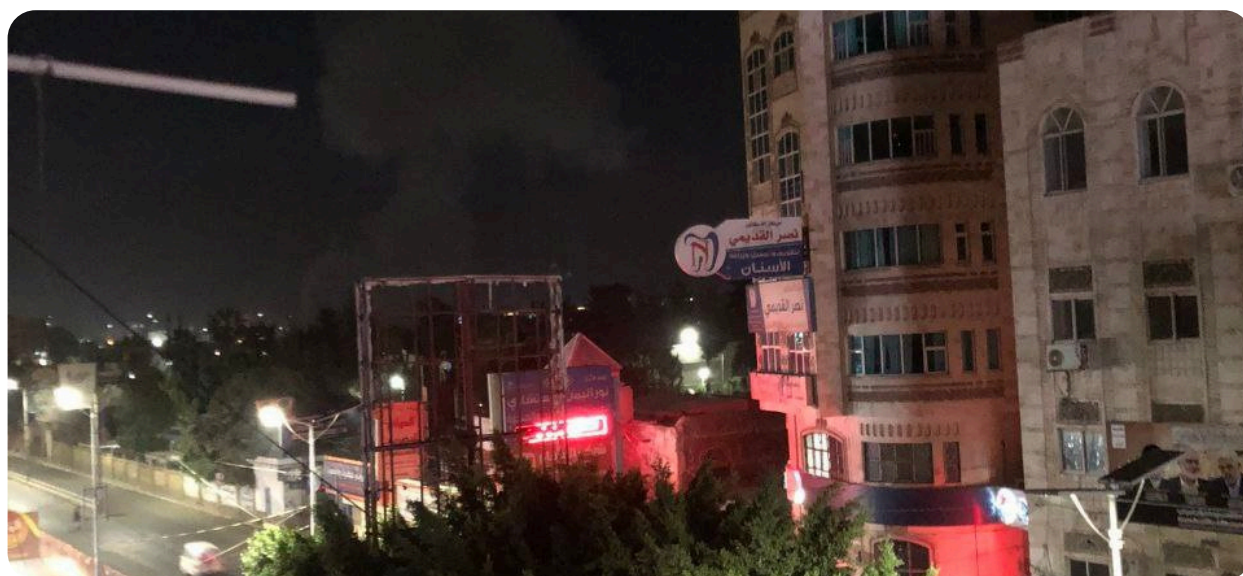


ESCALATION IN YEMEN : US AIRSTRIKES , NAVAL MOVEMENT, INTENSIFIED HOUTHİ ATTACKS ON ISRAEL

On 16 December, two separate airstrike operations were reported in Yemen. U.S. forces carried out precision airstrikes targeting Houthi weapons storage facilities in the Buhais area, located in Midi, Hajjah province. Simultaneously, U.S. airstrikes hit the Houthi Ministry of Defense and al-Hafa base in Sanaa, aiming to disrupt Houthi command and control capabilities. These actions followed CENTCOM's airstrike on a key Houthi command center earlier in the day, which was in response to Houthi attacks on U.S. Navy and commercial vessels in the Southern Red Sea and Gulf of Aden.



Footage from the airstrike on Al Ardi Complex , Sanaa / Ali Al Sakani , X (Twitter)

NAVAL MOVEMENT IN THE RED SEA

The USS Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group, including the flagship USS Harry S. Truman (CVN-75) and its accompanying Arleigh Burke-class destroyers, has been spotted transiting the Suez Canal southbound. This maneuver indicates a strategic repositioning, enhancing U.S. naval presence in proximity to Yemen. The deployment aims at bolstering military readiness and operational capabilities to respond to regional threats, particularly those posed by Houthi forces, thereby ensuring maritime security in the area.



USS Harry S. Truman and its strike group transiting the Suez Canal SB on 15 Dec 2024
Source: MT Anderson , X (Twitter)

Fleet Forces Commander Adm. Daryl Caudle has emphasized the need to stop the flow of weapons to the Houthis to prevent their attacks on merchant shipping. This approach is part of a broader international naval strategy, where ships from various nations (*Caudle noted that the French and United Kingdom navies are expected to begin operations in the region soon.*), including those from Carrier Strike Group 8, are enhancing their presence in the region. This collective effort not only aims at deterring Houthi aggression but also supports maritime security through multinational cooperation.

China Deploys 47th Naval Fleet for Anti-Piracy Mission in Gulf of Aden and Somali Waters

Following the hijacking of a Chinese vessel off the northeastern coast of Puntland, the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy has deployed its 47th fleet to the Gulf of Aden and the waters off Somalia. The fleet, consisting of a guided-missile destroyer, a missile frigate, and a supply vessel, includes over 700 personnel, two helicopters, and special forces. The mission focuses on anti-piracy, counter-terrorism, and the armed rescue of hijacked merchant ships.

The 47th Fleet will replace the 46th Fleet .



Footage of PLA 47 th Fleet / Source: Global Times , X (Twitter)

Houthis Amplify Threats and Escalation Amid Israel Confrontation

The Houthi forces, in conjunction with Iraqi insurgent groups, have escalated their military engagements against Israeli targets, deploying ballistic missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles. Following the strike on December 16, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) are preparing a strategic counter-offensive against Houthi positions in the coming weeks.

Senior Houthi official Hussein Al-Ezzi has declared that operations in the maritime domain, in solidarity with Gaza, will continue unabated until a cessation of hostilities is achieved. He further cautioned that any aggressive military maneuvers by the United States or Israel would necessitate a proportional escalation from the Houthi side. This development occurs amid the heightened U.S. naval operations in the region, with Carrier Strike Group 8, led by the USS Harry S. Truman now navigating towards strategic maritime chokepoints.

ANALYSIS

Following the recent U.S. airstrikes, the deployment of the USS Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group, and reports suggesting potential Israeli airstrikes in Yemen, the Houthis are likely to escalate their maritime operations in the Red Sea. Given their recent failure to successfully target U.S.-linked ships, which were protected by a heightened U.S. naval presence, the Houthis may shift their focus to other commercial vessels, claiming they are affiliated with Israel or the United States as a pretext for attacks.

While the increased U.S. presence in the region enhances maritime security, the operational environment remains volatile. Commercial shipping in the Red Sea and Bab el-Mandeb Strait is advised to exercise extreme caution, as vessels may unintentionally become collateral targets in the crossfire. Enhanced situational awareness, adherence to navigational alerts, and coordination with regional naval forces are recommended to mitigate the risks posed by this escalating threat.

SOURCES

SeaHawk Maritime Intelligence provides actionable, land-based intelligence on Somali piracy and other emerging threats in the region.

Al Mashhad

["https://www.almashhadnews.com/298088"](https://www.almashhadnews.com/298088)

CENTCOM

["https://x.com/CENTCOM/status/1868783918054273050"](https://x.com/CENTCOM/status/1868783918054273050)

CENTCOM

["https://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/PRESS-RELEASES/Press-Release-View/Article/4002442/uss-harry-s-truman-carrier-strike-group-enters-us-central-command-area-of-respo/"](https://www.centcom.mil/MEDIA/PRESS-RELEASES/Press-Release-View/Article/4002442/uss-harry-s-truman-carrier-strike-group-enters-us-central-command-area-of-respo/)

USNI News

["https://news.usni.org/2024/12/16/stopping-flow-of-weapons-to-houthis-key-to-halting-merchant-attacks-says-fleet-forces-commander"](https://news.usni.org/2024/12/16/stopping-flow-of-weapons-to-houthis-key-to-halting-merchant-attacks-says-fleet-forces-commander)

Yemen News Portal

["https://yemnews.net/index.php/news/m-twq-ha-ts-yd-amryky-sn-a-tkshf-mw-d-wqf-mlyatha-albhryt"](https://yemnews.net/index.php/news/m-twq-ha-ts-yd-amryky-sn-a-tkshf-mw-d-wqf-mlyatha-albhryt)

Xinhua

["https://english.news.cn/20241215/ff46a54a7fb34a92941ded1798e758cc/c.html"](https://english.news.cn/20241215/ff46a54a7fb34a92941ded1798e758cc/c.html)

Jerusalem Post

["https://www.jns.org/israel-prepares-to-strike-houthi-targets-in-yemen/"](https://www.jns.org/israel-prepares-to-strike-houthi-targets-in-yemen/)

MT Anderson X Twitter

["https://x.com/MT_Anderson/status/1868313516345848268"](https://x.com/MT_Anderson/status/1868313516345848268)

Ali Al Sakani X Twitter

["https://x.com/Alsakaniali/status/1868783700307251593"](https://x.com/Alsakaniali/status/1868783700307251593)

Houthi Military Media

["https://t.me/MilitaryMediaY/42097"](https://t.me/MilitaryMediaY/42097)

RESTRICTED

This document is strictly intended for the designated recipient(s) only and is not to be shared with any third parties without prior written authorisation from SeaHawk Maritime Intelligence. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the content, it is subject to updates or revisions at any time. Recipients use the information at their own discretion and risk. SeaHawk Maritime Intelligence disclaims any responsibility or liability for any products or services mentioned or recommended in this document.

