The Houthi Strike on Ben-Gurion: A Joint U.S.-Israel Imperative to Confront Iran’s Proxy War

written by Arsen Ostrovsky | 04.05.2025

Earlier this morning, a ballistic missile launched by Yemen’s Iran-backed Houthi terror group struck near Israel’s Ben-Gurion International Airport, injuring several people and causing significant disruptions to air traffic.This brazen attack on Israel’s primary international gateway underscores the growing danger of Iran’s proxy war against the West, and reinforces the urgent need for a strategic shift, from reactive restraint to overwhelming deterrence against the Houthis.Since the October 7th attacks by Hamas, the Houthis have escalated their attacks on Israel, ostensibly in solidarity with Palestinians, however undeniably as one of the proxy groups at the behest of the Iranian regime.Most Houthi strikes to date, armed by advanced Iranian technology, including ballistic missiles and drones capable of striking over 2,000 miles away, have been intercepted by Israel’s arrow missile defense system and the U.S.-deployed THAAD, however, today’s missile managed to circumvent the defenses.The attack on Ben-Gurion Airport – Israel’s primary international gateway – was a calculated attack, that represents a grave national security threat to the Jewish state. It is also a clear Crime of Aggression, pursuant to both the UN Charter and Rome Statute, and a War Crime under the Laws of Armed Conflict and Geneva Conventions, given that a civilian airport with no military utility was deliberately targeted.No nation—not Israel, the United States, or any other—can accept a slow drip of ballistic missile attacks against its civilians and vital infrastructure.Thus far, Israel’s response to Houthi attacks, has been relatively restrained, with some exceptions, deferring largely to Washington’s strategic prioritization of the situations in Gaza and Lebanon, allowing the United States to lead the charge against Houthi aggression from the U.S. Central Command.However, today’s attack, which exposed some vulnerabilities in Israel’s air defenses, demands an urgent reassessment. Israel should launch targeted strikes on Houthi leadership, missile sites, command centers, and supply lines in Yemen, prioritizing the destruction of their Iranian-supplied weaponry. Such operations, while logistically complex, are within the Israel Defense Forces’ reach, as demonstrated by

previous long-range strikes on Houthi targets in December 2024. The IDF must also bolster its multilayered defense systems, addressing gaps revealed by the failure to intercept today's missile. Iran's export of advanced weapons to non-state actors like the Houthis is not a localized problem—it is part of a region-wide strategy to undermine sovereign nations and destabilize the Middle East.The United States, under President Donald Trump and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, also has a critical stake in this fight—not only as Israel's closest ally, but because America's own security, economic and maritime interests, and global credibility, are directly threatened by Iran's expanding proxy network.

Since mid-March, the U.S. military has conducted over

1,000 precision strikes on Houthi targets, primarily aimed at protecting Red Sea maritime traffic, which has declined by 90% since late 2023 due to Houthi interference. President Trump's March 15 announcement

of "decisive and powerful" military action and "overwhelming lethal force", along with his warning to Iran to cease support for the Houthis, signaled a robust posture, however, it may be time to reassess that, and up the ante, given it appears the message has not been received in Yemen, or Tehran.

Ultimately, whether it's rocket fire from Hamas, missiles from Hezbollah, or drones from the Houthis, make no mistake: the common thread that weaves all this together, is the Iranian regime pulling the terror strings from Tehran.

In a subsequent March 17th statement, President Trump was unequivocal, when he stated: "Let nobody be fooled! The hundreds of attacks being made by Houthis … all emanate from, and are created by, IRAN" and that "every shot fired by the Houthis will be looked upon, from this point forward, as being a shot fired from the weapons and leadership of IRAN, and IRAN will be held responsible."

Going forward, Washington, in close collaboration with Israel, and other regional allies, should intensify its strikes, particularly targeting Houthi leadership and the Iranian logistical supply chains that enable their missile program.In the meantime, the United States should recalibrate its diplomatic approach to Iran, making clear that continued support for proxy attacks—like those by the Houthis—will carry real consequences. As President Trump warned on March 17, any further Houthi aggression will be viewed as an attack orchestrated by Iran itself, warranting direct and decisive response. The international community must

stop pretending that the Houthis are a localized Yemeni movement. They are an expeditionary arm of the Islamic Republic’s war machine.Ultimately, without confronting Iran’s role, any response to the Houthis will be incomplete. Today’s strike on Ben-Gurion Airport is a wake-up call not just for Israel, but for the entire international community.The time for half-measures is over. Israel must act decisively to eliminate the threat, and the United States must continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with its ally in this mission.This article was written with **John Spencer**, executive director of the Urban Warfare Institute.Posted on Twitter on May 4, 2025