

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **The Red Sea as a Multi-Dimensional Strategic Arena.** The Red Sea is a vital lifeline and a key link in global supply chains, being a shipping artery that accounts for approximately 17% of global maritime trade traffic. This is one of the main reasons for its status as an arena of inter-power competition, involving China, the United States, Russia, as well as regional players, and this arena is gaining strategic importance in fields such as communication, environmental protection, food security, and energy.
2. **Regional actors are working to strengthen their foothold in the red sea arena.** In addition to the major powers, countries including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Qatar, and Turkey are attempting to establish a maritime-strategic foothold through investments and power-building. This may export rivalries to the Red Sea and fuel previous tensions.
3. **The Houthi-Western conflict as a maritime reality changer.** Attacks by the Houthis, who are supported by Iran, have disrupted trade traffic in the Red Sea and created a severe crisis with enormous economic costs (for Egypt, for example), posing a complex challenge to the international coalition operating in the Red Sea. This is a conflict that escalated in the context of the war between Israel and Hamas that broke out in 2023 but may continue for a considerable period, regardless of developments in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
4. **An increased importance of undersea infrastructure.** The undersea cables traversing the Red Sea have become strategic targets and essential infrastructure components due to a global, albeit undeclared, battle for their control.

5. **Regional convergence.** There is quiet cooperation between Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE under an American umbrella, addressing threats and creating security-related but possibly also policy-related opportunities as a sort of “preparation” for normalization agreements.
6. **The arena is characterized by complex coastal combat.** The geographic nature of the Red Sea necessitates combat capabilities near the coast, maneuverability and rapid response, and preparedness against diverse threats, with an emphasis on asymmetric warfare including the use of shore-to-sea missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles, mines, and unmanned surface and subsurface vessels.
7. **Israel as an “asset” to the regional countries.** Its presence at sea and the security and civilian collaborations with Israel make it a strategic asset for potential partners, while it maintains its operational independence.