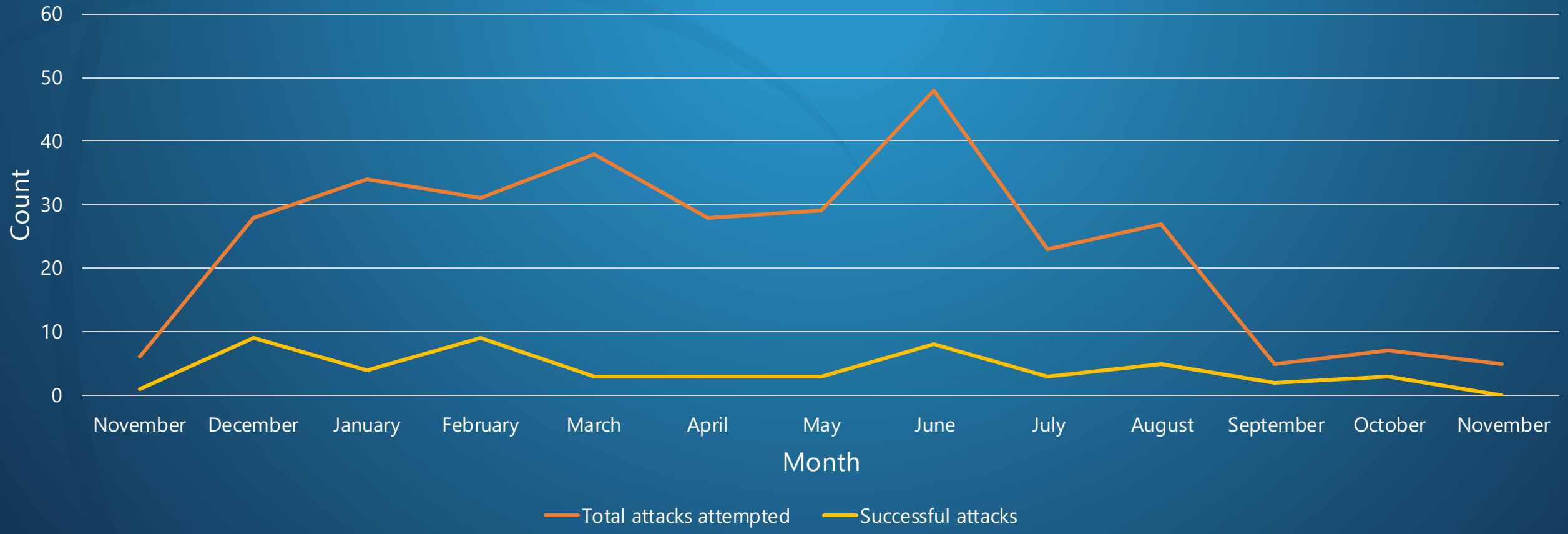
The Houthi Campaign in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden

Wolf-Christian Paes
Senior Fellow for Armed Conflict
International Institute for Strategic Studies

Figure 1: Number of Houthi attacks on ships per month, November 2023-November 2024

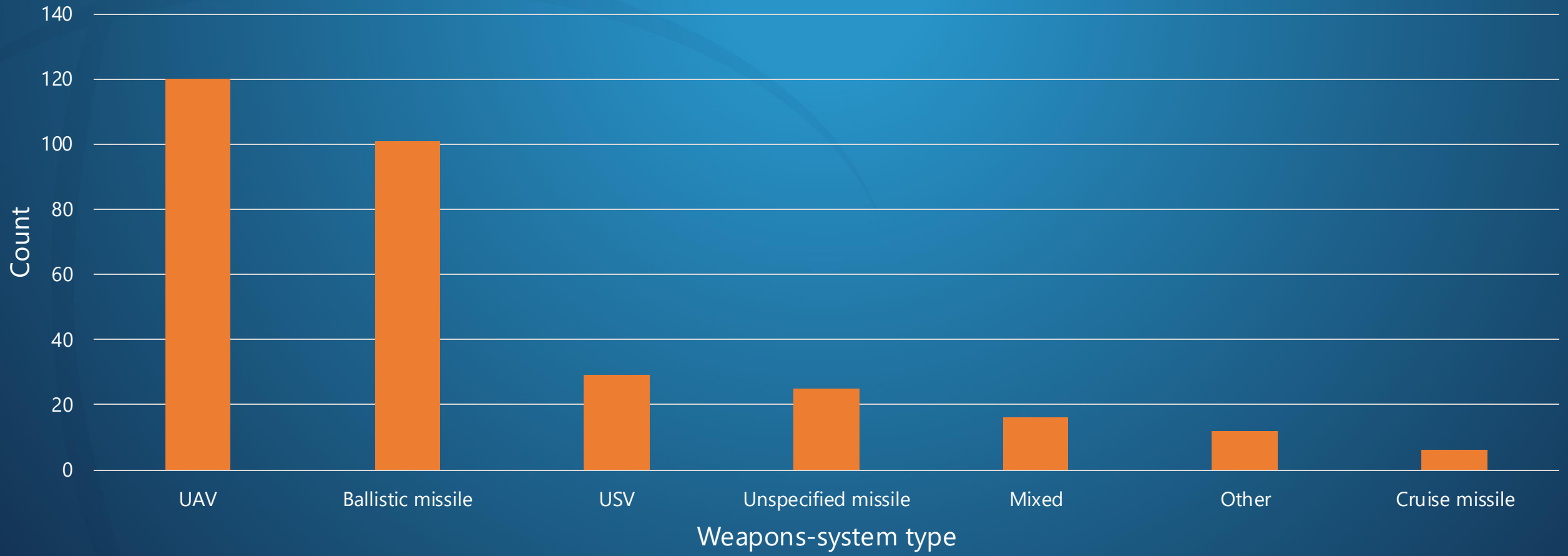


Source: IISS, based on ACLED-compiled data

Notes:
-'Attacks' includes the use of missiles and uninhabited aerial vehicles, including those launched from inland, as well as uninhabited surface vehicles and/or 'other' weapons system types (small arms, sea mines and explosive charges). Hijackings are also included.
-'Successful attacks' includes all attacks resulting in kinetic damage to a ship and/or involving small arms exchange.
-Attack count includes both confirmed and suspected Houthi attacks, if corroborated.

-Methodology: Each attack is one that took place at a specific time, involved distinct types of violence and actors, and occurred in a particular location. This means that incidents that differ on time, location, agent or type of activity are counted as separate attacks. Two incidents that occur at the same time and in the same place, involving the same actors and type of activity, are aggregated into a single attack. The overall attack count may therefore differ from the actual number of incidents. This IISS definition is informed by, but distinct from, the methodology used by ACLED in compiling the data.

Figure 2: Number of attacks per weapons-system type used in Houthi attacks on ships, November 2023-November 2024



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Houthi Weapon Systems used in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden

1 C-802 derivatives (*Noor* and *Ghader*)

2 *Paveh* (Project 351/*Quds*)-based ASCMs (*Quds*-Z-0 and *Sayyad*)

	Origin	Range	Warhead
1	Iran	120 km (*Noor*); 200 km (*Ghader*)	155 kg (*Noor*); 165 kg (*Ghader*)
2	Iran	900–2,000 km, depending on variant	n/a

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Anti-Ship Cruise Missiles

1 *Hatem* 2 (*Kheibar Shekan*) ballistic missile

2 *Asef* (*Fateh*) ASBM

3 Short-range ASBM (unknown types)

	Origin	Range	Warhead
1	Iran	1,300 km	550 kg
2	Iran	400 km (Houthi claim)	Approximately 400 kg
3	Iran or local assembly using Iranian technology	Below 200 km	n/a

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Ballistic Missiles

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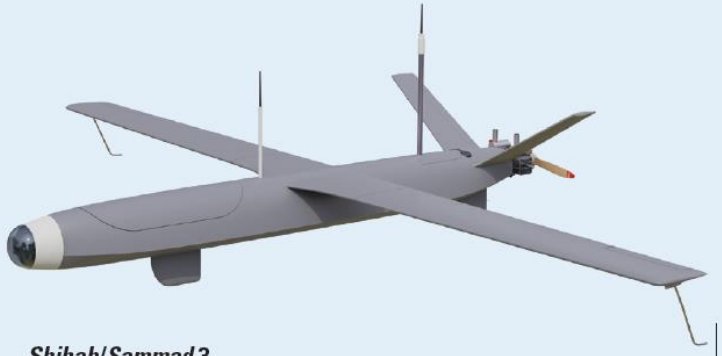
Houthi Weapon Systems used in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden



Shihab/Sammad 3

Origin	Range	Communications range	Warhead
Iranian design produced locally	1,000 km	100–150 km	Approximately 18 kg

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Uncrewed Aerial Vessel

1 Converted fishing skiff

2 *Toufan al-Mudammer*

	Origin	Speed	Warhead
1	Likely local production using Iranian technology	Unclear	n/a
2	Likely local production using Iranian technology	45 knots (Houthi claim)	1,000–1,500 kg (Houthi claim)

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Uncrewed Surface Vessels

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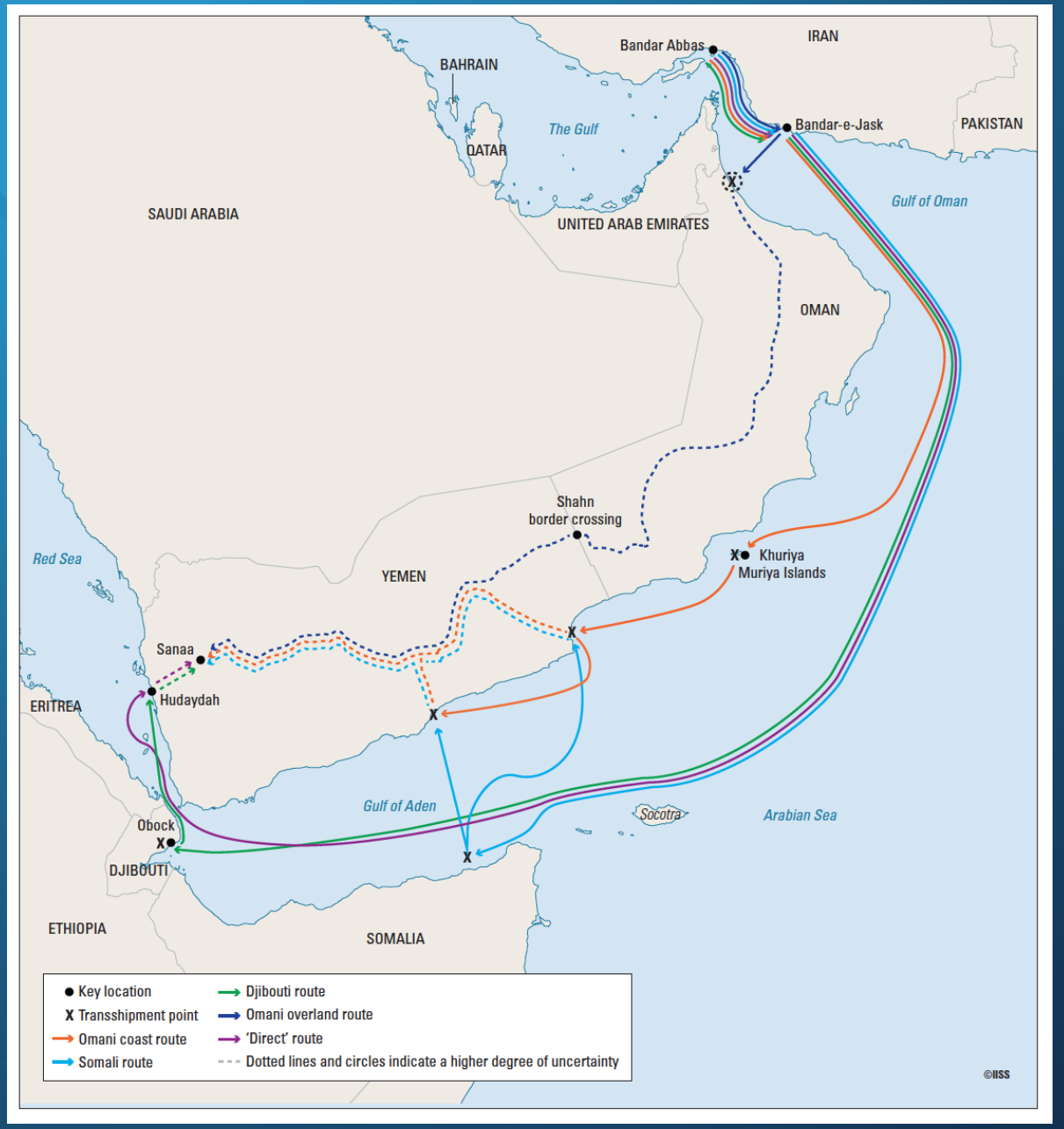
Weapons Smuggling to the Houthis

Kasra-3 General Cargo Ship

Al-Ghazal 1 Dhow



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Political and Military Outlook for 2025

- It seems unlikely that the current military approach (Poseidon Archer..) will degrade Houthi capabilities sufficiently for the attacks to stop.
- It is possible, but not guaranteed, that a ceasefire in Gaza will lead to a stop of Houthi attacks on commercial ships in the waters around Yemen.
- Politically, the position of the Houthis within the 'Axis of Resistance' has been strengthened by one year of sustained attacks on Western shipping.
- Regional states, such as Egypt and KSA, are unlikely to play a more active role in supressing Houthi attacks unless their own ships are targeted.
- It remains to be seen whether European Union Member States are willing to dedicate sufficient assets to Atalanta to play a larger role.

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