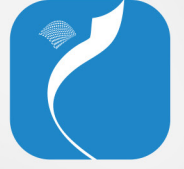


**Political Alert**  
January 2025

المركز  
لدراسات الاستراتيجية  
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# Protecting Yemen's Infrastructure: A Call for International Action

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# Protecting Yemen's Infrastructure: A Call for International Action



Political Alert



January - 2025



We are a research institution concerned with studying Yemeni affairs and the regional and international influences on it. Through interpreting history, analysing the present, and predicting the future, in the aim of positive participating for better future of Yemen

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## Introduction

On Thursday, December 26, 2024, Israel launched attacks on multiple targets in Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen, including Sana'a International Airport. The Israeli military stated that, in addition to the airport, it targeted military infrastructure in the ports of Hodeidah, Salif and Ras AlKatheeb, along Yemen's western coast. Power stations in the Haziz area of Sana'a and Ras AlKatheeb in Hodeidah were also bombed. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu declared that Israel would persist in its mission until its objectives were achieved. In a subsequent interview with Channel 14, he remarked, "We are still at the beginning with them."<sup>1</sup>

Given the pattern of previous Israeli strikes and other considerations, there is a significant likelihood that Yemen's already fragile and damaged infrastructure, including civilian facilities and economic resources, could become primary targets in potential future attacks. This poses serious risks to what remains of Yemen's infrastructure, threatening the livelihoods and survival of its people. This paper seeks to issue a political alert to relevant authorities about the potential dangers posed to Yemen's infrastructure, the economic challenges and the long-term security threats that could emerge as a result of Israeli aggression.

## Limited Infrastructure in Yemen

Yemen suffers from extremely weak and limited infrastructure due to several factors. The country's limited economic resources, lack of substantial external support and funding, decades of corruption, mismanagement and random government development policies have all contributed to this fragility. Also, the ongoing cycles of conflict and violence in Yemen have caused widespread destruction of the existing infrastructure.

Yemen's limited economic resources make it challenging to invest in the development of large-scale infrastructure projects. Government policies, both during periods of division and unity, have been plagued by inefficiency, corruption and a lack of adherence to governance standards, further hindering sustainable development. International aid directed toward Yemen's infrastructure has remained minimal, with a significant portion of the funding often allocated to administrative and operational expenses rather than tangible development.

Recurring crises and wars have exacerbated the destruction of Yemen's already fragile infrastructure. For instance, the war in the summer of 1994 resulted in the loss of approximately \$11 billion within just two months and 10 days. This figure includes the cost of destroyed military equipment, damaged infrastructure and ruined government and civilian buildings, alongside economic losses that were caused by halted production, deteriorated services and surging unemployment and poverty rates.<sup>2</sup>

The six Sa'da wars (2004–2010), triggered by the Houthi rebellion and its armed confrontations with state authorities, caused extensive destruction to the already limited infrastructure in Sa'da Governorate and neighboring regions to which the clashes spread. However, the most significant damage to Yemen's infrastructure occurred, following the Houthi coup on September 21, 2014, and the ensuing war that continues to this very day. This prolonged conflict has severely impacted various sectors of Yemen's infrastructure.

Numerous hospitals and health centers have been destroyed, while schools and universities, although not decimated, have sustained significant damage.

Water and sewage networks have deteriorated, and electricity generators and transmission networks have suffered extensive damage, leading to frequent power outages that disrupt all aspects of daily life. Roads, bridges, ports and airports have also been destroyed, hindering the movement of trade, goods and people.

A report by the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies estimates that the Yemeni economy has lost between \$170 billion and \$200 billion in gross domestic product (GDP) between 2015 and 2022 due to the ongoing war. While the humanitarian truce agreed upon in April 2022 briefly halted the conflict, clashes resumed shortly thereafter. Red Sea tensions escalated, and Houthi-controlled areas were subjected to renewed attacks, this time involving American and British aircraft and missiles, followed later by Israeli air strikes.

### **Deliberate Israeli Targeting of Infrastructure**

Unlike the ongoing U.S. and British strikes on Yemen, which primarily focus on Houthi military targets as stated by both governments, Israeli bombings have often targeted vital infrastructure critical to the Yemeni economy and the livelihoods of its citizens. For instance, during air strikes on July 20, 2024, Israeli aircraft attacked fuel tanks at the port of Hodeidah in western Yemen, a major electricity generation facility at the Ras AlKatheeb Port station that powers the city of Hodeidah and the headquarters of the Yemen Economic Corporation.

The port fire caused by the bombings raged for an extended period, exacerbated by the absence of civil defense resources. The city of Hodeidah experienced a complete power outage immediately after the attacks, while communication networks in the area faced repeated disruptions.<sup>5</sup>

According to media reports, the damage to the port of Hodeidah alone amounted to more than \$20 million. The strikes resulted in the deaths of about six to nine individuals and left more than 80 others injured. These actions appeared less like targeted military operations and more akin to deliberate acts of retaliation against Yemen's economic capabilities, severely affecting the lives and well-being of its citizens.<sup>6</sup>

On December 19, 2024, Israeli aircraft carried out air strikes on key sites, including ports, infrastructure and power plants. Among the targets were the Haiz and Dhahban central power stations, located to the south and north of the capital, Sana'a. Additional raids in the coastal Hodeidah Governorate hit the port of Hodeidah and the Ras Issa oil facility, resulting in nine casualties.

On Thursday, December 27, 2024, Sana'a International Airport and the Haiz Power Station were again heavily struck. A missile attack targeted the airport's terminal and runway, causing significant damage, setting the runway on fire, and reportedly leading to civilian casualties. Sources confirmed that Haiz Power Station was bombed for the second time in a matter of days. Ras AlKatheeb Power Station in Hodeidah Governorate was also attacked. The Israeli military confirmed that its aircraft targeted Sana'a airport, the port of Hodeidah and oil facilities.

Given the ongoing conflict and the escalating threats posed by Israeli forces, it is highly probable that Yemen's infrastructure and public resources will continue to face destructive strikes. This will likely lead to further losses of the already fragile infrastructure, which had taken decades of effort by the Yemeni people to develop and was considered one of the few significant achievements in the country's recent history.

## The Necessity of International Intervention

The international community bears significant responsibility in safeguarding Yemen's infrastructure and ensuring its neutrality in the ongoing conflict. The United States, as the leader of the international system, holds the greatest responsibility due to its strategic relations with Israel and its capacity to influence Israeli decision-makers. Consequently, the U.S. must exert substantial pressure on Israel to prevent the deliberate and widespread destruction of Yemen's remaining infrastructure. This pressure should go beyond the statement made by White House National Security Communications Coordinator John Kirby, who merely urged Israel to conduct operations in Yemen in a manner that minimizes damage to civilian infrastructure.<sup>9</sup> Instead, the U.S. should take meaningful and effective action to halt the destruction.

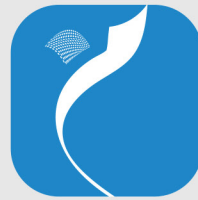
International and humanitarian organizations, along with global media outlets, share this responsibility. They must escalate efforts politically, in the media and legally to prevent the limited resources of the Yemeni people from becoming vulnerable to Israeli air strikes. These entities should focus their pressure on neutralizing and protecting these vital resources from further harm.



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