

(English version)

Question for written answer E-001127/25
to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Afroditi Latinopoulou (P/E)
(17 March 2025)

Subject: EU action in response to the illegal activities of the Houthi movement in the Red Sea

On 5 March 2025, the United States imposed sanctions on seven high-ranking members of the Iran-affiliated Houthi movement in Yemen. According to a statement by the US Department of the Treasury, these individuals smuggled military items and weapon systems into Houthi-controlled areas of Yemen and negotiated weapons procurement from Russia.

The US Department of the Treasury also imposed sanctions on Abdulwali Abdoh Hasan Al-Jabri and his company, Al-Jabri General Trading and Investment Co, for recruiting Yemeni citizens to fight in Ukraine on behalf of Russia and for raising funds to support Houthi military operations.

In view of the Houthis' continuous attacks on ships owned by companies from European countries, such as Denmark and Greece, will the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy say:

1. How does the EU assess the sanctions on the Houthi movement imposed by the US?
2. Does the EU intend to work with the US to put an end to the Houthis' illegal activities, ensuring that ships serving European interests can safely navigate in the Red Sea?

Submitted: 17.3.2025

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(13 May 2025)

The EU has repeatedly condemned ⁽¹⁾ the Houthi threats and attacks against commercial ships, as unacceptable violations of international law threatening maritime security, peace and stability in the region. The EU underlined that they must stop, notably through the High Representative/Vice-President's declaration on behalf of the EU and its Member States of 12 January 2024 ⁽²⁾, welcoming the 10 January 2024 United Nations Security Council resolution 2722 ⁽³⁾ condemning the Houthi attacks.

The EU has taken good note of the latest United States (US) designations of Houthi individuals and entities and is currently analysing their potential impact. The EU implements the United Nations Yemen sanctions through its Council Decision 2014/932 ⁽⁴⁾. This includes the Houthis (Ansar Allah), 12 Houthi commanders and influential figures, as well as a targeted arms embargo. Moreover, in 2024, the EU designated individuals and entities for their support to the Houthis under its sanctions regime regarding Iran's military support to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and to armed groups and entities in the Middle East and the Red Sea region ⁽⁵⁾.

The EU is committed to continue its engagement in the Red Sea through its defensive maritime operation EUNAVFOR ASPIDES, ensuring the protection of maritime routes and international navigational rights. Operation ASPIDES mandate has been recently extended until 2026 ⁽⁶⁾. Operation ASPIDES also proceeds with some exchange of information with US-led Operation Prosperity Guardian and other maritime actors in the region, including Operation EUNAVFOR ATALANTA.

The EU also remains the key contributor to the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism for Yemen, which aims to facilitate the unimpeded free-flow of commercial items.

⁽¹⁾ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/ep-plenary-speech-high-representativevice-president-josep-borrell-houthi-attacks-red-sea_en.

⁽²⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/01/12/yemen-statement-by-the-high-representative-on-behalf-of-the-eu-welcoming-the-un-security-council-resolution-strongly-condemning-houthi-attacks-on-red-sea-shipping/>. See also the EU Spokesperson's statements of 5 and 13 December 2023: https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/yemen-statement-spokesperson-houthi-attacks-red-sea_en, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/yemen-statement-spokesperson-houthi-attacks-ships-red-sea_en.

⁽³⁾ <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/doc/2722>.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014D0932>.

⁽⁵⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A02023D1532-20241118>.

⁽⁶⁾ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2025/02/14/red-sea-council-prolongs-the-mandate-of-operation-aspides/>.