.²²

The Houthis' roots trace back to the 1990s, when Houthis founder Hussein Badr al-Din al-Houthi created the al-Shabab al-Mumanin (Believing Youth) movement in an effort to combine religious revivalism with anti-imperialism.²³ The movement sought to educate local youth about Zaidism's long history in Saada Governorate, northern Yemen. To that end, the al-Houthi family launched a network of associations, sports clubs, and summer camps.²⁴ The al-Houthis also sought to protect Zaidism from perceived encroachment of Salafism and Wahhabism from Saudi Arabia into northern Yemen, where Zaidism has been dominant for centuries.²⁵

God is great! Death to America! Death to Israel! Curse upon the Jews! Victory to Islam! Houthis slogan

The Houthi movement grew increasingly politically engaged in 2003, in reaction and opposition to Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh's support for the U.S.-led war in Iraq.²⁶ Domestically, Hussein Badr al-Din al-Houthi continued to seek autonomy for Saada Governorate from Yemen's Sunni-dominated central government.

After Saleh dispatched troops in a failed attempt to arrest al-Houthi in 2004, the Houthis launched an insurgency against the government. Al-Houthi was killed during clashes with the government in 2004, but the movement has continued in his name, waging a series of intermittent wars against the government, with Saudi forces intervening to support Sanaa in the years since.²⁷

During these wars, Saleh repeatedly sought to appease the Houthis by issuing amnesties to their prisoners and even pardoning Hussein Badr al-Din al-Houthi in 2005, but al-Houthi rejected the pardon and the periodic fighting continued.²⁸ In 2007, Qatar brokered a brief cease-fire called the Doha Agreement, but the deal failed to satisfy the parties and fighting resumed that year.²⁹ In 2009, with the Saleh government launched the massive Operation Scorched Earth, which sought to crush the insurgency for good, and was backed by financial, political, and military support from the Saudis.³⁰ However, the campaign failed, and intermittent fighting continued.³¹

During the Arab Spring in 2011, mass protests began against the Yemeni government, and Saleh stepped down in 2012 pursuant to an internationally negotiated transition agreement.³² The Houthis participated in a National Dialogue Conference but continued fighting against government forces.³³

The Houthis made significant territorial gains in 2014-2015. In September 2014, the group captured Yemen's capital, Sanaa,³⁴ resulting in the resignation of President Abd Rabbuh Mansour Hadi in January 2015.³⁵ The following month, the Houthis officially announced the dissolution of Hadi's parliament and the institution of their interim government, known as the Supreme Revolutionary Committee (SRC).³⁶

The United Nations began facilitating peace talks between the Houthis and the Yemeni government in October 2015.³⁷ Concurrently, the government of Saudi Arabia held negotiations with the Houthis, beginning in March 2016 and reaching a stalemate in May.³⁸ The peace talks between the Houthis and Yemeni government ended without an agreement in early August 2016, after which President Hadi's forces launched a fresh offensive.³⁹ That month, the SRC handed its authority to the Supreme Political Council (SPC), a government body formed by the July 2016 merger between the Houthis and former Yemeni president Ali Abdullah Saleh.⁴⁰ The alliance between Saleh and the Houthis ended in December 2017 after Saleh offered to reconcile with Saudi Arabia. Houthi forces assassinated Saleh on December 4, 2017, during violent clashes between the rebels and Saleh's forces.⁴¹

Following a week of U.N.-sponsored peace talks in Sweden, all parties tentatively agreed to an immediate cease-fire in the Red Sea port of Hodeidah on December 13, 2018.⁴² However, few of the conditions agreed upon were implemented by either side. Fighting continued until February 17, 2019, when the Houthis and Yemeni government finally withdrew their forces from the city of Hodeidah.⁴³ While violence has

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declined in Hodeidah,⁴⁴ it has continued and escalated elsewhere in the country.⁴⁵

Beginning in 2017, the Houthis have also repeatedly attacked Saudi Arabia with missiles and drones, and has ramped up strikes in the spring and summer of 2019.⁴⁶ On August 27, 2019, the U.S. government was reportedly preparing to initiate negotiations with Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in an effort to bring the four-year civil war in Yemen to an end.⁴⁷ This round of peace negotiations is aimed at convincing Saudi Arabia to take part in secret talks with the rebels in Oman to help broker a cease-fire in the conflict. Oman currently stands at the front line in the regional proxy war between Riyadh and Tehran. The Houthis have previously engaged in peace talks, however both instances—once in 2015 during the Obama administration which sought to broker a cease-fire and the release of Americans held in Yemen, and once just last December during the United Nations peace talks—did not result in any significant progress.⁴⁸ Saudi Arabia resumed its airstrikes in Yemen in January 2020 after a suspected Houthi ballistic missile strike on a military camp in Yemen killed at least 116.⁴⁹ On November 16, 2020, a senior official from Saudi Arabia allegedly told the Houthi’s chief negotiator, Mohammed Abdulsalam, that Riyadh would sign a U.N.-sponsored ceasefire if the Shiite movement agreed to a buffer zone along the Kingdom’s border. In exchange for the buffer zone to prevent incursions and artillery fire, the Kingdom claims it will ease an air and sea blockade.⁵⁰ Saudi Arabia presented another ceasefire plan to the Houthis in March 2021, which the militants rejected unless Saudi Arabia fully lifted its blockade of northern Yemen and ceased targeting Houthi positions.⁵¹

On June 10, 2021, the Saudi-led coalition announced that it would stop carrying out attacks against the rebel group in Yemen in order to pave the way for peaceful settlement of the more than seven-year conflict. Coalition spokesman, Turki al-Maliki, told Saudi state television that “no military operation has been carried out in the vicinity of Sanaa or any other Yemeni cities” in recent days. Despite the Houthis ongoing offensive to seize Marib, the last northern stronghold of the Saudi-backed government, the coalition is “preparing the political ground for a peace process.” However, on that same day, the Houthis launched missiles on Marib, targeting a mosque and a woman’s prison. The attack killed at least eight and wounded as many as 27.⁵² On June 21, 2021, the Saudi-led coalition and the Houthis attempted to negotiate a peace deal with the help of U.N. envoy Martin Griffiths and U.S. envoy Tim Lenderking. However, the Houthis’ chief negotiator, Mohammed Abdulsalam, noted that the Houthis wanted to ensure reopening access to Sanaa airport and Hodeidah port before discussing a comprehensive ceasefire, conditions which Riyadh is unlikely to guarantee.⁵³ By providing the Iranian-backed Houthis with open access to Sanaa and Hodeidah, Riyadh would intentionally be putting Saudi Arabia’s domestic security at risk. Iran is Saudi Arabia’s greatest regional adversary and would potentially make use of their Houthi connections to exploit access to Sanaa airport and Hodeidah port to disturb regional security.⁵⁴

Doctrine:

Unlike Sunni extremist groups in Yemen, the Houthis adhere to Zaidism, a doctrinally distinct off-shoot of mainstream “Twelver” Shiism.⁵⁵ While Zaidism ruled Yemen for approximately 900 years beginning in the 9th century, the country has been officially secular since 1962, when a military coup ended the rule of Imam Mohammed Al-Badr.⁵⁶

The Houthi movement has drawn attention for its anti-American, anti-Semitic slogan, “God is great! Death to America! Death to Israel! Curse upon the Jews! Victory to Islam!”⁵⁷ While some analysts maintain that the slogan does not reflect the group’s objectives, the Houthis have issued threats against Yemen’s Jewish community and attempted to force the U.S. ambassador from Yemen to leave.⁵⁸ The Jews living in Saada were threatened by the Houthis in 2007 and forced to relocate to Sanaa, where they were living under government protection as of early 2015.⁵⁹

The Houthis have detained numerous foreign nationals, including at least five Americans. In June 2015, the Houthis released one American captive.⁶⁰ On September 20, 2015, after the intercession of Oman’s government, the Houthis released three more hostages, including U.S. citizen Scott Darden, a logistics employee from Louisiana, and one other American. On November 10, 2015, U.S. officials reported that American contractor John Hamen, who had been detained sometime in October 2015, was dead. The announcement was followed by the release of three other Americans believed to be working for the United Nations.⁶¹

Organizational Structure:

The Houthi movement’s organizational structure is opaque. The movement began as a grassroots religious organization aimed at youth,⁶² but over time it has entered politics and developed military capabilities. Following the killing of movement founder Hussein Badr al-Din al-Houthi by Yemeni forces in 2004, the Houthis were led by Hussein’s father, spiritual leader Badr al-Din al-Houthi. The movement’s current leader is Hussein’s younger brother, Abdul-Malik al-Houthi.⁶³

The organization revolves around a General Secretary, Fadhl Abu Talib, and has multiple “departments.” These departments include the political

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office—al-maktab al-siyasi—as well as the external relations office, health office, education office, social office, intelligence service, and the “media authority to counter the aggression.” However, the Houthis still have yet to make an organizational chart publicly available.⁶⁴

Since December 2, 2017 after the death of President Saleh, the Houthis have ruled northern Yemen. In Houthi-controlled territories, formal state authorities exist alongside the Houthi supervisory system. Decision-making within the Houthi regime is not in the hands of those who are actors of the state—such as governors or ministers—but rather with Houthi supervisors.⁶⁵

Houthi political leadership is organized around four “wings.” These wings include the military wing, which is headed by Abdullah al-Hakim; the tribal wing, which includes tribesmen; the ideological wing which is led by Abdulkarim al-Houthi; and the political wing, which is represented by Mahdi al-Mashat, the current president of the Supreme Revolutionary Committee (SPC).⁶⁶

Financing:

Yemeni officials have long accused Iran’s Shiite Islamist regime of providing political, financial, and logistical support to the Houthi rebels and other secessionist movements in Yemen. Despite a 2015 U.N. report confirming Tehran’s support of the rebel group since at least 2009, Iran and the Houthis have historically denied engaging in past cooperation.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, other reports subsequently confirmed Iranian support, including a Reuters article in December of 2014 confirming financial backing by Tehran. One source stated, “We think there is cash, some of which is channeled via Hezbollah and sacks of cash arriving at the airport.”⁶⁸ Only in 2015 did a Houthi official confirm that Iran provided “direct support” in the form of logistics, intelligence, and cash, to the Houthis rebels. According to the official, the group has received tens of millions of dollars from the Iranian regime in recent years.⁶⁹ Experts place the amount of financial support from Iran at between \$10 and \$20 million per year, including at least one alleged payment of \$3.7 million.⁷⁰

In addition to allegedly sending financial support to the Houthis, Iran also reportedly dispatches military personnel and weapons, including missiles, explosives, and small arms.⁷¹ American intelligence officials have claimed that the Houthis receive considerably less support from Iran than some have alleged.⁷² Nonetheless, on March 28, 2016, the U.S. Navy reportedly intercepted weapons from Iran believed to be headed for Houthi rebels.⁷³ Among the weapons intercepted were 1,500 AK-47 rifles, 200 rocket-propelled grenade launchers, and 21 .50-caliber machine guns, according to Reuters.⁷⁴

A 2018 U.N. report accused Iran of supplying missiles and drones to the Houthis.⁷⁵ In January 2019, the U.N.’s Panel of Experts on Yemen reported that they had “traced the supply to the Houthis of unmanned aerial vehicles and a mixing machine for rocket fuel and found that individuals and entities of Iranian origin have funded the purchase.”⁷⁶ In June 2020, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres reported to the Security Council that cruise missiles used attacks on Saudi oil facilities and an international airport in Saudi Arabia in November 2019 and February 2020 were of Iranian origin.⁷⁷

Though Iran has provided military and financial support to the Houthis, Iran had previously neither confirmed nor denied recognition of the Houthi government in Sanaa. In August 2019, the Houthis appointed Ibrahim al-Dulaimi, director-general of Houthi-run Al Masirah TV station, as ambassador of the Houthi government to Iran.⁷⁸ Iran accepted the appointment and transferred Yemen’s official diplomatic residence in Tehran to Dulaimi. Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei has since met with Dulaimi and the Iranian government has recognized the legitimacy of the Houthi government. In October 2020, Iran appointed its own ambassador, Hassan Eyrlou, to the Houthi government.⁷⁹

On June 10, 2021, the U.S. Department of the Treasury imposed sanctions on twelve individuals and entities who comprise a smuggling network responsible for providing tens of millions of dollars of funds to the Houthis. The individuals and entities—who allegedly are in cooperation with IRGCs Quds Force senior officials—sell commodities, such as Iranian petroleum, throughout the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. The revenue from those sales have further supplemented the Houthis and their ongoing offensive on Yemeni soil. Among the most notorious of the designations is Sa’id Ahmad Muhammad al-Jamal, an Iran-based Houthi financial supporter, who directs the network of front companies and vessels. Al-Jamal also maintains connections to Hezbollah as he works with the group to send millions of dollars to support the Houthis and their operations.⁸⁰

Recruitment:

According to Houthi officials in 2018, the rebels maintained a force of 60,000 fighters, while outside estimates have placed the number between 15,000 and 50,000.⁸¹ The Houthis’ primary area of recruitment is the northern provinces of Yemen, its heartland of ideological support.⁸² In February 2016, al-Arabiya reported that the group had expanded recruitment beyond its traditional political base by inducing “mercenaries” from

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African countries.⁸³ In May 2020, Yemeni Information Minister Muammar Al-Iryani warned that the Houthis were increasingly recruiting civilians in areas under Houthi control.⁸⁴

Houthi recruitment efforts inside Yemen have benefitted from the unpopularity of the Yemeni government.⁸⁵ Since the 2011 uprising that removed President Ali Abdullah Saleh from power, the Houthis have increasingly attracted potential recruits to anti-government public protests in support of the movement.⁸⁶ In the summer of 2014, the group gained noticeable traction when it protested the Yemeni government's decision to cut popular fuel subsidies. Houthi-led protests attracted tens of thousands of supporters, including not only Zaidis but also Sunnis, to Yemen's capital, Sanaa.⁸⁷

Since the 1990s, Houthi recruitment has reached out to its target Zaidi audience through social connections and networking, proselytizing through religious sermons, the dissemination of written materials, audio and videotapes, and online recruitment.⁸⁸ The Houthis began paramilitary activities in 2004 and began distributing military training videos electronically and in person where possible.⁸⁹

The Houthis have also revived local Zaidi rituals, including events where potential recruits can socialize with pro-jihadi Houthi militia men, with the intention of encouraging new recruits to join the veterans.⁹⁰ A pro-Houthi youth movement called Shabab al-Sumud (Steadfast Youth) has also provided support, including by managing a tent in Maydan Taghayr (Change Square) in 2012 where members of the public could enter and watch pro-Houthi videos.⁹¹

The group is also active on the Internet, including on YouTube channels where it posts pro-Houthi videos, as well as web forums to promote the Houthi movement.⁹² The Houthis operate the TV channel Al Masirah,⁹³ which publishes pro-Houthi videos, including poems and songs.⁹⁴ In 2007, group leader Abdel Malik founded the Al Minbar website,⁹⁵ which published press statements, editorials, speeches, videos, and images to promote its message.⁹⁶ The group has also released statements through website Ansar Allah (Supporters of Allah).⁹⁷ Houthi officials also maintain Twitter accounts disseminating pro-Houthi material. For example, in May 2016, Houthi spokesman Mohammed Abdul Salam posted comments accusing the Yemeni government of lying and time-wasting.⁹⁸

Since the start of Yemen's civil war in 2014, the Houthis have reportedly conscripted more than 30,000 child soldiers, all under the age of 15.⁹⁹ According to a February 2021 study by the Switzerland-based SAM for Rights and Liberties, the Houthis "deliberately used the education system to incite violence and indoctrinate students with the group's ideologies," particularly by giving children lectures on sectarian content and promoting military victories.¹⁰⁰ Houthis have also exploited the extreme poverty rampant in Yemen by offering financial incentives to children whose families' main providers had been killed.¹⁰¹ Houthi officials have admitted to conscripting at least 18,000 child soldiers as young as 10 years old, though officially the Houthis say they do not recruit children.¹⁰² In June 2020, news publication *Asharq Al-Awsat* revealed that local sources in Sanaa claimed that Houthi forces had launched a recruitment campaign to persuade children and young men to join its ranks. The campaign operates under the guise that recruits will be provided with protection from the COVID-19 pandemic. Upon enlistment, young recruits are asked to save themselves by joining the fighting front, which the Houthis claim is safer than crowded cities and areas.¹⁰³ According to the human rights organization the Yemeni Coalition of Independent Women (CIY), child abduction is also widespread and occurs daily in Houthi-controlled areas, especially in Sanaa and the governorates of Ibb, Amran, Hajjah, Mahwit, and Dhamar. However, reports released later in June claim that the Houthis failed to implement necessary health measures to prevent the spread of the virus at indoctrination schools and institutes, leading to dozens of children being infected by COVID-19.¹⁰⁴

The Houthis have used child soldiers to plant and clear landmines, as well as act as guards. There are also reports of the Houthis sending children to the frontlines to fight.¹⁰⁵ As the Houthis continued an offensive in Marib in March 2021, the Houthis reportedly took heavy losses and sought to replenish their ranks with child soldiers. Houthi forces allegedly conscripted at least 85 child soldiers that month alone. The minors received a week of training before they were sent to fight in Marib.¹⁰⁶ To further the indoctrination of Yemeni youth, the Houthis have created summer camps that reportedly enroll thousands of children in Houthi-held territory. According to Houthi officials, children are educated to Houthi ideology and "immunized from false cultures" during 45-day sessions at the camps, which culminate with graduation ceremonies attended by the children's families as well as Houthi officials.¹⁰⁷ The children also receive combat training. Parents who refuse to send their children to the Houthi camps are reportedly blacklisted in their communities.¹⁰⁸

The Houthis have also conscripted civil servants from areas under their control. Al-Arabiya reported in 2017 that the Houthis were forcibly subjecting civil servants to two-week "brain washing" sessions before conscripting them.¹⁰⁹ In 2021 in Ibb, the Houthis ordered all civil servants to enlist in the armed forces and spend at least 14 days on the battlefield.¹¹⁰ The Yemeni Teachers Syndicate has accused the Houthis of conscripting thousands of teachers to the frontlines. According to local media reports, the Houthis claim they are "mobilizing job sectors" by

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recruiting civil servants to fight for their cause.¹¹¹

Training:

The Houthis have historically trained their fighters in Yemen’s mountainous north.¹¹² The Quds Force of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has trained Houthis in Yemen and Iranian military leadership is also believed to be present in Yemen to provide strategic military advice.¹¹³ In March 2015, Saudi foreign minister Adel al-Jubair also alleged that Hezbollah operatives were advising the Houthis.¹¹⁴ In the same month, Syrian military officials were reportedly present in Yemen assisting the Houthis as well.¹¹⁵

In early 2015, U.S. officials reported that the IRGC’s training of Houthi rebels covered the use of advanced weapons, which the Houthis seized from Yemeni military bases.¹¹⁶ A January 2020 U.N. report claims that Iran continues to provide the Houthis with advanced weaponry and high-tech components for their ammunition systems. According to the Egyptian Center for Strategic Studies, the IRGC has its own special forces units in Yemen, with some of those units specializing in missiles and others in drones. There are also units specifically focusing on intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. The IRGC allegedly has multiple operation rooms throughout Yemen, with one located in Hodeidah and another on the west coast of Yemen that secures the arrival of military forces and weapons.¹¹⁷ Following the October 28, 2020 appointment of Hassan Eyrrou—an IRGC-Quds Force officer—as ambassador of Iran to the Houthi militia, it is likely that the IRGC will move from providing not just logistical support to the Houthis, but will also direct the way in which the Houthis will manage the Yemeni crisis.¹¹⁸

The Houthis have also sought to impose their ideology on the areas of Yemen they have captured. In mid-April 2021, Houthi militants evicted 20 academics and their families from university housing in Sanaa. The Houthis reportedly seek to install academics loyal to their cause within area universities.¹¹⁹ According to media reports, the Houthis have replaced 90 percent of school principals with pro-Houthi individuals. The Houthis have also sought to inculcate hatred of the group’s enemies by printing and distributing images of dead children allegedly killed by anti-Houthi forces. Houthi propaganda also positively highlights drone strikes on Saudi Arabia and a hatred of Israel. A member of the Yemeni Teachers Syndicate has claimed the Houthis are enforcing a “policy of cultural colonialism” and the “ideology of the Khomeinist revolution in Yemen through public education,” effectively brainwashing Yemen’s children.¹²⁰

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² “Houthi Movement (Ansarallah),” Terrorism Research & Analysis Consortium (TRAC), accessed June 9, 2015, <http://www.trackingterrorism.org/group/houthi-movement-ansarallah>.

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⁵ Reuters, “Yemen Bombs Shi’ite Rebels After Truce Collapses, 70 Killed,” *New York Times*, July 5, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2014/07/05/world/middleeast/05reuters-yemen-houthis.html>.

⁶ “Houthi Movement (Ansarallah),” Terrorism Research & Analysis Consortium (TRAC), accessed June 9, 2015, <http://www.trackingterrorism.org/group/houthi-movement-ansarallah>.

⁷ Adam Taylor, “Who Are the Houthis, the Group That Just Toppled Yemen’s Government?,” *Washington Post*, January 22, 2015, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/worldviews/wp/2015/01/22/who-are-the-houthis-the-group-that-just-toppled-yemens-government/>.

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⁹ “Houthi Movement (Ansarallah),” Terrorism Research & Analysis Consortium (TRAC), accessed June 9, 2015, <http://www.trackingterrorism.org/group/houthi-movement-ansarallah>.

¹⁰ “Houthi Movement (Ansarallah),” Terrorism Research & Analysis Consortium (TRAC), accessed June 9, 2015, <http://www.trackingterrorism.org/group/houthi-movement-ansarallah>.

¹¹ Saeed Al Batati, “Violence Erupts in Yemen Capital After Weeks of Rallies,” *New York Times*, September 9, 2014, <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/10/world/middleeast/violence-erupts-in-yemen-capital-after-weeks-of-rallies.html>.

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¹³ Associated Press, “Shiite Rebels Are Yemen’s New Masters,” *Washington Post*, October 5, 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/shiite-rebels-are-yemens-new-masters/2014/10/05/fce4fbca-4c07-11e4-b72e-d60a9229cc10_story.html.

¹⁴ Yara Bayoumy and Mohammed Ghobari, “Iranian support seen crucial for Yemen’s Houthis,” Reuters, December 15, 2014, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-houthis-iran-insight-idUSKBN0JT17A20141215>; Saeed Al Batati, “Who are the Houthis in Yemen?,” Al Jazeera, March 29, 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/08/yemen-houthis-hadi-protests-201482132719818986.html>; Zachary Laub, “Yemen in Crisis,” Council on Foreign Relations, April 19, 2016, <http://www.cfr.org/yemen/yemen-crisis/p36488>.

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Houthis

Key Leaders



Abdul-Malik al-Houthi

Spiritual, military, and political leader; brother of founder Hussein Badr-al-Din al-Houthi



Youssef al-Midani

Deputy leader; brother-in-law of Abdul-Malik al-Houthi (reported deceased October 2015)



Yahia Badr-al-Din al-Houthi

Senior leader, former lawmaker, brother of founder Hussein Badr-al-Din and current leader Abdul-Malik al-Houthi



Abdul-Karim Badr-al-Din Al-Houthi

Senior leader, brother of founder Hussein Badr-al-Din and current leader Abdul-Malik al-Houthi



Mohamed Abdul Salam

Spokesman



Faris Manna

Houthi-appointed governor of Saada between 2011 and December 2014; alleged former arms dealer whose assets were frozen by the U.N. Security Council and the U.S. Treasury Department



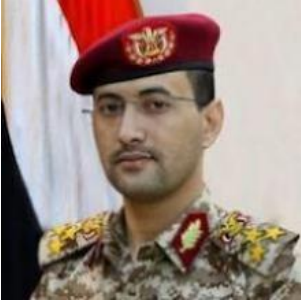
Mohammed al-Bukhaiti

Spokesman and member of the Houthi Political Council



Mohammed Ali al-Houthi

Member of the Supreme Political Council and former president of the Supreme Revolutionary Committee



Yahya Sarea
Military spokesman

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Violent history:

Violent activity by the Houthis has consisted mainly of armed rebellion against the Yemeni government, leading to clashes with security forces. Thousands have been killed and displaced as a result of the fighting. The Houthis also briefly fought Saudi forces on the northern border in late 2009, and have battled al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) for several years. In October 2016, the rebels took direct action against the United States by conducting a series of failed missile attacks against the U.S. Navy presence in the region.¹²¹ The Houthis had previously kidnapped several American citizens, including a teacher, journalist, humanitarian aid worker.¹²² U.S. ships are not the only vessels the rebels have targeted. Prior to the attacks on the U.S. Navy, a UAE civilian ship was damaged by Houthi missiles that same month.¹²³ Starting in 2017, the Houthis have repeatedly attacked Saudi Arabia with missiles and drones, and have ramped up strikes in 2019, often targeting Saudi airports and oil fields.¹²⁴

- **2003:** Hussein al-Houthi opposes Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh's cooperation with the United States in its war on terror and invasion of Iraq. He and his supporters later resist arrest by Yemeni forces, provoking conflict.¹²⁵
- **June–August 2004:** Fighting breaks out in Yemen's north between troops and Shiite insurgents led by Hussein al-Houthi. The clashes kill hundreds.¹²⁶
- **2004–2010:** The Houthis wage a series of insurgencies against the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh.¹²⁷
- **March–April 2005:** Renewed fighting between Yemeni forces and Hussein al-Houthi supporters kills more than 200.¹²⁸
- **January–March 2007:** Fighting between Yemeni security forces and Houthi rebels in the north kill or wound dozens.¹²⁹ Houthi rebels threaten Yemen's Jewish population in Saada, forcing many to relocate to Sanaa.¹³⁰
- **January 2008:** Fighting renews between the Houthis and Yemeni forces.¹³¹
- **April 2008:** Men allegedly associated with the Houthi movement destroy a Jewish family's home.¹³²
- **May 2, 2008:** A bomb explodes outside a mosque in northern Yemen, killing at least 12 and wounding at least 44.¹³³ Yemeni officials hold Houthi rebels accountable for the attack -- the first attack by the group that deliberately targets civilians.¹³⁴ Houthi leader Abdul-Malik al-Houthi denies any connection to the bombing.¹³⁵
- **June 2009:** Houthis deny responsibility for the abduction of nine foreigners—three of whom are killed—in Saada region, a stronghold.¹³⁶ Some media speculate the involvement of al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) following the arrest of a supporter accused of financing the group.
- **October 2009:** Clashes erupt between the Houthis and Saudi security forces along Yemen's northern border. The Houthis accuse Saudi Arabia of supporting the Yemeni government in attacks against them, which the Saudi government denies.¹³⁷
- **November 3, 2009:** Houthi rebels open fire on Saudi border guards, killing two and injuring at least 10.¹³⁸
- **January–February 2010:** More than 130 Saudi soldiers are killed by Houthis in fighting along the border between Yemen and Saudi Arabia.¹³⁹
- **July 17, 2010:** Houthis kill 11 Yemeni soldiers and government-aligned tribesmen, sparking a heightened wave of violence.¹⁴⁰
- **December 2010:** Yemen says 3,000 soldiers were killed in recent fighting with Houthi rebels.¹⁴¹
- **Late March 2011:** Houthis advance on Saada, causing the governor and other officials to flee the city. Houthi rebels install Faris Manna, believed to be the country's most powerful arms dealer, as governor of the province.¹⁴²
- **June 1, 2011:** Houthis kill five Sunni tribesmen in northern Yemen.¹⁴³
- **November–December 2011:** Clashes erupt between Houthis and Salafists on the outskirts of Saada.¹⁴⁴
- **October 2013–January 2014:** Houthis launch an attack on Salafists in the town of Damaj, resulting in the death of over 100, at least 210 according to a Salafi spokesman.¹⁴⁵
- **January 20, 2014:** Clashes between Houthis and pro-Salafist Sunnis in the north kill 12.¹⁴⁶
- **February 2, 2014:** The Houthis, reportedly joined by tribes aligned with former president Ali Abdullah Saleh, and attack tribal forces in Amran province.¹⁴⁷

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- **February 28, 2014:** Houthis attack a security checkpoint after a protest against the government, killing three soldiers and wounding four.¹⁴⁸
 - **March 6-9, 2014:** Fighting erupts between Houthis and Sunni tribesmen, killing at least 40.¹⁴⁹ Houthi fighters blow up a religious center in Hamdan on March 9.¹⁵⁰
 - **March 13, 2014:** Houthis attack an army base near Sanaa, killing two soldiers.¹⁵¹
 - **May 2014:** Houthis and Sunni tribesmen clash near Sanaa, killing at least 40.¹⁵²
 - **May 20, 2014:** Houthis attack Yemeni security outposts near Oman; seven Yemeni soldiers and nine Houthis are killed.¹⁵³
 - **May 29, 2014:** Houthis attack a checkpoint and two other locations, killing five tribesmen.¹⁵⁴
 - **June 18, 2014:** Houthi fighters advance toward the capital, clashing with Yemeni forces 25 miles outside of Sanaa.¹⁵⁵
 - **July 5, 2014:** The cease-fire between the government and the Houthis collapses and Yemen's air force bombs Houthi fighters in northern Yemen, killing 70 people.¹⁵⁶
 - **July 8, 2014:** At least 100 are killed and 150 wounded as the Houthis capture Omran.¹⁵⁷
 - **August 30, 2014:** Houthis kill at least ten soldiers and local militia fighters in clashes.¹⁵⁸
 - **September 20, 2014:** The Houthis shell the official state television building, setting it ablaze and ultimately capturing it.¹⁵⁹ Sanaa residents claim that Houthis control several other government sites, including the prime minister's buildings and an army command center.¹⁶⁰
 - **December 2014:** Yemeni and Iranian officials claim that Iran is supplying Houthi rebels with weapons, money, and training.¹⁶¹
 - **December 13, 2014:** AQAP militants kill at least 30 Houthi fighters as they battle for control of the city of Radaa.¹⁶²
 - **February 2015:** The Houthis seize power and announce that a transitional five-member presidential council will replace President Hadi, drawing protest from the U.N. Security Council.¹⁶³
 - **March 19, 2015:** Warplanes target the president's palace in Aden, where President Hadi had sought refuge since fleeing Sanaa.¹⁶⁴
 - **April 2, 2015:** Houthi fighters take control of Aden's central Crater neighborhood and fight their way into a presidential residence nearby.¹⁶⁵
 - **May 12-14, 2015:** The Houthis accept a five-day humanitarian cease-fire, but are accused of violating the truce within 24 hours.¹⁶⁶
 - **May 29, 2015:** The Houthis continue to battle for control of Aden.¹⁶⁷ They detain at least four Americans in the country's capital.¹⁶⁸
 - **June 1, 2015:** The Houthis release one American detainee, Casey Coombs. At least three other Americans are still being held captive by the Houthis.¹⁶⁹
 - **June 6, 2015:** Houthi rebels fire a Scud missile into Saudi Arabia from Yemen in apparent retaliation for two months of Saudi and coalition airstrikes.¹⁷⁰
 - **December 1, 2015:** Houthis attempt and fail to seize Saudi territory near the border with Yemen.¹⁷¹
 - **December 14, 2015:** In one of the deadliest attacks to date, Houthis launch a missile into Taz province, killing at least 146 people.¹⁷²
 - **December 18-22, 2015:** Houthi rebels fire four rockets into Saudi territory. Three are shot down, though one hits a desert area east of Najran city on December 18.¹⁷³
 - **December 25, 2015:** Houthi rebels launch a failed attack on Yemeni forces stationed near Jabal Al Salb.¹⁷⁴
 - **January 7, 2016:** Houthi forces repel a Saudi Arabian attack at Tawwal border-crossing, killing an estimated 40-60 Saudi troops.¹⁷⁵
 - **May 2016 – July 2016:** Houthi forces attack Saudi and Yemeni targets along the Yemen border and across the Yemen-Saudi border, collectively killing at least 40 individuals. On May 1, Houthi rebels attack and seize a Saudi military base north of the capital of Sanaa, killing several soldiers guarding the base.¹⁷⁶ On May 8, Houthi rebels conduct a failed missile attack across the Saudi border, violating a truce agreement. Saudi forces intercept the missile and do not retaliate to maintain the truce.¹⁷⁷ Later that month, Houthi rebels and Arab coalition forces clash in southern Yemen, killing 48 individuals, including 28 rebels and 20 coalition soldiers.¹⁷⁸ On June 3, Houthi rebels
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launched rockets at the western city of Taiz, killing at least 17 civilians, including 10 women and a girl, in a busy marketplace.¹⁷⁹ During the first week of July, Houthi militants fire a missile towards the southern Saudi city of Abha. Saudi forces intercept the missile, leaving no casualties.¹⁸⁰ They also fire a rocket into Yemen's border town of Marib, killing seven children and wounding 25 other civilians.¹⁸¹ On July 25, Houthi forces launch a ballistic missile into the Saudi Ahad Al-Masariyah Military Camp along the Yemen border, destroying several armored vehicles and killing a large number of soldiers.¹⁸²

- **July 28, 2016 - August 3, 2016:** Houthi militants abduct and murder four tribal sheikhs from Yemen's Al Bayda province. The bodies display evidence of torture before they were each shot in the head.¹⁸³
- **August 2016 – September 2016:** Houthi forces continue to launch missiles into Saudi Arabia and continue to clash with Saudi and Arab coalition forces along the Saudi-Yemen border. On August 2, UAE forces foil a Houthi forces offensive attempting to recapture strategic locations in Yemen's southcentral province of Shabwa, killing 30 militants.¹⁸⁴ On August 10, Houthi forces launch two intercepted missiles targeting the southern Saudi city of Abha in a failed attack.¹⁸⁵ The next day, Saudi forces kill Iranian-backed Houthi leader Saleh al-Houthi Mouawad Kibsi and 40 other Houthi militants near the kingdom's southwestern border with Yemen.¹⁸⁶ Throughout the rest of the month and into September, Houthi forces continue to launch missiles into Saudi Arabia's southern provinces, killing at least 10 civilians.¹⁸⁷ On September 4, Houthi rebels attack the Saudi border towns of Midi and Haradh, killing between 40 and 50 individuals, including government soldiers.¹⁸⁸ A week later, Houthi rebels claim they captured a Saudi military post in the border region of Jizan. The Saudi military denies these claims.¹⁸⁹
- **September 21, 2016:** Suspected Houthi rebels in the Island of Hanish and Zagar attack the Eritrean international airport and Navy headquarters in Assab, a port city in the Southern Red Sea region of Eritrea. The mortar attack causes damage to the sites.¹⁹⁰
- **September 24, 2016:** Arab coalition forces kill head of Houthi Special Forces Major-General Hassan Almalsi while he and a squad of Houthi fighters were attempting to infiltrate Saudi Arabia's southern province of Najran.¹⁹¹
- **October 9, 2016 – October 13, 2016:** Houthis are believed to be behind a series of attacks against the U.S. Navy, leading the United States to engage the rebels directly for the first time since the crisis began launching counter-attacks in Houthi-held areas. On October 9, suspected Houthi rebels fire a pair of missiles in a failed attack on the U.S. Navy destroyer *USS Mason* near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.¹⁹² On October 12, the Houthis are allegedly behind another failed missile attack on the *Mason*. The U.S. Navy launches Tomahawk cruise missiles against Houthi-controlled radar sites along the Yemeni coast.¹⁹³
- **October 27, 2016:** Houthis launch a ballistic missile toward the Islamic holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia, according to a statement by the Saudi-led coalition. Houthis confirm that they had launched a missile into Saudi Arabia but claim that they had been aiming for King Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah.¹⁹⁴
- **November 19, 2016:** The Houthis are accused by a Saudi general of launching a ballistic missile at the eastern Saudi province of Marib, in violation of a cease-fire.¹⁹⁵
- **January 30, 2017:** Houthis attack a Saudi ship off the coast of Yemen, allegedly ramming into the ship and causing an explosion, killing two crew members and injuring three. Separately, the group launches a ballistic missile on a Saudi military base on the Red Sea island of Zuqar. Rockets also hit and damage U.N. offices in southern Saudi Arabia in an attack Saudi Arabia attributed to Houthis.¹⁹⁶
- **December 2-4, 2017:** On December 2, former President Ali Abdullah Saleh offers to "turn a new page" with the Saudi-led coalition fighting against Houthi forces if the Saudis end their month-long blockade of the country. Saleh's supporters had until then fought alongside Houthi rebels, but the Houthis view Saleh's offer as a betrayal and fighting breaks out between the rebels and Saleh's loyalists. At least 125 people are killed and 238 are wounded in the fighting. On December 4, Houthi forces stop Saleh at a checkpoint as he is trying to leave Sanaa and kill the former president. The Houthi-controlled Interior Ministry announces Saleh's death later in the day. Saleh's General People's Congress party confirms he was killed by a sniper. Houthi forces also announce that they had blown up Saleh's home in Sanaa.¹⁹⁷
- **December 19, 2017:** The Houthis target Al Yamama royal palace in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia with a missile. Saudi forces says it intercepted the missile.¹⁹⁸
- **January 8, 2018:** The Houthis release a video that they claim shows the rebels shooting down a Royal Saudi Air Force F-15S over Yemen. Saudi Arabia confirms the crash but says it is due to "technical errors."¹⁹⁹
- **January 30, 2018:** The Houthis launch a ballistic missile at Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah Airport.²⁰⁰
- **March 25, 2018:** Houthi rebels fire seven modified scud missiles at Saudi Arabia. Four missiles target air defense and military bases in the cities of Abha, Jizan, and Najran. Three missiles target Riyadh, killing one civilian.²⁰¹
- **April 3, 2018:** The Houthis claim to damage a coalition warship near Hodeidah while Saudi Arabia claims the group targeted an oil tanker,

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causing only minor damage to the ship.²⁰²

- **April 11, 2018:** The Houthis launch a ballistic missile at Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and claim to conduct a drone attack on a Saudi Aramco oil refinery in Jizan province.²⁰³
- **April 28, 2018:** The Houthis launch eight ballistic missiles at Saudi Arabia's Jizan province. Four missiles are intercepted and one Saudi national is killed.²⁰⁴
- **May 9, 2018:** The Houthis fire multiple missiles at Riyadh targeting "economic centers." At least four blasts are heard throughout the city.²⁰⁵
- **May 10, 2018:** The Houthis are suspected of targeting and damaging a Turkish cargo ship delivering 50,000 tons of wheat to the Yemeni port of Salif.²⁰⁶
- **June 10, 2018:** The Houthis launch a missile at Saudi Arabia's Jizan province, killing three civilians.²⁰⁷
- **June 13, 2018:** The Houthis strike a UAE naval vessel with two missiles near Hodeidah. The attack occurs during a Saudi-led operation to recapture the port city.²⁰⁸
- **July 18, 2018:** The Houthis claim to have attacked a Saudi Aramco refinery in Riyadh with a drone. The oil company denies this claim, stating that the fire at the facility was caused by "an operational incident."²⁰⁹
- **July 25, 2018:** The Houthis slightly damage a Saudi oil tanker in the Red Sea.²¹⁰
- **August 4, 2018:** The Houthis claim to conduct a drone attack against a Saudi military base in the country's Asir province.²¹¹
- **August 6, 2018:** Houthi rebels launch a missile at the Saudi city of Najran. The missile is intercepted by Saudi air defense systems and no casualties are reported.²¹²
- **August 9, 2018:** The Houthis launch a ballistic missile at the Saudi city of Jizan, killing one civilian and wounding 11 others.²¹³
- **August 27, 2018:** The Houthis claim to target a UAE airport with a drone. The UAE denies the attack occurred and there is no evidence of any damage to the facility.²¹⁴
- **September 4, 2018:** The Houthis claim a missile attack on an Aramco facility in Saudi Arabia's Jizan province.²¹⁵
- **September 5, 2018:** The Houthis launch a ballistic missile at the Saudi city of Najran. Twenty-six people are wounded by shrapnel when the missile is intercepted by Saudi defense systems.²¹⁶
- **September 15, 2018:** Saudi Arabia intercepts a Houthi missile targeting Jizan, Saudi Arabia.²¹⁷
- **September 20, 2018:** Saudi Arabia intercepts two Houthi-controlled boats laden with explosives outside of the Saudi port of Jizan.²¹⁸
- **October 5, 2018:** Houthi forces fire three shells at an IDP camp in Hodeidah, killing one woman and injuring others.²¹⁹
- **December 7, 2018:** An Associated Press report accuses the Houthis of carrying out rampant detention and torture of political opponents in areas under its control.²²⁰
- **January 5, 2019:** Houthi forces kill two civilians and wound 16 others when they shell the 7th July neighborhood of Taiz.²²¹
- **January 10, 2019:** Houthi forces target a Yemeni military parade with a drone, killing five and wounding twenty soldiers, including the Yemeni army's chief of staff who would later die of his wounds.²²²
- **February 17, 2019:** Houthi forces launch several attacks across Yemen's northern border killing nine Saudi soldiers in the provinces of Aseer, Jazan, and Najran.²²³
- **March 11, 2019:** After weeks of intense fighting, Houthi forces seize several besieged villages in northern Yemen. Pro-government media outlets accuse the Houthis of killing 62 civilians and displacing 268 families. The Houthis blame the Saudi-backed coalition for some of the civilian deaths.²²⁴
- **May 14, 2019:** The Houthis carry out several drone attacks on Saudi oil facilities.²²⁵
- **May 15, 2019:** Fighting resumes between the Houthis and pro-government forces in Hodeidah, threatening the cease-fire there.²²⁶
- **May 20, 2019:** The Houthis launch two ballistic missiles at Saudi Arabia. The Saudi government says it intercepted the missiles over Mecca

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province.²²⁷

- **May 21, 2019:** The Houthis attack an airport in the Saudi city of Najran with a bomb-laden drone.²²⁸
 - **June 11, 2019:** The Houthis launch two drones at the southwest Saudi city of Khamis Mushait.²²⁹
 - **June 12, 2019:** The Houthis successfully strike Saudi Arabia's Abha airport with a cruise missile, injuring a reported 26.²³⁰
 - **June 19, 2019:** A Houthi-launched projectile hits a power-transformer station near a desalination plant in Saudi Arabia.²³¹
 - **June 23, 2019:** The Houthis successfully strike Saudi Arabia's Abha airport with a cruise missile, killing one.²³²
 - **July 2, 2019:** The Houthis again strike Saudi Arabia's Abha airport, this time with a drone, injuring nine.²³³
 - **July 6, 2019:** Houthi forces carry out drone attacks on military sites at the Abha airport in southern Saudi Arabia. Earlier that day, Houthis also claim targeting warplane hangars and other military sites in Saudi Jizan airport.²³⁴
 - **July 15, 2019:** The Saudi-led coalition intercepts and downs three Houthi drones that were launched towards the southwestern Saudi cities of Jizan and Abha.²³⁵
 - **July 16, 2019:** Houthi forces launch a drone attack on Jizan airport in southwestern Saudi Arabia.²³⁶
 - **July 20, 2019:** Saudi-coalition fighter jets take out at least five Houthi air defense sites around Sanaa.²³⁷
 - **July 28, 2019:** Houthi forces launch indiscriminate attacks in the Al-Rawdhah neighborhood of Taiz. The attack kills one child and injures three others.²³⁸
 - **July 29, 2019:** The Saudi-coalition launches an airstrike on a market in northern Yemen, killing 14 people and wounding more than 26 others. The attack is a response to a Houthi drone attack on a Saudi airbase.²³⁹
 - **August 1, 2019:** Houthi rebels initiate twin attacks in the city of Aden. Suicide bombers blast a police station in one neighborhood while the rebels fire a missile at a military parade of UAE-trained militia. At least 51 people are killed in the attacks.²⁴⁰
 - **August 5, 2019:** Houthi forces launch drone attacks on Saudi Arabia's King Khalid Air Base and Abha and Najran airports.²⁴¹
 - **August 13, 2019:** Yemen's Houthi movement launches drone attacks on the airport of Abha in southwest Saudi Arabia.²⁴²
 - **August 16, 2019:** The Houthis launch drone attacks on Saudi Arabia's Abha international airport, halting air traffic. The Saudi-led coalition reports that the drone was intercepted and shot down.²⁴³
 - **August 17, 2019:** Houthi rebels deploy 10 drones to strike Saudi Arabia's Shaybah oil field, one of the kingdom's largest. There are no injuries and no disruption to the field's production.²⁴⁴
 - **August 19, 2019:** The Houthis launch a ballistic missile on a military parade in the province of Marib. Official numbers have not been reported, but the attack kills and wounds dozens of soldiers.²⁴⁵
 - **August 21, 2019:** Houthi rebels shoot down a U.S. drone with an air missile. The U.S. suspects the missile to be provided by Iran although the Houthis claim the weapon was developed locally.²⁴⁶
 - **August 22, 2019:** Houthi forces launch two drones towards the city of Khamis Mushait, Saudi Arabia. Saudi forces intercept and down the two drones.²⁴⁷
 - **August 25, 2019:** Houthi rebels fire 10 ballistic missiles at Jizan airport in southwest Saudi Arabia. The Saudi-led coalition intercepts and destroys at least six of the missiles. It is unreported if there were any casualties in the attack. That same day, the Arab military coalition fighting the Houthis in Yemen intercept and down a drone that the rebels claim they launched in the direction of a Saudi airbase. A Houthi military spokesperson cited by the group's Al Masirah TV earlier said the group had launched drones targeting the control towers of the Abha airport and the Khamis Mushait airbase, both in the southwest of the kingdom.²⁴⁸
 - **August 26, 2019:** Houthi rebels launch armed drones at a "military target" in Riyadh. It is unreported if there are any casualties or injuries.²⁴⁹
 - **August 27, 2019:** Saudi-led coalition forces intercept and down a Houthi drone launched toward the kingdom from Yemen. Houthi's Al Masirah TV does not announce the attack. Also on the 27th, Houthi rebels conduct a large-scale attack in Saada. As many as 25 soldiers of the Saudi-backed government forces are killed and an unreported number are injured.²⁵⁰
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- **August 28, 2019:** Houthi rebels launch a cruise missile towards Saudi Arabia's Abha airport. Yahya Saria, the group's military spokesman, confirms Houthi responsibility for the attack. The missile targeted plane hangars and led to air traffic being halted in the airport. No casualties or injuries are reported. Also that day, the Houthis launch armed drones on "military targets" in the Saudi regions of Jizan and Najran.²⁵¹
 - **September 1, 2019:** The Saudi-led military coalition launch airstrikes in southwest Yemen, eventually hitting a prison complex. The Sunni Muslim coalition says it destroyed a site storing drones and missiles in Dhamar. Over 100 people are killed in the attack. The head of the Houthis' national committee for prisoner affairs, Abdul Qader al-Mortada, said many of those held were due to be released in a local deal to exchange prisoners of war.²⁵²
 - **September 3, 2019:** Houthi rebels launch multiple drone attacks on King Khalid Air Base in the southwest of Saudi Arabia. Earlier in the day, Houthis fire several ballistic missiles towards Najran airport in the southwest of the kingdom. No casualties or injuries are reported in both instances.²⁵³
 - **September 14, 2019:** Drone attacks are launched on two key oil installations in Abqaiq, Saudi Arabia. The Houthis claim responsibility for the attack. Although there are no casualties, the damaged oil facilities process the majority of the country's crude output which raises the risk of a disruption in world oil supplies. In January 2020, a U.N. Security Council investigation concludes that the Houthis did not carry out the attack.²⁵⁴
 - **September 24, 2019:** Saudi forces intercept and destroy two ballistic missiles fired from Sanaa.²⁵⁵
 - **September 28, 2019:** Houthi rebels claim to have killed 500 Saudi soldiers, captured a further 2,000, and seized a convoy of Saudi military vehicles in the southern Najran region of Saudi Arabia. The claims could not be corroborated have been denied by Saudi forces.²⁵⁶
 - **November 6, 2019:** Houthi rebels launch drones and fire at least four missiles at warehouses in the port town of al-Makha, killing at least eight and wounding at least 12. At least three other missiles are intercepted. The warehouses are used by the Giants Bridges militia allied with Yemen's internationally recognized government. Government forces say the attack also targeted a refugee camp and a hospital run by Doctors Without Borders.²⁵⁷
 - **November 17, 2019:** Houthi rebels hijack the Saudi tugboat Rabigh-3 while it is towing a South Korean drilling rig in the Red Sea. A Houthi spokesman acknowledges the seizure in what he calls a "suspicious case" off the Yemeni coast. He says the boat will be released if it is determined to belong to South Korea.²⁵⁸
 - **December 29, 2019:** A ballistic missile strikes a military parade for new recruits held at a soccer field in the capital of Dhale Province by the UAE-backed separatist militia the Resistance Forces. The attack kills at least 10, including four children, and wounds 21. There are no immediate claims of responsibility but the militia blames Houthi rebels.²⁵⁹
 - **January 2020:** On January 18, ballistic missiles strike a mosque at the al-Estiqbal military camp in Marib, killing at least 116 people. It is reportedly one of the deadliest attacks in the civil war. There are no immediate claims of responsibility but the government blames Houthi rebels. On January 20, government forces fight Houthi rebels east of Marib. Senior Houthi commander Jaber Al Muwaed is reportedly killed in the fighting.²⁶⁰
 - **January 25, 2020 – January 30, 2020:** Houthi military spokesman, Yahya Sarea, releases a statement claiming the Iran-aligned group has launched 26 rocket attacks between January 25th and the 30th against airports in southern Saudi Arabia. The targets also included the facilities of oil company Saudi Aramco, and "two sensitive targets." Saudi authorities have not confirmed the strikes, but if confirmed, they will be the first by the Houthis on Saudi Arabia since September 2019.²⁶¹
 - **February 11, 2020:** Houthi rebels carry out a missile attack against the Amajed army base in Abyan, southern Yemen. The attack kills three soldiers and wounds 15 others.²⁶²
 - **March 14, 2020:** Houthi militants carry out a missile attack in Taiz, southwest Yemen. The missile strikes a civilian vehicle, killing five and wounding an unconfirmed number of others.²⁶³
 - **March 17, 2020:** Houthi rebels launch ballistic missiles in Al-Yatma, north of Al-Jawf. The attack targeted a meeting of senior military and tribal leaders, including Amin Al-Akeemi, the governor of Al-Jawf. Al-Akeemi survives the attack, but four others are killed.²⁶⁴
 - **March 28, 2020:** Houthi rebels launch ballistic missiles, targeting Riyadh and Jizan, Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia's air defenses intercept the attack. However, two civilians are injured from debris fallout.²⁶⁵
 - **April 6, 2020:** Houthi rebels launch a shelling attack in Taiz, southwestern Yemen. The shelling hits a women's prison, killing at least six prisoners.²⁶⁶
 - **June 23, 2020:** A Houthi military spokesman claims the rebels launched drone and ballistic missile strikes on Riyadh, targeting the defense and
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intelligence ministries as well as an air base. The Saudi government says it intercepted one ballistic missile but has no comment on other projectiles.²⁶⁷

- **July 13, 2020:** Houthi rebels claim to have launched a missile attack from Sanaa on a large oil facility in Jizan, Saudi Arabia. The Saudi-led military fighting the Houthis allege they intercept the attack. Yahya Sarea, the Houthi’s military spokesman, claims that the group also launched attacks on Saudi military sites near the Yemen border on the same day, killing and injuring dozens of military officers. However, Saudi Arabia does not confirm the attack.²⁶⁸
- **August 16, 2020:** Houthi rebels launch a missile attack in both the northeast and east of Sanaa. The attacks kill nine soldiers and wound four others.²⁶⁹
- **September 10, 2020:** Houthi rebels launch a ballistic missile and drones toward Riyadh, which Saudi forces intercept. The Houthis claim to have attacked an “important target.” According to Sarea, the attacks are “a response to the enemy’s permanent escalation and its continuing blockade against our country” and will continue as long as Saudi Arabia “continues its aggression” against Yemen.²⁷⁰
- **September 19, 2020:** Houthi rebels launch a missile that targets Saudi Arabia’s Jizan province. The attack wounds five civilians.²⁷¹
- **September 23, 2020:** The Houthis launch a missile against a Saudi base near the Yemen border, allegedly killing 10, according to Iranian media.²⁷²
- **October 1, 2020:** Houthi fighters attack an army post in Al Hudaydah province. At least three militants are killed.²⁷³
- **October 4, 2020:** A Houthi missile launched from Yemen hits Jizan, Saudi Arabia. There are no reported casualties.²⁷⁴
- **October 5, 2020:** The Arab coalition in Yemen destroys a remote-controlled explosive-filled Houthi boat near As-Salif, Yemen.²⁷⁵
- **October 23-25, 2020:** Houthi drones target the Jizan and Abha airports and the Khamis Mushait base in Saudi Arabia. The Saudi military intercepts four drones over the three-day period.²⁷⁶
- **October 28, 2020:** The Saudi-led Arab coalition destroys six Houthi drones and three ballistic missiles targeting Saudi Arabia. There is no reported damage.²⁷⁷
- **November 22, 2020:** Houthi forces fire a missile that strikes a Saudi Aramco oil company distribution center in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. According to Houthi spokesman Yahya Sarea, the strike was carried out in response to the Saudi-led coalition’s actions in Yemen. Sarea also stated that foreign companies and Saudi residents should exercise caution as Houthi “operations will continue.”²⁷⁸
- **November 25, 2020:** An explosion damages a Maltese-flagged oil tanker in the Saudi port of Shuqaiq, causing minor damage. The Saudi government blames the Houthis.²⁷⁹
- **December 3, 2020:** Mortar shells strike the Thabit Brothers industrial compound in Hodeidah, killing at least eight and wounding 13 others. The government blames Houthi militants.²⁸⁰
- **December 14, 2020:** An explosives-filled boat attacks a Singapore-flagged oil tanker near Saudi Arabia’s port city of Jeddah, causing a small fire but no casualties. The Houthis are suspected in the attack.²⁸¹
- **December 16, 2020:** An unidentified projectile strikes Saudi Arabia’s Jizan province, causing no damage or casualties. Saudi authorities blame the Houthis.²⁸²
- **December 30, 2020:** As a plane carrying Yemen’s newly confirmed government arrives from Saudi Arabia, an explosion at Aden’s airport kills at least 25 and wounds more than 110 others. The Saudi-led coalition reportedly shoots down a bomb-laden drone over a palace where the new cabinet members were taken after arrival. No cabinet ministers are injured in the attack. Yemeni Prime Minister Maeen Abdulmalik Saeed accuses the Houthi militia and its primary sponsor, Iran, of responsibility. According to investigators, the Houthis fired four ballistic missiles at the airport. A Houthi official denies responsibility. A March 2021 U.N. report confirms the Houthis’ responsibility for the attack. On March 26, U.N. investigators present their report to the U.N. committee that oversees Yemen-related sanctions, but Russia blocks the report’s wider release.²⁸³
- **January 6, 2021:** Houthi militants kidnap three engineers employed by the Safer Company for Oil Exploration and Production in Sanaa. Two of the engineers are kidnapped off a bus, while the third is taken at his home. Separately, Houthi attacks on homes in Taiz leave six dead and seven wounded. Four of the dead are children.²⁸⁴
- **February 7-8, 2021:** On February 7, Houthi militants launch drone and rocket attacks on Marib, as well as ground attacks on al-Jawf. The following day, Houthi fighters continue an offensive operation into Marib. Government forces push back the Houthis and capture several fighters. At least 29 people are killed, and dozens are wounded in the fighting.²⁸⁵

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- **February 10, 2021:** Houthi drones armed with bombs target Abha airport in southwest Saudi Arabia. There are no casualties reported, but a civilian plane is damaged.²⁸⁶
 - **February 11, 2021:** Saudi forces reportedly intercept and destroy a Houthi drone near the town of Khamis Mushait, which hosts a key airbase in southern Saudi Arabia.²⁸⁷
 - **February 27, 2021:** The Saudi military intercepts and destroys a ballistic missile and three armed drones over Riyadh, which they accuse the Houthis of launching. There are no reported casualties, but debris from the destroyed missile damages a home in Riyadh. The United States calls on the Houthis to end all attacks.²⁸⁸
 - **February 28, 2021:** Shelling destroys a home near Yemen’s port of Hodeidah, killing five, including a child. Saudi and Houthi forces accuse one another of responsibility for the attack.²⁸⁹
 - **March 4, 2021:** The Houthis claim to launch a ballistic missile at an Aramco distribution facility in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Aramco and Saudi officials do not confirm the attack.²⁹⁰
 - **March 7, 2021:** Houthi security forces launch three tear gas cannisters into a protest at a migrant center in Sanaa, causing a fire that kills 45 people and wounds more than 200. Most of the fatalities are Ethiopian immigrants. Later in the month, the Houthis admit their forces caused the fire. The Houthis detain 11 security personnel and claim no authorization had been given to use the tear gas. Later in the month, Ethiopian activists in Sanaa announce they are pursuing legal counsel to file a lawsuit against Houthi leaders in the International Criminal Court over responsibility for the fire.²⁹¹
 - **March 2021:** The Houthis continue to clash with Yemen’s army for the government-controlled city of Marib. On March 3, the Houthis announce they have taken control of 10 of Marib’s 14 districts, while the Saudi-backed government remains in control of the city’s center. On March 10, the Houthis fire a ballistic missile toward Marib, which the Saudi military destroys. On March 11, the United States, United Kingdom, France, Italy, and Germany issue a joint statement condemning the Houthi offensive.²⁹²
 - **March 7, 2021:** Houthi security forces launch three tear gas cannisters into a protest at a migrant center in Sanaa, causing a fire that kills 45 people and wounds more than 200. Most of the fatalities are Ethiopian immigrants. Later in the month, the Houthis admit their forces caused the fire. The Houthis detain 11 security personnel and claim no authorization had been given to use the tear gas.²⁹³
 - **March 15, 2021:** The Houthis launch armed drones at Abuha Airport and King Khalid Air Base in Khamis Mushait, both in Saudi Arabia. Houthi spokesman Yahya Sarea claims the drones struck their intended targets. The Saudi-led coalition says it intercepted a drone targeting Khamis Mushait but does not confirm the other strikes.²⁹⁴
 - **March 16, 2021:** Shells from a Houthi rocket strike a market in Marib, killing one and wounding eight others. Separately, Houthi militants in Saada launch two ballistic missiles toward Saudi Arabia, which land in uninhabited areas in southern Saudi Arabia. Saudi forces respond by destroying a bunker and launch pads in Saada.²⁹⁵
 - **March 19, 2021:** Houthi militants launch armed drones toward a Saudi Aramco oil facility in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The drones cause a fire but no injuries or deaths. The fire is quickly brought under control and causes minimal damage.²⁹⁶
 - **March 20, 2021:** The Saudi air force intercepts and destroys an explosives-filled Houthi drone headed toward Khamis Mushait. In response to that attack and the previous day’s drone attack, Saudi forces launch airstrikes on Houthi military camps in and around Sanaa.²⁹⁷
 - **March 25, 2021:** Saudi defenses intercept and destroy eight armed drones fired by the Houthi militias toward universities in Jizan and Najran.²⁹⁸
 - **March 25-26, 2021:** On March 26, the Houthis claim they sent 18 armed drones to attack energy and military sites in Saudi Arabia over the past day. Houthi military spokesman Yahya Sarea says the Houthis targeted Saudi Aramco facilities in Ras al-Tanura, Rabigh, Yanbu, and Jazan, as well as the King Abdelaziz military base in Dammam and military sites in Najran and Asir. The Saudi energy ministry reports a projectile had struck a petroleum products distribution station in Jazan on March 25, causing a small fire but no casualties. On March 26, Saudi forces intercept and destroy a Houthi ballistic missile fired toward the Saudi city of Najran. The Saudi-led coalition also destroys an armed drone heading toward Saudi Arabia’s Khamis Mushait.²⁹⁹
 - **March 28, 2021:** Houthi forces expel 13 members of three Jewish families from Sanaa, effectively deporting the last of Sanaa’s millennia-old Jewish community except for four remaining seniors. The 13 reportedly await the United Nations to relocate them as they refuse to go to Israel.³⁰⁰
 - **March 28, 2021:** The Saudi-led coalition destroys explosive-filled boats the Houthis launched from the port of Hodeidah. According to Saudi officials, the Houthis planned an “imminent” attack with the boats. Separately, the coalition intercepts and destroys three armed drones launched toward southern Saudi Arabia.³⁰¹
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- **March 30, 2021:** The Saudi-led coalition destroys two Houthi drones launched toward Saudi Arabia.³⁰²
 - **Early April 2021:** Within 12 days, the Houthis reportedly kidnap more than 12 doctors and 17 health care workers from hospitals in Sanaa because they had refused to treat wounded Houthi fighters.³⁰³
 - **April 1, 2021:** The Houthis claim to launch four armed drones toward Riyadh. Saudi authorities do not confirm the drone attacks but do confirm they destroyed a Houthi ballistic missile in Yemen before it could launch.³⁰⁴
 - **April 3, 2021:** The Saudi military claims it destroyed an explosives-filled boat in the Red Sea, launched by the Houthis. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-yemen-security-saudi-redsea-idUSKBN2BQ0FW>.
 - **April 11, 2021:** The Saudi-led coalition intercepts six explosives-laden drones targeting the kingdom.³⁰⁵
 - **April 11-17, 2021:** Houthi militants evict 20 academics and their families from university housing in Sanaa. The Houthis reportedly seek to install academics loyal to their cause within area universities.³⁰⁶
 - **April 12, 2021:** The Houthis claim responsibility for overnight drone strikes on Aramco facilities in Jeddah and Jubail in Saudi Arabia. Houthi spokesman Yahya Saree claims the Houthis also fired five drones and two ballistic missiles at “sensitive military areas” in Khamis Mushait and Jizan. Saudi officials do not confirm the attacks on the Aramco facilities but claim the missiles and drones targeting Khamis Mushait and Jizan were intercepted.³⁰⁷
 - **April 15, 2021:** The Houthis abduct Yemeni model and actress Entesar Al-Hammadi for posing in pictures without a hijab. The Houthis reportedly intend to prosecute Hammadi for violating Islamic culture and dress codes.³⁰⁸
 - **April 15-16, 2021:** The Houthis continue their offensive in Marib, reportedly killing 36 Yemeni troops. At least 60 Houthi fighters are also reportedly killed during the clashes.³⁰⁹
 - **April 17, 2021:** The Houthis claim responsibility for a drone strike on the King Khalid air base in Mushait, Saudi Arabia.³¹⁰
 - **April 23, 2021:** The Houthis claim responsibility for drone strikes on the King Khalid air base and on an Aramco facility in Jizan, Saudi Arabia.³¹¹
 - **April 26, 2021:** Following two days of fighting between the Houthis and the Saudi-led coalition which backs Yemen’s government, more than 65 people are killed. The Houthis advance towards Marib city and take full control of the Kassara battlefield in the northwest.³¹²
 - **May 31, 2021:** The Houthis claim a drone strike against the King Khalid military air base in Khamis Mushait, Saudi Arabia. Saudi authorities do not confirm the strike.³¹³
 - **June 6, 2021:** The Houthis launch a ballistic missile that targets Marib. The missile strikes a gas station that kills 17 people and wounds five others. Yemeni Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism Moammar al-Eryani claims the attack amounts to a war crime.³¹⁴
 - **June 10, 2021:** The Houthis launch a missile in Marib, hitting a women’s prison and mosque. The attack kills at least eight and wounds as many as 27.³¹⁵
 - **June 14, 2021:** The Houthis claim to launch a drone toward Saudi Arabia’s Abha airport. The Saudis do not confirm the attack.³¹⁶
 - **June 19, 2021:** Saudi forces reportedly intercept 17 armed drones launched toward the country by Houthi forces.³¹⁷
 - **June 20, 2021:** Saudi forces destroy a Houthi drone launched toward Saudi city of Khamis Mushait.³¹⁸
 - **June 29, 2021:** Houthi rebels launch two missiles targeting the government-held city of Marib. The attack kills three people and injures at least 10 others. The Houthis claimed they targeted military camps in the city.³¹⁹
 - **July 4, 2021:** Houthi militias launch a missile targeting a mosque in a Yemeni army base in the Modiya district of the southern governorate of Abyan. The explosion kills five and injures at least 15. The assault occurred after government loyalists reclaimed ground in the central governorate of al-Bayda, a location that is critical to Houthi supply routes.³²⁰
 - **July 5-8, 2021:** On July 5, government-backed forces recapture the Yemeni town of a-Zaher from the Houthis. On July 8, the Houthis retake al-Zaher.³²¹
 - **July 14-20, 2021:** On July 14, government-backed forces recapture the Rahabah district, southwest of Marib, from the Houthis. The Houthis launch a counteroffensive and recapture some of the territory. On July 20, the Houthis blow up the home of Marib’s emergency police chief, Brigadier General Ahmed Saeed Durkom.³²²
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- **July 25, 2021:** The Houthis blow up the al-Zaher home of Hussein al-Humaiqani, who aided government forces in capturing al-Zaher from the Houthis earlier in the month. Moammar al-Eryani, the information minister in the Saudi-backed Yemeni government, condemns the Houthis for “deliberately” blowing up “citizens’ homes in the matter of terrorist organizations, terrorizing citizens and systematically avenging anyone who disagrees with it.”³²³
 - **July 29, 2021:** The Houthis blow up the house of Taleb Durkom, brother of Brigadier General Ahmed Saeed Durkom and a commander in the government forces in Marib. Taleb Durkom writes on Facebook the act won’t deter government-backed forces from confronting the Houthis.³²⁴
 - **August 9, 2021:** The Arab coalition intercepts and destroys two explosives-laden Houthi drones over southern Saudi Arabia. The coalition accuses the Houthis of deliberately targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure.³²⁵
 - **August 29-31, 2021:** Houthi fighters launch multiple attacks on government positions around Marib and the surrounding areas of Al-Mashjah, Al-Kasarah, Jabal Murad, and Rahabah. On August 30, at least 11 government-aligned soldiers are killed and several are reportedly wounded. Iranian media claim dozens of Arab coalition fighters are killed in the fighting. Yemen’s Armed Forces Guidance Department estimates at least 800 Houthi fighters are killed during the 72 hours of fighting. Military officials claim Iran sent military experts and fighters from the IRGC, Iraq, and Lebanon to provide reinforcements to the Houthis. Yemeni officials accuse the IRGC of firing ballistic missiles and drones inside and outside of Yemen.³²⁶
 - **August 29, 2021:** Houthi forces launch armed drones and ballistic missiles toward the al-Anad military base in southern Yemen, killing at least 30 soldiers and wounding 60.³²⁷
 - **August 31, 2021:** Armed drones strike Saudi Arabia’s Abha International Airport, wounding at least eight and damaging a civilian plane. The Houthis do not claim responsibility but are suspected of carrying out the strike. The Saudi government accuses the Houthis of war crimes for repeatedly targeting the airport.³²⁸
 - **September 1, 2021:** Saudi forces intercept and destroy three Houthi drones over Yemen, which the Saudis say were targeting civilian.³²⁹
 - **September 2-4, 2021:** The Houthis continue their assault on Marib in northern Yemen, killing 22 pro-government forces and wounding 50. At least 48 Houthi fighters are also killed within 48 hours of clashes.³³⁰
 - **September 5, 2021:** Saudi military forces intercept three ballistic missiles targeting the southern cities of Najran and Jazan, as well as Dammam in Saudi Arabia’s eastern region. There are no reported casualties in Najran and Jazan, but shrapnel from the missile fired toward Damman injures two children and damages 14 houses. The Saudi government blames the Houthis.³³¹
 - **September 8, 2021:** Houthi forces capture Marib’s Rahabah district. Yemen’s internationally backed government had initially recaptured the district in July, but lost control to the Houthis after heaving fighting that resulted in the death of 65 fighters from both sides.³³²
 - **September 11, 2021:** Militants fire a ballistic missile and explosive-laden drones toward the Red Sea port city of Mocha in Yemen, destroying several warehouses of humanitarian aid. No casualties are reported. Officials from the internationally recognized government blame the Houthis, who do not immediately claim responsibility for the attack.³³³
 - **September 18, 2021:** A Houthi firing squad executes nine people in Sanaa. The nine were accused of involvement in the killing of senior Houthi official Saleh al-Samad on April 19, 2018. Samad was president of the Houthis’ Supreme Political Council. He and six others were killed in a Saudi airstrike in Hodeida province. Altogether, the Houthis accused more than 60 people of involvement in Samad’s death, including U.S. President Donald Trump, and Western, Israeli, and Gulf Arab officials.³³⁴
 - **September 27, 2021:** Fighting continues in Marib as military and medical sources report at least 67 pro-government troops and Houthi rebels are wounded.³³⁵
 - **October 3, 2021:** The Houthis fire three ballistic missiles toward Marib, killing two children and wounding at least 33 other people. One of the missiles lands in the al-Rawdah neighborhood, which is home to thousands of displaced people. The missile struck a house, killing a 4-year-old girl and her 2-year-old brother. Their parents were also wounded. The other two missiles targeted military areas of the city. The U.S. Embassy in Yemen condemns the attack. Yemeni officials pledge to punish the Houthis for the attack.³³⁶
 - **October 7, 2021:** Houthis targeted the residential al-Rawdah neighborhood in Marib for the second time within a few days, killing at least 29 civilians.³³⁷
 - **October 8-9, 2021:** The Houthis increase shelling and ground attacks on the Marib western district of Al-Kasara on October 8. Government forces reportedly kill at least 100 Houthi fighters, forcing the Houthis to end their attack on Al-Kasara by October 9.³³⁸
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The U.S. Department of the Treasury designated Motlaq Ame Marrani pursuant to the Global Magnitsky Executive Order for being a foreign person who is a leader or official of an entity that has engaged in, or whose members have engaged in, serious human rights abuse relating to their tenure on December 10, 2020.³⁴³

COUNTER EXTREMISM PROJECT

Houthis

The U.S. Department of the Treasury designated Abdul Rahab Jarfan pursuant to the Global Magnitsky Executive Order for being a foreign person who is a leader or official of an entity that has engaged in, or whose members have engaged in, serious human rights abuse relating to their tenure on December 10, 2020.³⁴²

The U.S. Department of the Treasury designated Qader al-Shami pursuant to the Global Magnitsky Executive Order for being a foreign person who is a leader or official of an entity that has engaged in, or whose members have engaged in, serious human rights abuse relating to their tenure on December 10, 2020.³⁴⁴

Designations:

The U.S. Department of State designated Ansarallah, a.k.a. the Houthis, as a Foreign Terrorist Organization on January 19, 2021.

The government revoked the designation on February 16, 2021. April 14, 2015. The U.S. Department of the Treasury designated Houthi leader “Abdul Malik al-Houthi” as a Specially Designated National (SDN).³³⁹

The U.S. Department of State designated Abd al-Khaliq Badr al-Din al-Houthi as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist on January 19, 2021.³⁴⁷

The U.S. Department of State designated Abdul Malik al-Houthi as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist on January 19, 2021.³⁴⁶

The U.S. Department of the Treasury designated former commander of Yemen’s Republican Guard “Ahmed Ali Saleh” as a Specially Designated National (SDN).³⁴⁰

The U.S. Department of State designated Abdullah Yahya al Hakim as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist on January 19, 2021.³⁴⁸

Designations by Foreign Governments and Organizations:

Saudi Arabia—designated the Houthis as a terrorist group in March 2014.³⁴⁹

United Nations—the U.N. Security Council designated “Abd al-Khaliq al-Huthi” on November 7, 2014.³⁵¹

United Nations—the U.N. Security Council designated “Abdulmalik al-Houthi” on April 14, 2015.³⁵³

Yemen—the military court of the internationally backed Yemeni government labeled the Houthis a “terrorist criminal group” on August 26, 2021.³⁵⁴

United Arab Emirates—designated “The Houthi Movement in Yemen” as a terrorist organization in November 2014.³⁵⁰

United Nations—the U.N. Security Council designated “Abdullah Yahya al Hakim” on November 7, 2014.³⁵²

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Houthis

“Treasury Sanctions Serious Human Rights Abusers on International Human Rights Day,” U.S. Department of the Treasury, December 10, 2020, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm1208>.

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Houthis

Associations:

Ties to Extremist Entities:

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)

Houthi militants have engaged in violent clashes with al-Qaeda's Yemeni branch, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). While the Houthis are opposed to Salafist encroachment in their stronghold, analysts have noticed that the two groups have at times appeared to enter in an alliance against the Yemeni government.³⁵⁵

Hamas

Higher-ups in the Houthi movement have expressed support for Hamas. Before he was killed in 2004, Houthi's founder Hussein al-Houthi made it a point to praise Hamas for its wars against Israel.³⁵⁷ In October 2014, a member of the Houthi political party stated that the Houthis and Hamas share "a common stand vis-a-vis Israel" and the United States.³⁵⁸ Hamas maintains a representative in Houthi-held territory in Yemen who maintains a relationship with the Houthi rebels. In June 2021, Houthi Supreme Political Council member Mohammad al-Houthi met with Hamas representative Moath Abu Shamala to express support for Hamas's cause and extend greetings to Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh. Abu Shamala presented al-Houthi with the shield of Hamas in recognition of his support to the Palestinian cause.³⁵⁹

Badr Organization

No known cooperative links exist between the Houthis and Iraqi Shiite paramilitary group the Badr Organization. Badr members have, however, rallied in Iraq in support of the Houthi rebels.³⁵⁶

Hezbollah

Saudi officials allege that Hezbollah has provided training to the Houthi rebels.³⁶⁰ According to the Saudi Ambassador to the United States, the "first thing the Houthis did when they entered and occupied Sanaa was to free Iranian Revolutionary Guards operatives and Hezbollah operatives from the jails."³⁶¹ Moreover, Houthi rhetoric as early as 2004 indicates the group looks up to Hezbollah due to its anti-American, anti-Israel stance.³⁶² According to a number of analysts, the Houthis may also have modeled their organization after Hezbollah.³⁶³ In October 2014, the Associated Press reported that the Houthis were "poised to become Yemen's version of the Shiite Hezbollah in Lebanon—top powerbrokers dominating the government and running a virtual state-within-a-state."³⁶⁴ In June 2021, Abdul-Malik al-Houthi declared the Yemeni people were "an integral part of the equation announced by" Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and part of the "framework of the axis of resistance."³⁶⁵

Houthis

Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)

Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)

The Houthis have received training and military equipment from Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). According to the Saudi ambassador to the United States, the “first thing the Houthis did when they entered and occupied Sanaa was to free Iranian Revolutionary Guards operatives and Hezbollah operatives from the jails.”³⁶⁶ In December 2020, the United States levied financial sanctions on Hasan Irlu, whom the government accused of being Iran’s envoy to the Houthis. The U.S. government accuses Iran of being the only nation to officially recognize, and appoint formal representation to, the Houthis. According to the U.S. government, Irlu is a member of the IRGC’s Quds Force who has provided advanced weapons and training to the Houthis through coordinated support from other Quds Force leaders.³⁶⁷

The Iranian ship *Jihan I* was seized allegedly en route to Yemen in 2013 with arms meant for the Houthis. The cache, as Reuters reported in December 2014, included, “Katyusha rockets M-122, heat-seeking surface-to-air missiles, RPG-7s, Iranian-made nightvision goggles and ‘artillery systems that track land and navy targets 40km away’” as well as “silencers, 2.66 tonnes of RDX explosives, C-4 explosives, ammunition, bullets and electrical transistors.”³⁶⁸

During a late August 2021 engagement between Houthi fighters and pro-government forces in and around Marib, government-aligned military officials claimed Iran sent military experts and fighters from the IRGC, Iraq, and Lebanon to provide reinforcements to the Houthis. Yemeni officials further accused the IRGC of firing ballistic missiles and drones inside and outside of Yemen.³⁶⁹

Higher-ups in the Houthi movement have expressed support for Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ). Mohammed al-Bukhaiti, a member of the Houthi political party, has stated that the Houthis and PIJ share “a common stand vis-a-vis Israel” and the United States.³⁷⁰

³⁵⁵ Steven Erlanger, “Yemen’s Chaos Aids the Evolution of a Qaeda Cell,” *New York Times*, January 2, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/03/world/middleeast/03yemen.html>.

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Houthis

Rhetoric:

Unnamed Houthi official, August 2021

Speaking at a Houthi summer camp graduation ceremony:

“We tell the world that the Yemeni youth are at the forefront of the ranks in fighting off brutal aggression. These people say no to the damned culture of the US and Israel.”³⁷¹

Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, June 3, 2021

“In parallel with the American move after September 11, there was more Israeli tyranny in the oppression of the Palestinian people. The Yemeni people are an integral part of the equation announced by [Hezbollah leader] Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah in defense of Al-Quds, within the framework of the axis of resistance.”³⁷²

Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, June 3, 2021

“The Saudi and Emirati media appeared in their stance on the Palestinian resistance as if they were affiliated with the ‘Israeli’ enemy.”³⁷³

Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, May 24, 2021

“The Israeli enemy will suffer more defeats at the hands of the Palestinians until final victory is achieved by the resistance front.”³⁷⁴

Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, May 24, 2021

“We are facing an aggression supervised by the United States, planned by Israel and Britain, and implemented by their mercenaries.”³⁷⁵

³⁷¹ Saeed Al-Batati, “Thousands of Yemeni children brainwashed in Houthi ‘summer camps,’” Arab News, August 17, 2021, <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1912296/middle-east>.

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