

**Subject:** Joint Military Exercise in the Red Sea - IMX/CE 22

Good afternoon

I hope you are having a good week!

The [International Maritime Exercise/Cutlass Express 2022 \(IMX/CE 22\)](#) is taking place for the next two weeks in the Red Sea. IMX/CE 2022 is not only the largest multinational naval exercise in the Middle East, but also the largest unmanned exercise in the world with more than 80 unmanned systems from 10 nations participating. International naval forces participating in IMX/CE 2022 are divided into four geographical combined task forces led by the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Kenya and Oman. “This level of representation demonstrates shared resolve in preserving the rules-based international order,” said Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. 5th Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces.

The joint exercise in the Red Sea is timely. During the month of January, U.S. military personnel at Al Dhafra air base successfully responded not [once](#), but [twice](#) with patriot missile batteries to in-bound missile threats on the UAE by Iran-backed Houthis in Yemen. [Houthis also seized](#) a UAE flagged vessel and its crew and are the type of actions that interfere with freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and threaten international trade and regional security.

On Tuesday, at his Senate confirmation hearing to lead CENTCOM, Gen. Kurilla responded to questions on the threats emanating from the region -

**On Yemen** - *“It is my view that the Houthi threat to U.S. and partner interests in the region remains high. The risk to U.S. personnel, citizens, partners, and interests is substantial given the Houthis’ capabilities to inflict harm and demonstrated willingness to conduct complex strikes against major urban areas, including Riyadh and Abu Dhabi.”*

**On Iran** - *“Iran is the No. 1 destabilizing factor in the Middle East right now with their malign behavior... They support the Houthis and they are providing that technology to them to fire ballistic missiles into the UAE and into Saudi Arabia.”*

In the face of these ongoing attacks the UAE continues to support and train with its partners like the U.S., Israel, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and other allies to combat the threats in the region, preserving the rules-based international order, and strengthen security in the Middle East.

Thank you for your attention.

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