

# Yemen: Imperialist Engineered Disaster. US Navy Destroyer Says It Was Fired on by Resistance Forces in Yemen

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*Various news agencies internationally reported on October 10 that a Pentagon war vessel was threatened by missiles amid an escalating war of imperialist dominance in the Middle Eastern state of Yemen. This ship was reported to have been deployed in the southern Red Sea.*

Only a week before another ship from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was struck causing extensive damage in a missile attack said to have also come from inland Yemen.

A Destroyer known as the USS Mason was reportedly not struck in the alleged attack according to Navy Capt. Jeff Davis, who serves as a spokesman for the Department of Defense. Pentagon officials contend the incident took place around 7 p.m. as the ship, which originated from Norfolk, Virginia, was claimed to have been in international waters off the coast of Yemen.

The Pentagon quickly sought to blame the supposed incursion against their ship on the Ansurallah movement (also known as the Houthis) which Washington has targeted as the principal enemy in Yemen since the religious group has made gains in taking control of huge areas of territory in the northern, central and southern regions of the country located near the Gulf of Aden. The Supreme Revolutionary Committee, an alliance led by the Ansurallah, has been targeted in air strikes and ground operations since the withdrawal of U.S. diplomatic and military personnel in early 2015.

Davis told the Washington Post that the U.S. assessed “the missiles were launched from Houthi-controlled territory in Yemen. The United States remains committed to ensuring freedom of navigation everywhere in the world, and we will continue to take all necessary steps to ensure the safety of our ships and our service members.”

The war conducted by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) since March 2015, has resulted in the deaths of more than 10,000 Yemenis. Daily aerial bombardments have sought to neutralize and defeat the Ansurallah movement which is accused of being supported politically by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Supporters of the Ansurallah have been largely the Shite-oriented adherents of Islam in Yemen whom have formed an alliance with the former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Military units still loyal to Saleh have fought against a coalition of anti-Houthis forces including the ousted Saudi and U.S.-backed President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, who has been reinforced by Islamist elements alongside special forces from the GCC countries and their allies.

On October 8, Saudi-GCC air forces struck a funeral in the capital of Sanaa killing over 140 people. There were at least two separate bombings according to eyewitnesses at the scene of the attacks. These air strikes follow a pattern since this phase of the war emerged which targets civilians through the bombing of residential areas, schools, health facilities, mosques and internally displaced persons camps.

There has been the deliberate destruction of power stations and water supply lines in a war of desperation to reclaim control of the country by political interests currently allied with Washington, London, Paris, Brussels and Riyadh. Numerous attempts to negotiate a political settlement involving the major organizations and religious groups inside the Middle East's most impoverished state have been sabotaged by the Saudi Monarchy supported by the U.S. State Department.

### **International Outcry Over Funeral Attack**

Even the Wall Street Journal reported on October 10 that "With its military campaign in Yemen under renewed international scrutiny, Saudi Arabia said it 'regretted' a strike on a funeral that killed 142 mourners but stopped short of accepting responsibility for the attack. In a letter from its United Nations mission to the U.N. Security Council on Sunday, the kingdom promised to release the results of an investigation into Saturday's airstrike, which Yemen's Iranian-backed Houthi rebels blamed on the Saudi-led coalition fighting to unseat them."

U.S. State Department top envoy Secretary of State John Kerry was said to have made a telephone call to the Saudi leadership expressing Washington's "grave concern." Perhaps this particular air strike which received widespread press coverage in U.S. media was a potential political embarrassment to the administration of President Barack Obama. Kerry's predecessor, Hillary Clinton, is currently seeking the presidency in a hotly-contested race against New York real estate magnate and right-wing demagogue Donald Trump.

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon also weighed in on the massacre saying "Aerial attacks by the Saudi-led coalition have already caused immense carnage and destroyed much of the country's medical facilities and other vital civilian infrastructure. Bombing people already mourning the loss of loved ones is reprehensible. This latest horrific incident demands a full inquiry. More broadly, there must be accountability for the appalling conduct of this entire war."

This same statement went on to emphasize that "The Secretary-General condemns the attack on an event hall in Sana'a where hundreds of people were gathered for a funeral ceremony. Initial reports indicate that the attack, said to have been airstrikes by the Coalition, killed over 140 people and injured hundreds of others. The Secretary-General expresses his sincere condolences and sympathies to the families of the victims and wishes a speedy recovery to those injured. The Secretary-General notes that any deliberate attack against civilians is utterly unacceptable and calls for a prompt and impartial investigation of this incident. Those responsible for the attack must be brought to justice. The Secretary-General once again reminds all parties to abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law - including the fundamental rules of proportionality, distinction and precaution - to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure against attack."

The Secretary General also noted that he had requested that the UN Human Rights Council establish a team to conduct an independent investigation into the bombings on October 8.

He stated as well that these latest attacks represented a continuation of a disaster that has left 80 percent of the 20 million people in Yemen in need of humanitarian assistance.

### **An Imperialist-engineered Disaster**

Many Yemenis have fled to other parts of the country and abroad to avoid the impact of the conflict. The situation has been the subject of numerous reports issued by the UN Office for Humanitarian Affairs and other relief organizations.

Spokesman for the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Jens Laerke, went as far as to say that the bombing and ground war in Yemen has destroyed the economic fabric of the country. Laerke emphasized that the situation has destroyed basic services moving the economy toward near total collapse. This same office noted that children have been the main casualties in the war. (VOA)

The World Food Program (WFP), a UN agency, reported that it has reduced monthly food rations to the people of Yemen due to the lack of funds. Bettina Luescher, a spokeswoman for the WFP, said that agency needs another \$145 million to complete its work by the end of 2016. (VOA)

Laerke stressed as well that “Even before the violence and the war in Yemen, the malnutrition rates of children in Yemen were the highest in the world. So you have a little bit of a perfect storm coming together there.”

The port city of Hudaydah has suffered tremendous damage making it difficult to import food and other needed supplies. “Before the war, Yemen was over 90 percent dependent on import of basic food items and medicines,” he said. “Eighty percent of those imports come through Hudaydah port. That gives you an indication of the importance of that lifeline.”

“What is particularly urgent in the port is the rehabilitation and the repair of five cranes, which were damaged in an airstrike in August 2015, so they have been partly out of commission for quite some time,” Laerke noted.

“Half of the children are stunted,” Luescher added, “meaning they are too short for their age because of chronic malnutrition. This year, the nutrition cluster estimates that there are 1.5 million [children younger than 5] who are acutely malnourished, of whom 375,000 are suffering from severe acute malnutrition. There are many, many others suffering from moderate malnutrition, indicative of the gravity and severity of the situation.”

### **U.S. War Policy Causes Death and Destruction**

This is a genocidal war being waged with the support of Washington. It is the Obama administration that has authorized the use of American-made warplanes, bombs and other destructive weapons against the Yemeni people.

The Wall Street Journal reported on October 10 that “The U.S., a top Saudi arms supplier, approved a \$1.15 billion sale of tanks and other military equipment to Riyadh in August. Citing Yemen’s high civilian casualty toll, four senators introduced a resolution on the floor of the Senate in September to block the sale, but the measure failed to garner sufficient support in a vote later that month. The U.K. government has approved for the sale of billions of dollars’ worth of British jets, bombs and missiles to the country in recent years.”

Without the diplomatic cover provided by the White House the war waged by the Saudi-GCC coalition could not have been carried out for the last 19 months. The situation in Syria has overshadowed the war in Yemen yet both are a direct result of the failed imperialist policies of the U.S.

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