



# MONTHLY BRIEFING

FOREIGN STUDIES UNIT

MARCH / 2025

ISSUE : 43



# Monthly Briefing

The Monthly Briefing is a bulletin that monitors and documents the most prominent current events in Yemen, on the political, military, economic, security and humanitarian levels. It is published monthly and translated into several languages

THE PREVIOUS  
ISSUE



## Political Scene



Yemen witnessed a significant escalation in political and military tensions during this month, as international pressure increased on the Houthi group following the U.S. decision to designate them as a “terrorist organization”. This was accompanied by intensified exchanges of attacks between the group and the United States, while Iran continued its support for the Houthis. Meanwhile, the prospects for a political settlement have further diminished, foreshadowing a continuation of the conflict and a deepening of the crisis.



## Political Scene

During the Arab Summit held in Cairo, the Yemeni Presidential Leadership Council Rashad Al-Alimi and council member Sultan Al-Aradah met with their Syrian and Lebanese counterparts, President Ahmad Al-Shara and President Joseph Aoun, respectively.

March 4



Yemen's Ministry of Foreign Affairs welcomed the U.S. State Department's announcement of the enforcement of the Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) designation against the Houthi group, under Executive Order 14175, issued by U.S. President Donald Trump.

March 4

UN Envoy to Yemen Hans Grundberg warned of escalating tensions in the country, urging all parties to avoid military escalation. He emphasized the fragile nature of the situation despite a recent decrease in Houthi attacks in the Red Sea.

March 6

## Political Scene

Former Iraqi Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi, known for his close ties to Iran and his role in forming the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF), had been seen in Sana'a footage — shared by activists and Houthi leaders — however, there was no official announcement of the visit.

March 20



According to a draft obtained by The New York Times, the U.S. administration plans to issue a travel ban affecting citizens of 43 countries, including Yemen.

March 15

The U.S. Treasury Department imposed new sanctions on a network supporting Iranian oil exports, including a Chinese refinery, vessels and entities linked to the Houthis and Iran's Ministry of Defense. (The sanctions freeze the targeted assets and prohibit U.S. transactions with them, as part of the "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran.)

March 20

## Political Scene

Saudi Defense Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman met with Hadhramaut Tribal Alliance head Sheikh Amr bin Habrish, in Jeddah, to discuss the situation in Yemen — particularly Hadhramaut's political and security concerns. The visit came after bin Habrish made public statements opposing both the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC) and the Southern Transitional Council (STC).

March 21



Egyptian authorities referred the head of the Drug Authority for investigation after he met with a Houthi delegation, led by Mohammed Ali Abbas, who had falsely claimed to be the head of Yemen's Drug Authority. The Egyptian Authority later removed the news from its official platforms, and several local websites deleted related coverage. The incident is reminiscent of a previous scandal in which Jordan had to cancel a similar unauthorized agreement with the Houthis.

March 28

A Houthi delegation visited Cairo on an official invitation and held talks with Egyptian General Intelligence officials to explore ways to de-escalate regional tensions. According to Al-Araby Al-Jadeed, Egypt relayed messages from the United States to the Houthis regarding the Red Sea escalation, though it remains unclear if those messages also addressed the situation in Gaza.

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March 28

UAE-backed Hadhrami Elite Forces launched a wave of arrests targeting senior officers in Yemen's Second Military Region, including Brigadier General Mohammed Al-Yemeni. The arrests come amid intensifying rivalry between Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Al-Yemeni's tribe condemned the move as a "serious escalation" and demanded the immediate release of the detainees.

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March 28



## Military Scene



Military clashes intensified across several fronts, with the Houthis launching heavy attacks on Ma'rib and Taiz, accompanied by troop buildups amid growing challenges for government forces trying to repel infiltration attempts. At the same time, the United States carried out a series of powerful air strikes on Houthi-controlled areas in an effort to weaken their capabilities. This came alongside escalating tensions at sea, as the Houthis targeted U.S. aircraft carriers — further expanding the scope of the confrontation and adding complexity to the already volatile situation in Yemen.





## Military Scene

U.S. President Donald Trump announced the launch of “decisive” strikes against the Houthis, promising an “unprecedented hell”. The air strikes targeted military sites north of Sana’a, reportedly hitting camps, Iranian-supplied weapons depots and key Houthi leadership locations.

March 15



Joint U.S.-British air strikes on Sana’a killed nine people and wounded nine more, targeting a residential home in the Al-Jiraf neighborhood. No further details about the casualties have been released.

March 15

Dozens of U.S. air strikes hit Houthi-held areas, killing 31 people and injuring 101 — most of them women and children — according to Houthi sources.

March 16

### Military Scene

Government forces successfully repelled several Houthi infiltration attempts across various fronts in Ma'rib province, including one foiled advance in the Mas Belt area in the north. Fierce clashes also erupted in the Al-Zur front, resulting in injuries on both sides

March 14



According to The Wall Street Journal, the U.S. air strikes aimed to achieve three main objectives: to destroy missile-launch platforms targeting the sea, eliminate hidden Houthi leaders and send a warning message to Iran.

The U.S. launched air strikes on areas in Hodeidah and Al-Jawf, while the Houthis claimed to have targeted the U.S. aircraft carrier Harry Truman with drones and missiles, asserting that they had thwarted a major U.S. attack

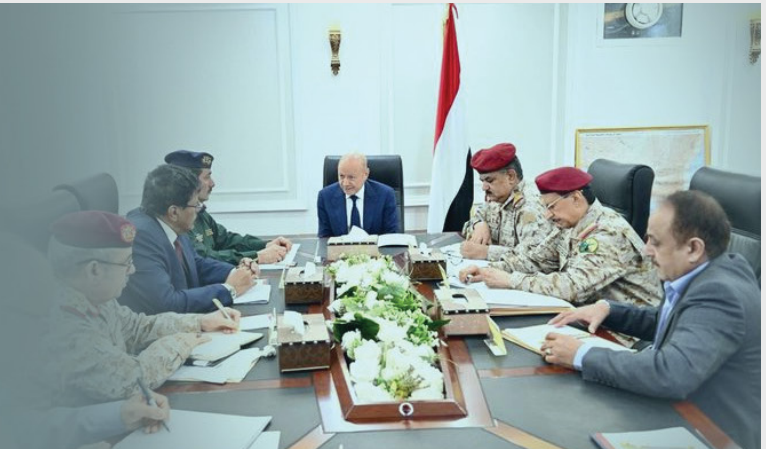
March 16

17 Mart

## Military Scene

During a meeting chaired by Rashad Al-Alimi, the Yemeni Joint Operations Command held the Houthi group responsible for the U.S. escalation, warning against any further intensification of hostilities.

March 16



The U.S. carried a series of air strikes on Houthi positions in Sana'a, targeting the Presidential Palace, Al-Iman University and Mount Sarf in Bani Hashish. The strikes caused massive explosions and large fires in the targeted areas.

The Pentagon confirmed that U.S. air strikes on the Houthis would continue until their "specific objectives" were met, focusing on the group's weapons facilities and leadership.

March 18

March 18

Military Scene

The Popular Resistance Councils in al-Makha and Al-Sabiha declared their readiness to continue liberating Yemen during public events organized by the Supreme Council of the Popular Resistance. They called for unity and preparation for the upcoming battle for Sana'a.

March 25



Iran condemned the U.S. air strikes on the Houthis as “aggression” and called on Russia and China to engage in talks to de-escalate the situation.

March 18

U.S. aircraft carried out air strikes on Houthi positions in Sana'a, Amran, Sa'dah, Hodeidah and Al-Jawf, targeting camps and command centers. While Washington described the strikes as “completely successful”, the Houthis reported damage to civilian homes and funerals for their field commanders.

March 28

## Security Scene



Security pressure on the Houthis has increased with the official designation of the group as a “terrorist organization” and the ban on fuel imports through the port of Hodeidah. This marks an escalation in U.S. efforts to curb their military and economic power. At the same time, recent investigations in the southern governorates have uncovered assassination cells funded by the UAE. Ongoing seizures of weapons and drugs at ports with the Sultanate of Oman further complicate the situation. Additionally, divisions within the south, particularly in Hadhramaut, fueled by Emirati support, threaten to worsen security instability amid a growing regional power struggle.



## Security Scene

The United States officially designated the Houthis as a “terrorist organization”, stating that their actions pose a threat to civilian safety and maritime trade and warned against engaging with them.

March 4



Security investigations in Al Dhale'e uncovered an assassination cell that carried out targeted murders of political, journalistic and educational figures between 2018 and 2020. The cell, funded by the UAE and led by Major-General Shallal Ali Shaya', was involved in operations that included an attempt on the life of former Interior Minister Ahmed Al-Maysari.

March 12

The United States announced a ban on the import of petroleum products through the port of Hodeidah, effective April 2, 2025, following the Houthi designation as a “terrorist organization”. This ban restricts fuel flows to Houthi-controlled areas and prohibits the resale or export of oil, with exceptions for payments related to taxes and public services.

March 13

### Security Scene

Customs authorities at the Sarfait border crossing in Al-Mahrah Governorate seized 800 Chinese-made drones in cooperation with security services. The shipment included three-blade propellers, each with a power of 1,050 watts, manufactured by GEFMAN and made from glass and carbon fiber.

March 24



The Joint Maritime Forces announced the seizure of 260 kg of drugs from a ship in the Arabian Sea, in collaboration with the U.S. Coast Guard. The shipment contained 200 kg of methamphetamine and 60 kg of heroin.

March 25



## Economic Scene



The Yemeni economy continued to deteriorate throughout March, with the value of the riyal declining further and government losses exceeding \$6 billion, worsening the already severe living conditions for citizens. There were also reports that banks were planning to relocate their headquarters from Sana'a to Aden to avoid the tightening U.S. sanctions on the Houthis. While these sanctions may place additional economic pressure on Houthi-controlled areas, they could also push the government to explore alternative sources of revenue, particularly given the ongoing failure to resume oil exports. Meanwhile, poverty and hunger remain widespread and persistent.



## Economic Scene

Since the suspension of oil exports in October 2022, the Yemeni rial has lost 47% of its value in areas controlled by the legitimate government, reaching 2,187 riyals to the dollar in January 2025. This sharp decline has led to government losses surpassing \$6 billion, with fuel and food prices reaching record highs.

March 1

The Central Bank announced that eight banks based in Sana'a had notified it of their intention to move their headquarters to Aden, the interim capital, in order to avoid U.S. sanctions targeting financial institutions linked to the Houthis. This follows Washington's designation of the Houthi group as a "terrorist organization" and the imposition of restrictions on their financing, including in the oil and telecommunications sectors.

March 17

The Houthis escalated their rhetoric against Saudi Arabia and the UAE, accusing them of using sanctions to exert pressure on the banking sector in areas under Houthi control. This came after the Central Bank in Aden aligned with the legitimate government, received requests from Yemeni banks to relocate their operations to Aden to avoid U.S. sanctions. Meanwhile, Washington further tightened its restrictions on Houthi financial networks, targeting their sources of funding.

March 22

## Violations



In March, the human rights situation in Yemen continued to deteriorate, with widespread violations by the Houthis, including kidnappings, forced displacements and the detention of UN staff. Mines, some of which are camouflaged, remain a deadly threat to civilians, despite ongoing efforts by The Saudi Project for Landmine Clearance, MASAM, to clear them, particularly in Al Hudaydah Governorate.



The United Nations and international organizations renewed their calls for the immediate release of dozens of staff members who have been arbitrarily detained for six months. They emphasized that these detentions are hindering humanitarian operations and urged the international community to support Yemen.

March 2

The Monitoring Center documented 12,989 Houthi violations in Al Bayda Governorate, between 2014 and 2024, including murders, injuries, kidnappings and forced displacements. These violations included 823 civilians killed, 796 injured, 3,083 cases of kidnapping and 6,500 instances of forced displacement.

March 9

The MASAM project has cleared 51 Houthi minefields in Al Dhale'e since 2019, removing over 2,000 mines and explosive devices and clearing 234,379 square meters of land.

March 9

The United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement (UNMHA) reported the deaths and injuries of six civilians, including children, due to mine incidents in Al Hudaydah Governorate in February

March 11

## General

### General

U.S. President Donald Trump nominated Amir Ghaleb to be the Ambassador to Kuwait, making him the first American of Yemeni descent to hold this position.

March 8



The legitimate Yemeni government submitted a nomination for Yemeni coffee to UNESCO, seeking to include it on the list of intangible cultural heritage. This move aims to enhance international recognition of Yemen's historical contribution to coffee, especially through the port of al-Makha (Mocha).

March 28

## Statistics

**The United States has imposed sanctions on seven Houthi leaders, one other individual, as well as a company accused of engaging in arms smuggling, collaborating with Russia and recruiting Yemenis to fight in Ukraine. The sanctions include asset freezes and warnings to financial institutions against dealing with these individuals. The sanctioned individuals are:**

1. Abdulsalam Salah Faleetah (Mohammed Abdulsalam): Houthi spokesperson based in Oman, responsible for negotiating arms deals with Russia.
2. Mahdi Al-Mashat: Head of the Houthi Supreme Political Council.
3. Mohammed Ali Al-Houthi: Member of the Houthi Supreme Political Council.
4. Ishaq Abdulmalik Abdullah Al-Marouni: Senior aide to Abdulsalam, involved in Houthi delegations to Moscow.
5. Ali Mohammed Mohsen Al-Hadi: Head of the Sana'a Chamber of Commerce, responsible for financing and purchasing weapons.
6. Abdulmalik Abdullah Muhammad Al-Ajri: Prominent Houthi leader who participated in meetings with Russian and Chinese officials.
7. Khaled Hussein Saleh Jaber: Member of the Houthi financing network, involved in delegations to Moscow and working with Houthi financial official Saeed Al-Jamal.



# Saudi Project "Masam"

## for Landmine Clearance in Yemen

(June 2018 – March 2024)



**CLEARED**  
**486,108**

landmines, unexploded ordnance  
and improvised explosive devices

**8,209**

Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs)

**6,770**

Anti-Personnel Mines

**324,867**

Unexploded Ordnance

**146,262**

Anti-Tank Mines

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