



[Israel's Attacks on Yemen and the Root Cause of Israeli-Houthi Tensions](#)

An Israeli attack on Yemen in recent days has ratcheted up the threat of potential further retaliations and escalations. Earlier this week, a Houthi missile fired towards Israel hit near the latter's main airport outside of Lod, while Israel carried out a wave of bombings targeting the Sanaa International Airport, other civilian sites, and Yemen's Hodeidah port. All of this comes in the midst of President Trump's announcement that the United States would cease its bombing campaign against the Houthis in an Oman-mediated ceasefire deal. However, the Houthis have remarked that the recently reached agreement with the United States does not apply to their operations against Israel, and they have pledged to continue this and respond to Israeli attacks and aggression.

While Israel claims that the Sanaa International Airport is a hub for the Houthis to transfer weapons and receive supplies, analysts have disputed this and lament that Israel's attacking of the airport and Yemen's Hodeidah port will only hurt civilians by hindering the work of humanitarian agencies seeking to help alleviate conditions in the country. Both sites function as important means of getting lifesaving medical treatment and humanitarian supplies to those in desperate need. Observers have also been quick to point out that the root cause of the troubling Houthi-Israeli tensions is Israel's destructive military offensive in Gaza. During the ceasefire there between January and March, the Houthis had halted their operations against Israel and only restarted them following Israel's decision to enforce a total blockade on the besieged Gaza Strip and initiate a resumption of its hostilities. Due to this, many contend that effectively addressing the escalated tensions between Israel and the Houthis requires putting a permanent end to the hostilities in Gaza that are fueling the precarious circumstances throughout the region.

Thus, while the Trump administration might try to sell its ceasefire agreement with the Houthis as a notable diplomatic achievement, the Houthis' comments in the aftermath of this regarding their intention to continue operations against Israel demonstrate that more is needed for a genuine quelling of the situation. Israel's breaking of the Gaza ceasefire deal – whose first phase was implemented back in mid-January but did not progress to the agreed-upon second stage – and the United States' failure to use its leverage over Israel in order to ensure that it upholds the agreement is ultimately what has led to the ongoing state of tensions and risk of further escalations between Israel and the Houthis in Yemen. While the recent U.S.-Houthi truce could reflect an acknowledgement from Trump regarding growing American public opposition to the prospect of U.S. entanglement in foreign wars, truly minimizing the risk of new developments that could drag the United States into an expanded conflict in the Middle East is contingent upon ending Israel's destructive war in Gaza. In the absence of this, the threat will remain.

With respect to the U.S.-Houthi ceasefire agreement, it has been reported that news of the deal caught Israeli officials by surprise, as Tel Aviv was unaware of attempts aimed at reaching such an agreement. For issue experts, it is noteworthy that Israel only learned of the ceasefire news when President Trump announced it publicly during an Oval Office meeting with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney and that the Trump administration seems keen on fiercely pursuing nuclear talks with Iran in spite of Israel's clear objections to both. They also took notice of the fact that President Trump's announcement of the news failed to mention the ongoing situation between the Houthis and Israel, and that the American president merely remarked that "I'll discuss that if something happens"

when asked about it. All of this suggests that the Trump administration is willing to take actions that ignore Israel's interests and demonstrates that the American president is growing increasingly frustrated with Netanyahu. The Houthis hit Israel today, and if the circumstances persist, it will be interesting to see how – if at all – the Trump administration reacts.