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Iran's meddling exposed again

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If further proof were needed of Iran's unconscionable meddling on the Arabian Peninsula, it has come with the release of a report from a United Kingdom-based arms-tracking NGO. The European Union-funded Conflict Armament Research (CAR) report confirmed that Houthi rebels are using "kamikaze" drones sourced from Iran to attack radar systems on anti-missile batteries operated by the Saudi-led coalition, which is supporting the legitimate government of Yemen and defending the Yemeni people.

The report says the Houthis and forces aligned with former president Ali Abdullah Saleh are using the sophisticated drones in addition to other military technology smuggled in from Iran. Last year, CAR documented an arms smuggling route from Iran to the Horn of Africa and Yemen that was used to send light weapons and anti-tank missiles to the rebels. The seven Qasef-1 drones and one drone engine mentioned in the report released yesterday were found after a Houthi attack on Marib governorate late last year. Six of the partially assembled drones were recovered by UAE forces fighting with the coalition.

This indisputable evidence of further Iranian interference is disturbing, but it comes as no surprise. Tehran has a long track record of meddling in this region – usually through proxies such as the Houthis in Yemen and Hizbollah in Lebanon – with the sole intent of extending its realm of influence well beyond its own borders.

The Iranians seem determined to be enablers of further bloodshed in Yemen. The UAE and its coalition partners from the Gulf Cooperation Council and beyond want something different for our brothers and sisters in Yemen: a peaceful resolution to the crisis that ensures a stable, legitimate government and the chance for people to live in peace.

Along with its military commitment, which has come at the cost of Emirati and Saudi lives, the UAE has invested about Dh6 billion in aid programmes in Yemen. While Iran smuggles in weapons to prop up the minority Houthi rebels, we are bringing food, medicine and shelter to the victims of war, and rebuilding lives and infrastructure.