
Current Intelligence Report Circular

CLASSIFICATION: DECLASSIFIED AND APPROVED FOR RELEASE

Report Topic: Saudi Arabia

Production Date: 24 JAN 2022

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High-ranking Houthi military official and at least 20 civilians killed in Saudi-led coalition air strikes in Sanaa.

On 17 JAN, air strikes were carried out by the Saudi-led coalition, just hours after a number of drone and missile attacks on the United Arab Emirates (UAE), a key Saudi ally. These strikes, on the city of Sanaa, have caused at least 20 civilian deaths, including that of a high ranking Houthi military official and his family. The United Nations condemned the attacks and called for “effective and transparent investigations”. The Saudi-led coalition stated that they have reserved the right to respond to “terrorist attacks and criminal escalation” after Houthi drone strikes caused explosions in fuel trucks and ignited a fire in the Abu Dhabi Airport. These attacks caused three deaths and damage on three oil tankers. The coalition stated that it had intercepted eight Houthi drones launched directly at Saudi Arabia on the night of 16 JAN. This is the first time that the UAE have acknowledge air strikes from the rebels. END

Analysis

The Houthis are likely to retaliate against these strikes. It is unlikely that a nationwide ceasefire or any political resolution will arise imminently. The Yemen crisis has been heightened and, as a result, is likely to deteriorate further as the Saudi-led coalition is seeking greater investment in their air missiles, indicating the desire for another attack, or to extend their defense against the Houthis. This can be explored through the US economic actions, as Washington recently \$650 million worth of missiles to Saudi Arabia. It is also possible that the UAE will respond through a potential alliance with Israel, as Prime Minister Naftali Bennett announced his support to Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed in the form of “security and intelligence”. These two examples alone signify a deliberate and direct message to the Houthi rebels that the Saudi-led coalition is not willing to back down, worsening tensions further.

Sources

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