

Designation of the Houthis as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO)

Administration Policy:

President Trump issued an Executive Order (EO) [designating](#) Ansar Allah, or the Houthis, as a Foreign Terrorist Organization within 30 days. The EO also requires that the Secretary of State and Administrator of USAID jointly conduct a review of the United Nations partners, nongovernmental organizations, and contractors through which USAID works in Yemen who may have made payments to the Houthis – and terminate these programs.

It would also make it the policy of the United States to cooperate with its regional partners to eliminate the Houthis' capabilities and operations, deprive it of resources, and thereby end its attacks on U.S. personnel and civilians, U.S. partners and allies, and maritime shipping in the Red Sea.

Background:

- The Houthis are an Iran-backed militia in Yemen founded in 1994 and led by Abdul Malik Houthi. They have engaged in a decades-long insurgency against the Yemeni government.
 - Since 2014, Houthis have taken control over vast parts of Yemen including the capital Sanaa.
 - In 2015, Saudi Arabia led a military intervention against the Houthis who have launched numerous direct ballistic missile and drone attacks against Saudi Arabia.
- [The Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996](#) created the Foreign Terrorist Organization list which makes it a federal crime to provide material support to such organizations.
- The Specially Designated Global Terrorists list is a Treasury Department [sanctions list](#) which prohibits significant transactions with the groups on that list.
- President Trump designated the Houthis as an FTO and as Specially Designated Global Terrorists in January 2021, both designations were quickly reversed by former President Biden in February 2021.
 - As a result of President Biden's weak policies, the Houthis have fired at U.S. Navy warships dozens of times, launched numerous attacks on civilian infrastructure in partner nations, and attacked commercial vessels transiting Bab al-Mandeb more than 100 times, a strait through which [12% of global trade flows](#), including 30% of global container traffic.
 - The Houthis have launched numerous missile and drone attacks against Israel following the October 7, 2023 assault on Israel by Hamas.