

Iran's Influence In Yemen after Soleimani .. The Houthis between containment and retaliation for the general



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focuses on politics, intellect, democracy, election, political parties, terrorism, freedoms as well as economic and social issues.

Introduction

With the beginning of a new decade, the body of Iranian Major General Qassem Soleimani has joined bodies of hundreds of people who were killed due to his activities to extend the Iranian influence in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen and, before that, in Lebanon. The leader of Quds Force, which is part of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, is considered to be the mastermind of the Iranian strategy to extend its influence in Middle East through establishing armed sectarian militias that had controlled some Arab capitals and caused open violent wars.

Qassem Soleimani, 62 years, was killed in U.S. raids on Friday, January 3, 2020, along with vice president of the Iraqi Popular Mobilization militias Abu Mahdi al-Mohandis. Soleimani is the supreme Iranian official that U.S. killed since the Iranian revolution in 1979. He was more than just a man who leads an Iranian military force. He was the second man after the supreme guide in Iran. He was a legend for decades until he became one of the symbols of Iranian regime, internally and internationally. Soleimani started his military life when he joined the Revolutionary Guards in 1980 and his participation in the Iranian-Iraqi war (1980-1988). He was appointed as the leader of Quds Force in 1997. He named by the Iranian Supreme Guide Ali Khamenei as "the alive martyr".

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The body of Iranian General Qassem Soleimani has joined hundreds of thousands of corpses he left behind him due to his activities to expand his country's influence.

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The Quds Force is the most prominent and confidentiality unit in the Iranian military and in the Iranian Republican Guard Corps. During the past two decades, Quds Force could arm Hezbollah in Lebanon, Shiite militias in Iraq and Syria, the Houthis in Yemen, and fighters in Pusnia and Afghanistan. So Soleimani could make "external influence" for Iran in the region under the principle of exporting the Iranian revolution abroad and his ability to maneuver traditional military forces made Quds Force as an independent authority whose mission is to extend "the supreme values of the revolution to all over the Middle East." ¹

For Iran and its allies, the killing of "Soleimani" was a major act of war. They believe that the United States had overturned an agreement with "Soleimani" not to exchange unannounced attacks against each other during the joint campaign against the Islamic State (ISIS) in Syria and Iraq. While the Americans believe that the killing of a senior military leader in Iraq and the storming of the US Embassy in Baghdad had showed that the main enemy now is "Qassem Soleimani".

The decision to kill "Qassem Soleimani" remained pending during previous US administrations over the past 12 years, during the administrations of George W Bush and Barack Obama, but Donald Trump decided to break it by carrying out the attack. The killing of Soleimani also makes Washington in direct confrontation with the Revolutionary Guards - which the United States ranked on terrorist list in 2019. It is a force of half a million soldiers and is described as the most powerful military force the United States might face since confronting the Chinese People's Voluntary Army in Korea more than 60 years ago. ²

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The Revolutionary Guard Corps are described as the largest military force that America may face since confrontations with the Chinese People's Army, 60 years ago
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Therefore, the killing of Qassem Soleimani, is a major turning point in the Iranian-American relations, certainly reflects on the security of the Gulf and the region, particularly in Yemen as it is a field of regional conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

Iran's regional networks:

The killing of "Soleimani" is a loss for Iran. It is difficult to compensate the man with his prestige and capabilities, and it is difficult to make a new "legend" for the Iranians and the world. Tehran has already been shocked with the dramatic jump by the administration of US President Donald Trump in the ladder of the policy of "maximum pressure" on Iran, which began with the US withdrawal from the nuclear agreement in 2018, and then the US economic sanctions against Iran, the most dangerous of which is the US attempt to make the Iranian oil exports zero,

a policy that Iran faces with the policy of "the edge of the abyss". The two policies may lead to confrontation or an unexpected war in the region.

After the killing of Soleimani, Iran is expected to double its influence in Iraq, Lebanon, Syria and Yemen, and considers this as a strengthening of its front lines in the face of an attempt, led by the United States, to encircle it with the help of Israel and Saudi Arabia.³

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Through General Soleimani, Iran has worked for decades to build a network of relationships with the Syrian government and armed groups in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and Yemen, many of them are in the range of confront lines with US allies, and in the vicinity of US forces units that are deployed in Syria and Iraq, and near the Bab al-Mandab Strait (Red Sea - Gulf of Aden) and Strait of Hormuz (Arabian Gulf). Therefore, the spread of this network means that Iran can rely on its field allies to strike strategic interests in the region while denying responsibility.



Iran has previously given examples of how it could respond. After the Trump administration withdrew from the nuclear agreement that Iran signed with the United States and other global powers in 2015, the Revolutionary Guard and its allies moved from limited attacks on oil tankers in the Gulf to specific attacks by missiles and airplanes targeting the global oil giant Aramco in Saudi Arabia, the Houthis claimed responsibility for most of these attacks, despite assurances that the Houthis could not carry out these strikes without Iran's support.

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The Revolutionary Guards and its self-employed allies have moved from limited attacks on oil tankers in the Gulf to qualitative attacks with missiles and drones targeting the global oil giant, Aramco, in Saudi Arabia
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Therefore, it is noted that Washington's regional allies expect the next step by Iran, by strengthening their defenses, away from Trump's decision to kill General Soleimani and even quietly communicating with Iran directly to try to avoid the conflict. On the day following the killing of Soleimani, Qatari Foreign Minister in headed to Tehran as Washington has an advanced military base in Doha. Kuwait also denied that the plane that targeted "Soleimani" was launched from American bases in Kuwait. But the situation is particularly sensitive for a country like Saudi Arabia as well as the United Arab Emirates, which are located directly on the opposite side of Iran in the Persian Gulf and have close relations with the United States, which makes the oil and commercial infrastructure of the two countries an expected target of Iranian attacks.

Before the killing of Soleimani, the Houthis announced an escalation against Saudi Arabia and the UAE by targeting vital facilities.

The killing of "Soleimani" may be considered more important than - or at least paralleling to - the killing of Osama bin Laden (leader of al-Qaeda) a decade ago - or Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (the leader of the Islamic State "ISIS") in October 2019, not because Soleimani could spark yet another war in the Middle East, as many have warned, nor because Iran cannot do anything without him,⁴ but because his death comes at a time when the Iranian hegemony project faces unprecedented challenges in Iraq and Lebanon through popular protests, while the project in Syria is still in a state of instability, especially with the Russian influence over the regime of Bashar al-Assad

, and the project in Yemen is in a phase of exhaustion and confusion as Saudi Arabia tries to persuade leaders within the Houthi group to reconsider their alliance with Iran.⁵

Despite all challenges that the Iranian regime faces in the region, another challenge can be added, which is the rooted hostility with the United States of America that is constantly increasing. So the Americans do not rule out the possibility of attacks by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard through affiliated militias in several countries.

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This keeps the world in a state of tension.

The response to the assassination of "Soleimani" may be within the activity of what is known as the axis of resistance, led by Iran (Hezbollah in Lebanon - the militia of the popular mobilization in Iraq - the Houthi group in Yemen and the Assad regime and other militias in Syria) and all of these parties were directly linked to the Iranian general, Qassem Soleimani.

Multiple-Retaliation:

It is believed that the United States and Iran may not want to go to an escalation in the region, and that Washington is seeking to amend the nuclear agreement that President Trump canceled, while Tehran believes that the killing of Soleimani exceeded the expected pressure to targeting the head of the Iranian regime, and therefore the urgent Iranian military response was to hit two bases in Iraq where US forces exist.

But if we assume an escalation from the United States against Iran,⁶ the response will be multi-pronged:

Iraq: For various reasons, the response there may be double, military and political. As far as targeting the US bases with missiles, there will be political and popular pressure from the Shiite factions to demand the departure of the US forces from Iraq.

Iran has benefited greatly from the killing of deputy head of the Iraqi Popular Mobilization militia, "Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis," with General Qassem Soleimani. It also took advantage of the slogan "violating sovereignty" because the strike took place on Iraqi soil, and therefore Iraqi militias that are close to Iran launched an incitement and mobilization campaign against the United States in a way that might push some of Iran's loyalists to carry out retaliatory attacks.

Such scenarios could make the US presence in Iraq unsustainable, and may target foreign military bases present on its soil. The Shiite militias that joined the popular crowd - which was supervised by Soleimani - launched attacks on Americans regularly until recently.

Ayatollah Ali Sistani, the most respected cleric in the Iraqi Shiite community, condemned Washington for doing what he called "blatant aggression," but at the same time he called for restraint. This culminated in a decision by the Iraqi Parliament calling on American forces to leave the country. Trump refused to go out and asked the Iraqi authorities to pay losses in building the military bases.

On (January 8, 2020) Iran launched attacks on the Ein al-Assad bases in Anbar and another base in Erbil, with more than 16 ballistic missiles, which pushed the region to tension ^{7*8} .

Iran said it was a first step to avenge the killing of Soleimani. No American forces casualties were reported and Trump preferred to increase pressure through economic sanctions rather than military response.⁹

In its escalation during the first hours of the attack, the Revolutionary Guard said in a speech that the "second step" to avenge the killing of Soleimani would include the axis of resistance that includes Iranian militias in the region.¹⁰

Lebanon: Hezbollah militias may begin targeting multiple Israeli targets. Information already indicates that Hezbollah has begun moves for revenge after the killing of Soleimani and the Iranian response to the attack on "Ein al-Assad."¹¹ In his speech, Hassan Nasrallah had vowed to avenge the killing of Soleimani. In addition to the US targets inside and outside Lebanon, Hezbollah has influence in Latin America due to trade of arms and drugs.



Syria: It is difficult for the Shiite militias in Syria to target the American presence, as it is expected that Iran will adhere to the containment policy that aims to prevent Russia and Turkey from conquering the provinces under its control in Syria, but in case confrontations occur between Washington and Tehran, the US military bases may be damaged and Israel will get the opportunity to deliver specific strikes on Iranian militia camps as it did before.

Link to the Quds Force: Qassem Soleimani, and the regime in Iran, has often been talking about confronting the United States, clearly referring to the Bab al-Mandab Strait, the Red Sea, and oil installations in the Gulf. There is no reliable information from open sources that determine when relationship between the Houthis, and the "Quds Force" and Qassem Soleimani began, but the relationship may have been deepened after 2015, when the Saudi-led coalition began military operations in support to the internationally recognized government.

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When talking about confrontations with America, commander of Quds Force, Soleimani, used to refer to the Strait of Bab al-Mandab, the Red Sea and oil installations in the Gulf. He believes that winning a war in Yemen without costs helps determine the balance of power

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It is expected that Iran will find the right place in Yemen to respond, as the country lives in a state of war, and the files of its militias in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon are open due to the demonstrations that topple the political regimes that Iran have hold their decisions for decades, as Iran is believed to use the Soleimani's killing to suppress the demonstrations and consider them as acts that obstruct actions against the Americans. The same thing is related to confronting the expansion of demonstrations in Iran that have reached more than 100 Iranian regions in recent months. It is expected that the regime will use the killing of "Soleimani" to accuse the demonstrators of being agents for the United States of America.¹² Information indicates that Qassem Soleimani played a prominent role in developing ties between the two parties and bringing them to the top of cooperation. Qassem Soleimani used to meet with Houthi leaders abroad.¹³

Moreover, the Quds Force has confessed more than once the training of Houthis in Iran. Information confirms that "Soleimani" was on the top of a special Iranian committee that delivered its report to the UN Committee of Experts on Yemen about the status of the Houthi group and how to assist them. This committee was different from the Committee of Support to Yemeni People, which the Iranian regime announced for collecting donations to the Yemeni people after the Arab coalition had launched operations against the Houthis.¹⁴



Since 2015, Soleimani has met regularly with senior Revolutionary Guards officials in Tehran to discuss ways to "empower" the Houthis. Soleimani usually emphasized the necessity of "increasing the volume of aid through training, weapons and financial support."¹⁵ Soleimani believes that Yemen is the real war that Iran is fighting without exorbitant costs, and that winning the battle in Yemen will help determine the balance of power in the Middle East.¹⁶ Soleimani said in May 2016 that the results of war in Yemen "have enshrined and demonstrated the ability of the Houthi group in a way that cannot be ignored."¹⁷

The Quds Force smuggled Iranian weapons into Yemen, and reinstalled them inside the country, in addition to training Houthi fighters inside Iranian territory.¹⁸ A specialized unit, called Unit (190), in the Quds Force undertakes the mission of smuggling weapons to the Houthis under direct supervision

of Qassem Soleimani and his deputy, Ismail Qa'any, who currently succeeded Soleimani in commanding the Quds Force.¹⁹ Soleimani represents the spiritual leadership of the Shiite militias in the Middle East, so his death affects the psyche of the Houthi group leadership, which may be motivated to take revenge. This indicates that the Houthis put pictures of Qassem Soleimani with some captions on their guns. Hassan Nasrallah, the Secretary-General of the Lebanese Hezbollah, confirmed relationship between the Houthis and "Soleimani" by saying: "Yemen knows Qassem Soleimani," in reference to his support for the Houthi group to carry out revenge.

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The mission of Unit (190) in the Quds Force is to smuggle weapons to the Houthis under direct supervision from Qassem Soleimani and his successor, Ismail Qa'any
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The most prominent indication of the "Quds Force" relationship with the Houthis is the presence of the Yemeni arm of "Qassem Soleimani" in Sana'a - according to the US State Department's statement, in addition to the announcement of the killing of another leader.

Colonel Abd al-Ridha Shahlai is considered to be the right arm of "Soleimani." Washington announced his presence in Yemen in December 2019,²⁰ and accused him of being responsible for transferring weapons and ammunition to the Houthis, assisting them in planning military operations

and contributing to developing the Houthi combat capabilities. The US State Department said that Shahlai was born in 1957. He uses several names, including: Abd al-Rida Shahlai, Haji Yusef and Hajj Yasir. Washington offered an award of \$ 15 million for any information lead to him, and several attempts to assassinate him have failed.

There is no detailed information about the 38-year-old Mustafa Muhammad Mirzai. Iranian media says that he lives in a country affiliated with the "Axis of Resistance" without identifying the country.²¹

However, "Mirzai" was killed in the outskirts of the capital, Sana'a, on Thursday, January 2, 2020, in an air strike by the Saudi-led coalition.²²

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Washington announced the presence of Shahlai, the right arm of Soleimani, in Yemen, while the leader in the Revolutionary Guards, Mirzaei, was killed in Sana'a

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On January 9, the commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards' Air Force "Amir Ali Haji Zadah" appeared at a press conference and behind him were the flags of Iran's militias, including the flag of the so-called (Ansarullah) Houthis.²³

Dismantling the strategic alliance

During 2019, the United States attempted to break the Houthi alliance with Iran, after the Houthis completely adopted the rhetoric of the so-called "the axis of resistance" and its principles. The Houthis would not have referred to this relationship - which also appeared in the reaction to Soleimani's death - if the size of relationship and coordination and military aid was not encouraging to speak out about this relationship.²⁴

Following the strikes that targeted Aramco in September 2019-²⁵

which led to the halting of half of Saudi oil exports temporarily and caused a reduction in the value of Aramco in the market, the Houthis' claim that they were behind the attack, despite the fact that Saudi, Western and American accusations confirm that Iran is behind that attack.

Washington tried to lure the Houthis and push them out of the Iranian axis. The US special envoy to Iran, Brian Hook, said that "the Houthis are not affiliated with Tehran"²⁶ in a qualitative shift from previous statements in which Hook considered the Houthis "the group acting on behalf of Iran." He also described the Iranian / Houthi relationship as a "strategic alliance".



These statements were evidence of progress in consultations between the Houthis and Saudi officials in the Omani capital, Muscat, as the Saudis seek to accelerate efforts to end their military intervention in Yemen. But those consultations were ultimately obstructed²⁷ when the Houthis stopped an unilateral truce they had announced after the September 2019 attacks on Aramco, announcing the resumption of bombing Saudi with ballistic missiles and drones in December 2019.²⁸ But the Iranians responded quickly

by recognizing the group's authority over Sana'a as a legitimate authority, accepting the appointment of an ambassador in the name of Yemen in Tehran.²⁹ The Supreme leader Ali Khamenei also met a Houthi delegation, in a large symbolism of the group as Khamenei rarely met with officials of his tools in the region.³⁰ The Iranian Foreign Ministry has coordinated meetings between the Houthis and ambassadors of Western countries.³¹ The failure of the Saudi / Houthi consultations may be an incentive for Iran to push the Houthis to bomb Saudi Arabia and the UAE.



Houthi reactions to the killing of Soleimani

The statements of the Houthi leaders indicate that the group is angry at the death of Qassem Soleimani and that it will seek revenge, and the most prominent manifestation of the Houthi response is the following:

- Thousands of the group's supporters demonstrated in Sana'a and neighboring Dhamar, and the governorates of Hajjah and Saada (north), and Hodeidah (west), denouncing the killing of "Qassem Soleimani" and "Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis" and vowing "full revenge" and "expelling American forces from the region."³²



- The pictures of "Qassem Soleimani" and "Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis" spread throughout the Yemeni capital, Sana'a, with phrases calling for revenge.³³
- The Houthi-affiliated media repeatedly broadcast a call by "Zainab Qassem Soleimani" for the Houthi group's leader, Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, to avenge her father.
- On social media, the Houthis appear to be extremely angry at Soleimani's killing, calling on Iran to coordinate with their group for revenge.



• After Iran bombed the American bases in Iraq, Abdul-Malik al-Houthi said: The Iranian strike against the American military bases is a great start to uproot the American hegemony in the region. He vowed to respond, if Iran was targeted.³⁴

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Al-Houthi: The Iranian strike against American military bases is a great start to uproot American hegemony in the region, and Qa'any: The Houthis are qualified to target America and Israel.
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• In a message of condolence, Abdul-Malik al-Houthi said: "The direct assault was from the biggest arrogant American Satan, who initiated the aggression under the auspices of senior leadership.

The blood of those who were killed in the battle of independence, confronting arrogance, confronting the American and Israeli enemy, will not go in vain."³⁵

• Mohamed Ali al-Houthi: "This assassination is condemned, and the quick and direct response in the spreading bases is the option and solution."

Later, Mohamed Ali al-Houthi added: «Iran, with what it possesses, is not unable to respond, but the delay in responding is not in its favor."³⁶

Post-General strategy

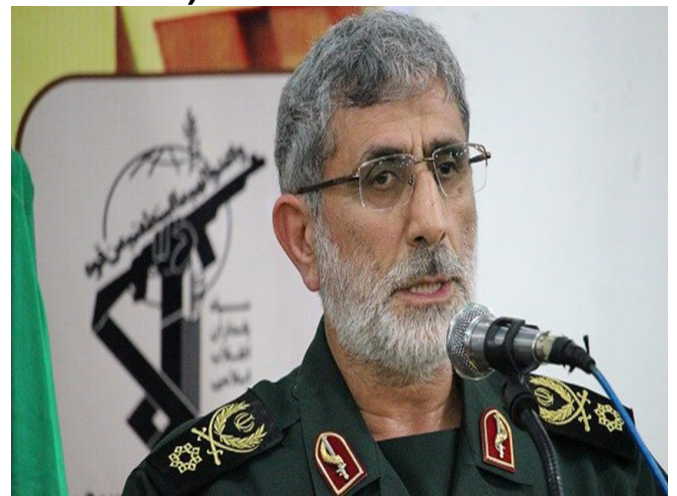
It seems that the Houthi relationship with Tehran has become solid and gone beyond a relationship that can be affected by Soleimani's death. Rather, it is a strategy that made the group exploits the incident to root the internal integration while Iran took advantage of this by measuring the group's loyalty to it.

The strategy of the Houthis after the killing of Soleimani can be summarized in two directions. The first is internal, the reordering of priorities, and the second is external, the commitment to see the Soleimani successor at the head of the Quds Force.

Before the killing of Soleimani, there were some imbalances in the Houthi group, after which some of the group's field leaders were cleansed,³⁷ and accusations were made within the movement against leaders who prefer understanding with Saudi Arabia of having secret contacts with the "enemy", and the group believes that the accident is an opportunity to re-order priorities.

Iranian support for the Houthis appears to be unaffected too. Iran has been preparing for the killing of Soleimani for a long time. Also, "Soleimani" is a man who implements the plans of the leaders of the Iranian regime, so support and coordination will continue to increase, even though "Soleimani",

as a military commander had better capabilities to communicate with others than other Iranian leaders. The successor of Soleimani in the leadership of the Quds Force is Brigadier Ismail Qa'any, who turned his attention to Yemen through his previous position as deputy of "Soleimani", especially after 2015. He has good relationship with the Supreme Guide in Iran. Qa'any had shared with Soleimani the affairs of some countries. Soleimani was in-charge for the affairs of the Middle East and North Africa, while Qa'any was in-charge of Afghanistan and Central Asia (according to Western and Iranian sources).



However, the statements from "Qa'any" - a very hardliner man - emerged in support of the Houthis and asserting their relations with Iran:

- On May 23, 2015, Qa'any said: "Those who are defending Yemen have been trained by the Islamic Republic,"³⁸ stressing that the growing Houthi power comes "because of the Iranian revolution."

- He was the first one to announce that the Houthis possessed a precision-guided missile system with a range of 500 km.³⁹ He also spoke repeatedly that the Houthis were «qualified» to target the United States of America and the "Israeli occupation".⁴⁰ He also spoke about the presence of anti-tank Cornnet missiles in hands of the Houthis, which he said can proudly destroy the US tanks.⁴¹ This type of missiles was not previously exist in the Yemeni army arsenal or the Houthi arsenal.

The mission of revenge:

Iran could push the Houthi rebels in Yemen to launch revenge attacks against the American allies. The Houthis confirmed, after the killing of "Soleimani", that they are within the "axis of resistance" of Iran, and that they are getting more coherent and powerful than before.⁴² The Houthis have a strong arsenal of drones, in addition to ballistic and cruise missiles, and they have used them to launch attacks in Yemen and Saudi Arabia and waters around Yemen such as the Red Sea and the Strait of Bab al-Mandab. Iran and leaders of the Quds Force are accused of operating the Houthi missiles that were launched against Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Therefore, the Revolutionary Guard leaders will implement the goals set by their country in coordination with the Houthi group, or even without coordination.

The potential targets include, but are not limited to, airports, critical infrastructure, energy infrastructure, military targets, and ships crossing the Red Sea. The Houthis had already started escalation against Saudi Arabia and the UAE before the killing of "Soleimani" by announcing a new list of targets, "nine very important targets, including six in Saudi Arabia and three in the UAE."⁴³

In general, Saudi Arabia expects to receive attacks from the Houthis, as the Saudi newspaper Al-Sharq Al-Awsat published news about the kingdom's coordination with "friendly" countries to confront any attacks by the Houthis. The newspaper says: "Information indicates that the strategy includes "willingness to direct painful military operations and strikes for militia leaders to pay the price of their attacks so that the focus

is on targeting the leaders who are obstructing the political solution and their headquarters and interests in Yemen." This developed strategy is based on "assuming the possibility that the Houthi militia will do what Tehran dictates to push Yemen and its people into a battle that Yemenis have nothing to do with it."⁴⁴

Prince Khalid bin Salman, the Saudi Deputy Minister of Defense (responsible for the Yemen file and the leader of negotiating with the Houthis), went to Washington after the killing of Qassem Soleimani to discuss tension in the region. He met with "Trump" and officials in the US Department of Defense.⁴⁵



The Houthis have intensified their attacks on the Arab Coalition forces in the west coast of the country, led by Tariq Saleh, the nephew of former Yemeni President Ali Saleh, who effectively controls most of the western coast with support from the UAE in addition to most of the islands near the Bab al-Mandab strait. If the Houthis want to reach the Bab al-Mandab easily and close it, they will need to reach it by defeating or infiltrating "Tariq Saleh" forces or by controlling the islands nearby the strait. The Houthis possess smart sea missiles supplied to them by Iran,⁴⁷ in addition to the technology of booby-trapped boats, which can threaten navigation traffic in the Red Sea, as the Houthis control a large coastal strip. The Houthis had previously targeted American warships and military and commercial ships in the Red Sea between 2016 and 2019.

Through information obtained by the Abaad Center, the Houthis are seeking to return to Aden and control the al-Anad air base and use it to counter a possible American presence in Aden to control the Bab al-Mandab Strait. The Iranian media have indicated that the United States is sending US soldiers to protect the strait from possible Houthi attacks in retaliation for "Soleimani".⁴⁶

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The Houthis are seeking to return to Aden and control the Bab al-Mandab in preparation for any possible confrontation between Iran and America, and the General, before his death, supervised smuggling an air defense system
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Before the killing of Soleimani, the Abaad Center obtained information that the Iranian General has already supervised the last operations of smuggling an air defense system to the Houthi armed group,⁴⁸ which enables them to hit the coalition's warplanes. Information says that this system was smuggled as multiple pieces that were transported for a long time by sea to Yemen. It is believed that this system is capable of hitting warplanes at a high altitude. The name of this system is not known, but information indicates that pieces of the missiles were seized on the Iranian ship that the United States confiscated in the Arabian Sea early in December 2019.⁴⁹

Houthi role scenarios:

The Houthi group's vision of retaliation for the killing of Quds Force commander Qassem Soleimani, or not, depends on the new vision of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and on Tehran's understandings with Washington, especially with the failure to dismantle the Houthi alliance with Iran. The following can be expected:

The first scenario: reducing escalation, the return of dialogue between Iran and America and giving an opportunity for discussions on amending the agreement of the Iranian nuclear program. This means that the September 2019 experience of both the Houthis and Saudi Arabia will be repeated as long as the Emirati-Iranian contact continues.

Saudi Arabia may go to quick consultations with the Houthis to secure itself from the Houthi attacks at a request from Iran. The United States and the UAE exert great pressure on Riyadh to accept any agreement with the Houthis in order to ease the escalation in the region. In a repeat of the September 2019 model, when the Houthis adopted an attack on Saudi Aramco oil facilities, in which Iran was accused, the kingdom rushed to consultations with the Houthis in Muscat.

The second scenario: the military escalation between Iran and the United States, and this is reflected in the whole region, which means that the Houthis will carry out the task entrusted to them to take revenge within the axis of Iran, including targeting international trade corridors, closing the Bab al-Mandab Strait, attacking nearby American military bases, and hitting oil and energy installations in the Gulf states,



and striking infrastructure, civil and economic installations, including UAE and Saudi airports and ports.

If tensions persist between the two countries with the success of international containment efforts and preventing further escalation, Iran will seek to find a permanent foothold for the Houthis in the coming Yemeni authorities in the country, through European, Russian and Chinese partners to defuse the outbreak of a proxy war. Saudi Arabia may rely on American support to confront Iran's agents in the region, but this support will not be guaranteed, especially after the United States retracted from considering the Houthis as Iranian agents.

Summary:

The operation of General Qassem Soleimani, commander of the Quds Force, revealed that the militias affiliated with Iran in the region, including the Houthi group, are committed to the strategy of the Supreme leader of the Iranian Islamic Revolution, and are ready to carry out retaliatory attacks, and it is difficult to dismantle them or separate them from the Iran's interests and influence because the supervision, financing, controlling, and the ideological and military construction of the Houthi group are closely related to the general structure of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, which means that Iran's influence in Yemen will remain and expand as long as the Houthi group remains prevailing and powerful. It seems that stability in the Middle East, not only in Yemen, is subject to Iran's choices and its militias, either chaos, if they choose war, or stability, if they choose peace.

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Iran's influence in Yemen is still and it expands as the Houthi group remains dominant and powerful, and post-Soleimani scenarios oscillate between reducing escalation and confrontation, and the Houthis seem to be ready for the task of revenge.

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¹ Khomeini's Warriors: Foundation of Iran's Regime, Its Guardians, Allies around the World, War Analysis, and Strategies by Mehran Riazaty(2016)

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Khomeinis-Warriors-Foundation-Guardians-Strategies/dp/1514470330>

² Qassem Suleimani's death threatens to open grisly new chapter in Middle East

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/jan/03/qassem-suleimani-iran-death-middle-east-us-trump>

³ Iranian media propaganda and statements by Iranian officials point to this threat to Iranian national security and the use of allies in the Middle East to protect Iran in the first place.

⁴ Soleimani is a tool and personality that implements his country's plans in the region set by the Iranian regime. After his death plans will continue in the region, although with his death Iran lost one of the smartest and bravest military / intelligence leaders.

⁵ Information about a decision issued by the Houthi group to its military media to stop the circulation of statements by some of its leaders who are suspected of having open communication with Saudi Arabia.

⁶ Iran may also use Soleimani's killing to stoke the Iraqi street against international forces even in the event of a truce with the United States as part of international containment efforts to prevent direct war in the region.

⁷ The Pentagon reveals new details about the Iranian attack, <https://cutt.us/MAfdS>

⁸ Iranian leader calls missile attack a 'slap' at US bases <https://apnews.com/c7116313efdb56f4e928289faa1ad8cd>

⁹ US, Iran step back from the brink; Trump opts for sanctions

<https://apnews.com/d40501d9b0a712d02e2a6626f607ead2>

¹⁰ After bombing the American base of Ein Al-Assad in Iraq, what is the next step for Iran and its allies? <https://www.bbc.com/arabic/interactivity-51036098>

¹¹ The resistance axis raises its preparedness in preparation for any American-Israeli response <https://arabic.sputniknews.com/world/202001081043985056>

¹² These accusations already exist against the demonstrators in Iran who have moved in recent weeks in a major escalation to demand economic reforms and have evolved to include chants against the supreme leader and the legal guardian system in general.

¹³ Washington ... on the strike arm of the «General» in Yemen, <https://al-akhbar.com/World/282024>

¹⁴ شماره حساب کمیته امداد برای کمک به مردم مظلوم یمن اعلام شد <https://www.isna.ir/news/94041609287>

¹⁵ Exclusive - Iran steps up support for Houthis in Yemen's war: sources <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-yemen-iran-houthis/exclusive-iran-steps-up-support-for-houthis-in-yemens-war-sources-idUKKBN16S22P>

¹⁶ Previous source

¹⁷ This was before the Houthis got ballistic missiles to reach Riyadh, and suicide car bombs. It appears that Soleimani was addressing the Iranians, including political officials and military leaders, that the Houthi capabilities are strong and require a stronger and more effective weapon. Where Iran relied on arming the Houthis during the war years in the American way to support the jihadists in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union, a degree / degree with the development of the battle and trust in the group and its capabilities.

¹⁸ You can read a study by the Abaad Center on Iranian weapons in Yemen: Iranian terrorism ... a force that threatens Gulf security

Arabic: <https://abaadstudies.org/news.php?id=59755>

English: <https://abaadstudies.org/news-59756.html>

¹⁹ One 190 - One Transfer Weapon <https://cutt.us/03ABp>

²⁰ Rewards for Justice: Abdul Reza Shahla'I

²¹ The testimony of the defender of the sanctuary of Sayyid Mustafa Muhammad Mirzaei <http://www.iribnews.ir/fa/news/2613971>

²² A security official in the capital, Sanaa, spoke to the Abaad Center on condition of anonymity for fear of Houthi reprisal through correspondence on the Signal application on Friday evening (January 3, 2020)

²³ The press conference was published by the official Iranian channels, including Al-Alam. Behind the commander of the Airspace Force there were flags (Pakistani Zaynbiya, Afghani Fatimiya, Palestinian Hamas, Ansar Allah Houthi, the Iraqi Popular Mobilization and the Lebanese Hezbollah)

²⁴ The Houthis usually deny their relationship with Iran, to win Saudi Arabia on their side and confirm that they do not have Iranian agendas.

²⁵ The Americans have been leading mediation between the Houthis and the Saudis since August 2019 to bring the two sides to consultations in Muscat, and after the Aramco attacks and the Houthis announced an unilateral initiative to stop the ballistic and unmanned drone attacks on Saudi Arabia, the two parties met to consult in Muscat under American supervision.

²⁶ In shift, State's Hook says Yemen's Houthis are independent from Iran <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2019/12/state-department-hook-shift-yemen-houthi-independent-iran.html>

²⁷ A diplomat familiar with the talks told Abaad on phone on January 1, 2020, indicated that consultations had been stopped with the Houthis rejection of a Saudi plan for a long-term truce on the Yemen-Saudi border, and a permanent cessation of raids in four other Yemeni governorates, including Sanaa. However, the Houthis demanded a declaration of halting the coalition's air operations in Yemen entirely and sitting on negotiations table to discuss the future of the country without the internationally recognized government.

²⁸ Houthis resume bombing Saudi Arabia with ballistic missiles <http://www.yemenmonitor.com/Details/ArtMID/908/ArticleID/35868>

²⁹ Appointment Yemen extraordinary ambassador to Iran <https://www.farsnews.com/news/13980526001188>

³⁰ هیات انصارالله یمن با خامنه‌ای ملاقات کرد <https://cutt.us/lmj2k>

³¹ A delegation of Houthis meets with ambassadors of European countries to Iran <http://www.adennewsagency.com/22166/>

³² During a demonstration in Sanaa .. Houthi group vows to avenge the killing of "Soleimani" <https://socotrapost.com/localnews/1771>

³³ Pictures Abaad got from Sana'a

³⁴ Houthi threatens to retaliate if the United States attacks Iran <http://www.yemenmonitor.com/Details/ArtMID/908/ArticleID/36083>

³⁵ Ansar Allah group condemns the assassination of Soleimani and sets response options https://arabic.rt.com/middle_east/1073524

³⁶ Previous source

³⁷ A prominent Houthi field leader in Dhamar named Ali al-Sharafi and another field leader in the capital, Sana'a called (Abu Jalal) were cleansed

³⁸ سردار قآنی: دشمنان حریف مبارزان یمنی نیستند <https://www.mashreghnews.ir/news/419987>

³⁹ سردار قآنی: یمنی‌ها موشک 400 کیلومتری با خطای 10 متر در اختیار دارند <https://fa.alalamtv.net/news/3932651>

⁴⁰ نگاهی به مواضع و دیدگاه‌های جانشین «حاج قاسم» / قآنی: آمریکایی‌ها را رها نخواهیم کرد <https://www.farsnews.com/news/13981013000920>

⁴¹ Previous source

⁴² The speech of Abdul-Malik Al-Houthi on January 8, 2020 was watched by a researcher in "Abaad", the text of which can be found through the link: <https://www.ansarollah.com/archives/307771>

⁴³ Six in Saudi Arabia and three in the UAE .. The Houthis announce the expansion of their military targets and deaths among the security belt forces <https://cutt.us/JhQN0>

⁴⁴ Saudi military coordination with the allies to deter Houthi attacks <https://aawsat.com/home/article/2066391>

⁴⁵ White House skewered for failing to disclose meeting Trump had with Saudi deputy defense minister <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/01/07/media/oval-office-meeting-trump-saudi-arabia/index.html>

⁴⁶ آمریکا از بیم واکنش ایران، نیرو وارد جنوب یمن کرد <http://www.jahannews.com/news/713979>

⁴⁷ You can read a study by the Abaad Center on Iranian weapons in Yemen: Iranian terrorism ... force that threatens Gulf security

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English:

<https://abaadstudies.org/news-59756.html>

⁴⁸ Information got by the Yemeni intelligence says that the missiles package is similar to the Russian S300, and it is not ruled out that some parts of it might be from the Iranian Power 373 that Iran declared it possesses

⁴⁹ Officials: U.S. Navy seizes suspected Iranian missile parts set for Yemen

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/military/officials-u-s-navy-seizes-suspected-iranian-missile-parts-set-n1096096>