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# Yemen's Maritime Security Conundrum

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18 May 17

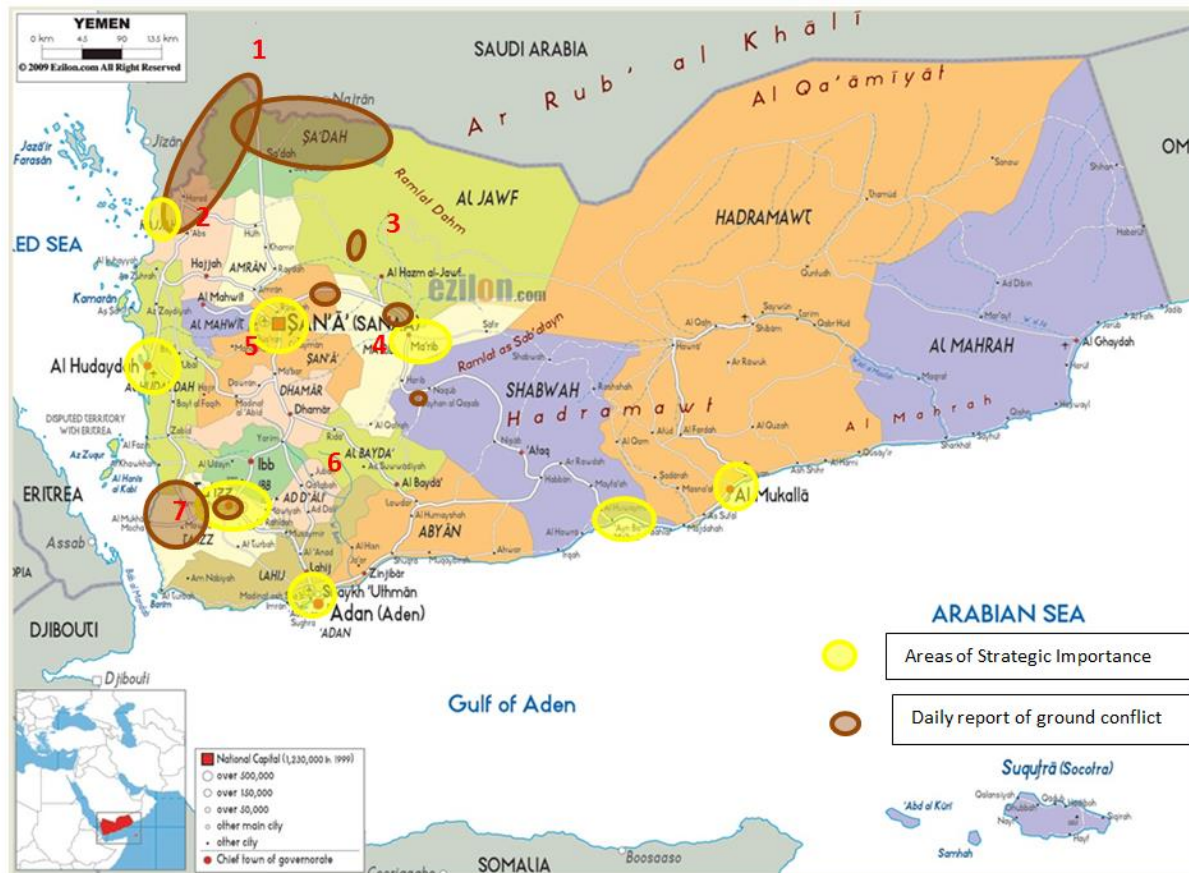
# Scope

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# Political

- > Sep 14 – Houthi/Saleh supporters take over Sana'a
- > Conflict began 26 Mar 15 to restore legitimate Government of Yemen



# Humanitarian

- > 90% of Yemen's food and fuel needs are supplied by commercial shipping
- > Any break in the pipeline risks the outbreak of country-wide famine
- > 18.8 million people going hungry, 3 million severely malnourished
- > Hodeidah especially vulnerable; 80% of Yemen's food and fuel needs come through Hodeidah
- > An alternative – Hodeidah independently managed?? Possible CBM, or overland cross-border routes from Saudi Arabia, or ship through Aden
- > UN Pledging Conference raised \$1.1 bn of \$2.1 bn target – UK pledged £139m (\$180m)

# The Role of UNVIM

- > Since May 16, UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism provides a structure and process for commercial ships to gain access to Red Sea ports
- > Problems experienced with incorrect manifests
- > EHOOC and UNVIM working to draw up a common, definitive list of banned items
- > Funding now an issue
- > Deployed monitors to ports would make a difference

# A Growing Pattern of Maritime Misbehaviour

- > 1 Oct 16 - Missile attack, reportedly fired from land by the Houthis on the MV Swift, a UAE chartered catamaran vessel, ostensibly conducting transportation of Humanitarian Aid.
- > 3 Oct - US immediately commits three warships to operate in the Red Sea and BAM area to contribute to the freedom of navigation and safe passage of commercial shipping through international shipping lanes.
- > 9 -12 Oct - Missiles launched against US Warships on separate occasions over the period. Counter-measures taken
- > 13 Oct - US becomes **directly** involved in the conflict for the first time militarily, effectively becoming an active combatant. Launches retaliatory cruise missile attack against coastal radar station.
- > 30 Jan 17 – Water-borne IED (WBIED) attack on the RSNF HMS MEDINAH adds a further dimension to Houthi capability causing significant damage, killing two RSNF personnel and injuring three.
- > 9 Mar - Yemen Coast Guard Vessel Sana'a sunk after making contact with a mine - two crew members killed.
- > 25 Apr - Houthi WBIED exploded at the entrance to Jizan harbour (KSA) after being engaged by Saudi Border Guards.
- > 8 May – Saudi forces report presence of mines off Maydi.

# So What?

- > Maritime insecurity and criminality through the Red Sea ports is driving SLC desire to take control of these ports
- > Houthi maritime capability appears to be diversifying
- > But.....
- > Direct action could limit maritime access and impact commercial confidence if not completed quickly, and followed by rapid investment
- > Major humanitarian issues to consider. Houthi miscalculation can have devastating effects
- > Key is to find a way to increase the ease of commercial and humanitarian access whilst ensuring a robust maritime security and enhanced inspection regime

# A Possible Solution?

- > Maritime insecurity is not a new phenomenon in Yemen; especially smuggling
- > Requires an enhanced international response
- > Perhaps through enhanced international policing and inspections



# Summary

- > Building and maintaining commercial confidence remains key to feeding Yemen
- > Balancing the requirements for Maritime Security v ensuring Commercial/ Humanitarian access remains challenging

Any Questions?