



By: TA | AP Brief

Pakistan vows to defend Saudi Arabia against Iran-backed Houthis



Pakistan will use “whatever means are available” to defend Saudi Arabia against Iran-backed Houthi rebels, the country’s defense minister said Tuesday, offering one of Islamabad’s clearest indications yet that it could become directly involved in the widening regional conflict.

Defense Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif declined to say whether Pakistani forces had already participated in airstrikes.

He said, however, that Pakistan’s military capabilities would be available to Saudi Arabia under a new mutual **defense pact** with Saudi Arabia and Turkey.

“I’m not going into detail, but obviously when I say that we are bound by this arrangement to defend Saudi Arabia, that means whatever means are available at our disposal, they’ll be available to Saudi Arabia also. I think that’s a categoric statement,” Asif told reporters during a visit to Rome when asked whether Pakistan had been involved in airstrikes against Iranian **operators in Yemen**.

His response did not explicitly confirm Pakistani participation in any strikes.

He also did not say whether Saudi Arabia, which has been repeatedly attacked by the Houthis in recent weeks, had asked for assistance.

Military commanders recently met

His comments came days after the army chiefs of Pakistan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia met in Riyadh to discuss responses to Houthi attacks.

Asif said the Houthis had intensified missile and drone attacks on Saudi Arabia and expanded their control along Yemen’s **Red Sea coast**.

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The Houthis recently captured the strategic port city of Mokha and several Red Sea islands, extending their reach toward the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, a maritime route through which about 12% of global trade passes.

They, along with allied militias in Iraq, also have attacked Saudi oil facilities and sought to prevent Saudi tankers from using the strait.