



[Rights Groups Implore U.S. President Biden Against Re-Blacklisting the Houthis in Yemen](#)

Rights groups are urging U.S. President Joe Biden against re-blacklisting the Houthis in Yemen and highlighting that the potential move would have a devastating effect on the ability to deliver much-needed aid and basic goods to the country. President Biden raised alarms and elicited concern about this when he stated in a recent news conference that his administration was considering re-designating Yemen's Houthi movement as an international terrorist organization. This is likely due to pressure from the United Arab Emirates after a Houthi-claimed attack on Abu Dhabi airport and a fuel depot. The United Arab Emirates, a member of the often-criticized Saudi-led coalition fighting the group in Yemen, publicly requested that the Biden administration take this action. The war in Yemen has created what many experts deem to be the worst humanitarian disaster in the world, and as such, there is a desperate need for aid services. The Biden administration was praised for revoking the terrorist designation put in place by former President Trump, citing the damaging impact it could have on Yemeni civilians' access to aid. Much of the Yemeni population relies on these international humanitarian operations, as the ongoing conflict has brought the country to the verge of widespread famine. The war has claimed an estimated 230,000 lives since 2015 according to U.N. estimates, and 131,000 of these are directly linked to food insecurity and lack of access to health services.

The groups that celebrated the removal of the Houthis from the blacklist now caution Biden against putting them back on. Hassan El-Tayyab of the Friends Committee on National Legislation says that this move would make it more difficult to end the conflict and worsen the impact of the Saudi-led blockade. The designation would do little to address any concerns, while forgoing it could aid in the delivery of humanitarian services to millions of innocent civilians. Blacklisting the Houthi rebels could also increase the risk that humanitarian aid groups incur U.S. sanctions for assisting aid-dependent Yemenis living in the area. On the other end of this debate, some politicians and officials are calling for Biden to put the Houthis back on the international terrorist blacklist. Republican Senator Ted Cruz has even gone as far as claiming that Biden is appeasing Iran.

Many members of human rights activist groups have been opposed to U.S. support of the Saudi-led coalition. The coalition, which consists of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and others, has been credibly found to have greatly contributed to civilian deaths and humanitarian suffering. One of the most recent examples of this was an attack on a prison in northern Yemen late last month that killed an estimated 70 people, according to Doctors Without Borders. President Biden halted support for offensive operations in early 2021, but the United States continues to provide intelligence and weapons to the Saudis. This includes a \$650 million weapons sale to Saudi Arabia back in late 2021, and activists outline that this continued enabling only prolongs and exacerbates the humanitarian crisis caused by the conflict in Yemen.

It was recently announced that the United States will be sending a guided-missile destroyer and fighter jets to the United Arab Emirates. This move was triggered by a recent string of drone and missile attacks on the country, and could potentially indicate that Biden is seriously pondering putting the Houthis back on the international terrorist blacklist.