



# SAUDI ARABIA

*and*

# THE YEMEN CONFLICT

**SUMMARY: YEMEN WHITE PAPER**

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**The Saudi-led coalition's objectives in Yemen are clear: to restore the legitimate government and protect our borders from a dangerous Iranian-backed Houthi militia.**

- By responding to an appeal from the legitimate president of Yemen and entering the conflict, Saudi Arabia is seeking to restore a sovereign government and standing up to Iran's aggression.
- The Kingdom has been supported in this campaign by several neighboring countries militarily and many more throughout the international community, including the United States.
- The situation in Yemen is a national security issue for Saudi Arabia, which must protect its citizens from being targeted by ballistic missile attacks against its population centers, such as the holy city of Makkah.

**Saudi Arabia is working with all political factions in Yemen towards a peaceful political solution to the conflict.**

- The endgame should be a political solution based on UN Security Council Resolution 2216, the GCC Initiative, and the Yemeni National Dialogue.
- The proposed Saudi framework calls for the withdrawal of forces from Sana'a and other key areas and the transfer of all heavy weapons, including ballistic missiles, from the Houthis to a neutral third party.
- The Houthis have the right to be part of the political process in Yemen, but they cannot use aggression and military weapons to disrupt national order and regional security.
- The Houthis continue to negotiate in bad faith. Saudi Arabia and the international community have made more than 70 agreements with the Houthis and ex-president Saleh, but the Houthis have reneged on every agreement.



### **The Saudi-led coalition in Yemen is achieving its goals.**

- Military intervention was undertaken only after repeated diplomatic efforts had failed.
- The legitimate government of Yemen now controls over 85 percent of the country. Iranian intervention has been contained and deterred.
- The coalition and the Yemeni forces retook the city of Aden from the Houthis and liberated the city of Al-Mukalla from Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

### **Iran makes no secret of its nefarious intentions in Yemen. Their intervention in Yemen is just another example of Iran acting with international mischief and aggression.**

- Yemen is another example – along with Iraq, Syria, Bahrain and Lebanon – that showcases Iran’s engagement in aggression outside its borders.
- The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) have provided the Houthis with money, training, and weaponry for more than a decade, according to the U.S. State Department.
- According to a recent Reuters article, Major General Qassem Soleimani, commander of the Qods Force, met top IRGC officials in Tehran in February 2017 to evaluate plans that would further advantage the Houthis in Yemen.
- Secretary of Defense Mattis in Riyadh recently reiterated that “Iran once again is no help” in Yemen. Secretary Mattis said the French, Australian and U.S. Navies have intercepted Iranian support and weapons in transit to Yemen.
- According to the White House, the Houthis have threatened U.S. and allied vessels transiting the Red Sea. The Houthis fired missiles at the USS Mason in October 2016.

### **Saudi Arabia has a right to defend itself with weapons purchased with their own funds.**

- Every nation should provide for its own security. Iran is posing a threat to Saudi Arabia via its support for the Houthis in Yemen.
- In response to this threat, Saudi Arabia wants to defend itself with weapons purchased with Saudi funds.
- Support for Saudi arms sales is support for Saudi Arabia fighting its own battles in the region.

### **The Coalition deeply regrets unfortunate incidents of errant strikes causing civilian casualties in an ongoing war zone. It is committed to protecting civilians in Yemen and has taken steps to avoid casualties.**

- The Coalition established an independent Joint Incidents Assessment Team (JIAT) and tasked it with assessing claims of violence against civilians by Coalition forces, including violations and accidental fire incidents.



- The Coalition is working alongside UN agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross as part of a collaborative approach to minimize the possibility of harm to civilians, medical personnel, journalists and relief organizations.

### **The Houthis have repeatedly violated international humanitarian law by design.**

- Houthi militias have shelled civilian targets, planted land mines in civilian areas and coerced child soldiers into their ranks.
- Houthis use aid as a weapon. At ports under their control, such as the Port of Hodeidah, the Houthis sell humanitarian aid on the black market to purchase arms. They use food itself as a weapon, particularly to recruit child soldiers in violation of international law.

### **Because of the Coalition's counterterrorism efforts, terrorist organizations like Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Daesh can no longer use the vacuum created by Houthi destabilization to find a safe haven in Yemen.**

- In April 2016, Coalition forces liberated the city of Mukalla, depriving AQAP of a key stronghold. Today, AQAP no longer controls a single city in Yemen.
- Daesh has attacked Saudi operations in Yemen in retaliation for Saudi participation in airstrikes against Daesh in Syria.

### **Saudi Arabia is the single largest donor of humanitarian aid to Yemen, having contributed over three quarters of a billion dollars through the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center.**

- In April 2017, the Kingdom pledged an additional \$150 million donation to support KSRelief in Yemen.
- The new donation comes as part of the \$8.2 billion committed by the Kingdom within its humanitarian and developmental assistance to Yemen since April 2015.
- Hodeidah, specifically, is receiving the largest amount of humanitarian aid from external sources, yet much of the population is suffering from famine. Liberation of the Port of Hodeidah would improve the flow of humanitarian aid, not stifle it.