

# Disruption of Maritime Trade: Yemen Resistance Prompts Companies to Suspend Shipping through the Red Sea and the Suez Canal

United States proposes task force to “ensure safe passage” through one of the most lucrative commercial waterways

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*United States Secretary of Defense **Lloyd Austin** visited Tel Aviv on December 18 to discuss the ongoing siege of Gaza and other military operations being carried out against the Palestinian people.*

*Although the major talking point from the Pentagon which aired over western media sources was that the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) must carry out its blanket bombing and ground operation in Gaza utilizing precision tactics.*

Such statements have been advanced by the White House spokesman and cabinet members as the opposition to the siege on Gaza mounts internationally. Pressure from below throughout North America, Europe, Africa, Latin America and the Asia-Pacific has compelled most imperialist states to pay lip service to a long-term ceasefire by the IDF.

Although President Biden has reportedly whispered to private audiences that he disagrees with the way in which the war is being waged by the IDF against the 2.3 million people of Gaza, the reality is without U.S. shipments of weapons to the settler-colonial state the carnage being imposed upon the Palestinians would not exist. It has been well-documented even within corporate and government-sponsored western media networks that thousands of tons of weapons including bombs sent by the U.S. have caused havoc in Gaza.

Nearly 20,000 people have been killed in the strip by mid-December. Tens of thousands more have been injured while the entire population of Gaza have been dislocated, deprived of housing, medical care and security by the State of Israel backed by the government and ruling class in North America and Western Europe.

## Yemeni Resistance and Palestine Solidarity



Nonetheless, another major concern by Washington and Wall Street is the actions carried out by the Yemen Naval Forces which have targeted ships linked to Israeli business interests and those utilizing ports controlled by Tel Aviv. Austin has confirmed during December that **the U.S. is establishing a task force to challenge the Yemeni resistance forces led by the Ansar Allah in the Red Sea region.**

**Yemen resistance forces are in complete solidarity with the people fighting the Zionist regime in Palestine.** They are representative of the anti-imperialist sentiment throughout the West Asia, Horn of Africa and North Africa geopolitical regions.

Resistance forces in Syria, Iraq and Lebanon have engaged both Israeli and Pentagon bases and settlements. On a political level, there have been large demonstrations against Israel and the U.S. throughout the impacted region as well as around the globe.

This overall atmosphere of solidarity with Palestine and a growing commitment to facilitate substantive change has created a strategic dilemma for the leading imperialist states seeking to continue their domination of the shipping lanes in the Red Sea, Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden. As Austin announced the redeployment of aircraft carriers from the Perian Gulf to the Red Sea areas, the threats of direct military confrontation with the Yemeni resistance will become a reality.



The threats of U.S. military strikes against Yemen are only inflaming tensions throughout West Asia and the Persian Gulf. Major shipping companies transporting goods and oil have suspended their operations in the Red Sea. Insurance corporations are gaging their risks as Yemeni Naval Forces escalate military operations against Israeli interests.

In a report published by [Al Mayadeen](#) it notes that:

“After repeated operations from Yemeni Armed Forces in the Red Sea, the Mediterranean Shipping Company and CMA CGM, announced Saturday (Dec. 16) they were suspending passage through the Red Sea. The declaration by MSC, an Italian-

Swiss conglomerate, and CMA CGM, a French shipping company, follows a similar move by the world's second-largest shipping company, A.P. Moller-Maersk, who announced, on Friday (Dec. 15), **the suspension of all container traffic through the Red Sea until further notice.** This decision comes in response to an attack by the Yemeni Armed Forces on container ships heading to Israeli-occupied Palestine in the Bab al-Mandab Strait. Simultaneously, the Yemeni Armed Forces announced that their Naval forces carried out a military operation against the Maersk Gibraltar cargo ship, which was en route to the Israeli occupation entity."

These shipping firms are essential in the profit-making capabilities of global commerce, particularly in the energy industry. Any effective blockade by the Resistance units operating within the Red Sea and Arabian Sea would be extremely costly for the world capitalist system.

Not only are the substantial risks incurred by shipping and energy interests of concern to the U.S., if Washington was compelled to engage in military strikes in Yemen, it could very well open up other avenues of attacks by the Resistance in various areas along the Red Sea. Even among Axis of Resistance forces in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq, an attack on Yemen could bolster their willingness to confront U.S. and Israeli military units.

In the same above-mentioned article in Al Mayadeen the publication says:

"On Saturday morning, the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) claimed a U.S. missile destroyer in the Red Sea shot down 14 drones fired from Yemen, adding that regional allies had been notified of the incident. In addition, the spokesperson for the Yemeni Armed Forces, Brigadier General Yahya Saree publicly announced that the Yemeni Naval Forces targeted the MSC Alanya and the MSC PALATIUM III with anti-ship missiles, dealing direct hits to the two vessels, on Friday. Two U.S. officials recently stated that the Biden administration has conveyed messages to the Yemeni Armed Forces in Yemen through various channels, cautioning them to cease their operations on ships in the Red Sea and against Israel. The operations in Yemen have posed a threat to Israeli and Israeli-affiliated ships sailing one of the key commercial shipping routes in the region, in solidarity with Palestine."

Therefore, the U.S. is compelled to confront the Yemeni Resistance in an effort to reinforce its status as the facilitator and guardian of trade. The outcome of this expanded phase of the war may prove disastrous for Washington since the worldwide opposition to the war on Gaza has weakened the political posture of the Biden administration.

## **The Palestinian Question and the 2024 U.S. Elections**

On December 18, there was yet another World Day of Action against the Israeli regime and its backers in the White House and Congress. In New York City thousands marched through the streets blocking entrances to businesses and transportation hubs.

After more than two months of the IDF siege on Gaza and the West Bank, within the U.S. and around the world there are mass demonstrations, rallies and other forms of protest directed towards the acquisition of a ceasefire and halting of all military, diplomatic and economic support to the Zionist state. Since the beginning of the Al-Aqsa Flood in early October, the Palestinians have maintained the ideological and psychological advantage over the governments of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Biden.

The Democratic Party president has suffered huge losses in public support in less than one year leading up to the national elections. A recent CNN opinion poll indicated that Biden was facing a 63% disapproval rating among U.S. voters. In a race against Trump, if the elections were held in mid-December, Biden would lose by several percentage points.

Undoubtedly, the disapproval of Biden is fueled by the proxy wars in Ukraine against the Russian Federation and in Palestine. The war against the Palestinians in Gaza has expanded to the West Bank where thousands have been arrested and dozens killed since October 7. On a regional level there are threats of deepening involvement by the U.S. in Iraq, Syria, Yemen and the Red Sea.

Moreover, the U.S. propaganda on the West Asia region is based upon the false notion that the Islamic Republic of Iran is directing the entire Axis of Resistance in its every move. The purpose of making these assertions against Tehran by the Biden administration is aimed at building support among the U.S. electorate for its increasing hostility towards the country.

This approach by the Biden administration will only enhance its disapproval ratings within the U.S. and abroad. In the ever-expanding opposition to Biden's vetoing of ceasefire resolutions at the United Nations Security Council, many more workers, youth and oppressed peoples domestically and internationally will turn against the president.

Consequently, the path to re-election by Biden is becoming narrower each month. The U.S. electorate is being forced to choose between the neo-fascism of former President Donald Trump and the warmongering of the incumbent. What is needed is an alternative political movement geared towards realizing the emancipation of the workers and oppressed while ending the imperialist antagonisms and wars.

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