

## **YEMEN 2024: Assessment of Geopolitical Power Dynamics in the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait Region: Analysis of the Actors Involved in the Yemeni Conflict and Their Coastal Positions**

The YEMEN project focuses on the region surrounding the Bab el-Mandeb Strait - encompassing Yemen and the maritime coasts along the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. This area is a critical geostrategic route, with approximately 40% of global goods transiting through it. Since 2023, Houthi forces have emerged as the primary threat to safe navigation in the area.

Over the past decade, alliances and partnerships in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait region have been continuously reshaped in response to the security issues stemming from the war in Yemen. Gulf states, Turkey, China and the United States have extended their competition to the shores of the Horn of Africa, seeking to establish strategic footholds - primarily through the development of military and commercial port facilities.



In this competitive environment, marked by overlapping and sometimes conflicting alliances, the United Arab Emirates has been particularly active. It has leverage asymmetric relationships with politically fragile or internally unstable littoral states to consolidate its position and secure the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, which it views as critical to regional stability and the protection of its strategic interests.

The YEMEN project analyzes the regional geopolitics of the Bab el Mandeb Strait through the lens of commercial strategies. It addresses the following research question: **How has the conflict in Yemen contributed to the reconfiguration of economic partnerships in the Bab el-Mandeb region?**