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Houthi fire barrage at passing American convoy

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US Navy

The Houthis roared back into action yesterday, firing a barrage of armaments against a passing American convoy in the Red Sea.

As is common in the 13-month campaign waged by the Houthis, there are discrepancies in terms of the scale and efficacy of the latest attacks with the Yemeni group claiming it fired 16 ballistic and cruise missiles and a drone against two US naval ships and three American-flagged merchant ships, while US Central Command reported today that the destroyers *USS Stockdale* and *USS O'Kane* "successfully engaged and defeated" three anti-ship ballistic missiles, three air drones and one anti-ship cruise missile.

The merchant ships attacked were the MR2 tanker *Stena Impeccable*, the 2,500 teu containership *Maersk Saratoga*, and the supramax bulker *Liberty Grace*.

On November 19 last year, Houthi militants stormed the Bahamas-flagged *Galaxy Leader*, taking the car carrier and its 25 crew hostage, ushering in the start of what has become a protracted campaign

against international merchant shipping with more than 120 vessels targeted by drones and missiles and the Red Sea becoming a no-go area for a sizeable portion of the international merchant fleet.

“One must assume that the Red Sea continues to be a no-go zone indefinitely for many operators. Western military navies have not prevented the attacks; Western air bombardments have not ended them,” commented Mark Williams, who heads up UK consultancy Shipping Strategy.