

# **National Resistance Forces (NRF) – Strategic Profile**

## **1. Who We Are**

The National Resistance Forces (NRF) are a Yemeni military formation operating along Yemen's western Red Sea coast under the leadership of Lieutenant General Tareq Mohammed Abdullah Saleh. The NRF operates within the framework of Yemen's Presidential Leadership Council and in coordination with joint anti-Houthi forces.

## **2. Strategic Geography (Why It Matters to the U.S.)**

- Control of approximately 150 km of Red Sea coastline
- Operational presence from Bab al-Mandab through Mokha to south of Hudaydah
- Located along one of the world's most critical maritime chokepoints
- Direct proximity to international shipping lanes

This area directly impacts:

- Freedom of navigation
- Global energy flows
- Suez Canal access
- U.S. naval operations in the Red Sea

This material is distributed by Bashar Al Zamzami on behalf of the Yemeni National Resistance Forces. Additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, D.C

### **3. Maritime Security & Counter Smuggling Impact**

Recent NRF operations include:

- Seizure of 750 tons of Iranian weapons bound for the Houthis (described by CENTCOM as the largest such seizure)
- Interdiction of narcotics shipments in Red Sea waters
- Interception of smuggled medium weapons and anti armor systems
- Air defense interception of Iranian-made drones targeting coastal patrols
- Since its 2018 deployment, the NRF has not lost any territorial ground.

NRF naval and coast guard units operate in coordination frameworks designed to limit weapons flows and maritime threats.

### **4. Force Structure & Capability**

- Approximately 28 brigades including Naval Infantry, and Coast Guard forces
- Structured training programs and specialization in coastal defense
- Ground, sea, and air logistical infrastructure anchored in Al-Mokha
- Integrated political and humanitarian track in areas under control
- The force enjoys broad national support and is affiliated with an active political bloc that holds 26 seats in the Yemeni Parliament. Unlike other factions, the NRF promotes a secular, nationalist agenda, opposing sectarianism and extremism.

## **5. The Immediate Strategic Question**

Although the Houthis are not currently targeting commercial shipping, the potential for future attacks remains. The central question is:

How can structured coordination between U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) and NRF maritime and coastal forces enhance preemptive deterrence, intelligence sharing, and rapid interdiction along the western Red Sea corridor to address any emerging threats?

## **6. Objective of Engagement**

To explore practical mechanisms for:

- Provide advice to NRF to support a locally driven solution to ensuring stability in Yemen and combating the Houthis.
- Maritime threat monitoring ( Assign a U.S. military assessment team)
- Counter-smuggling cooperation
- Intelligence coordination (Provide direct technical and intelligence support)
- Support to freedom of navigation

## **7. Strategic Benefits for the United States**

With U.S. support, coordination, and intelligence sharing, the NRF could better combat the Houthis, secure the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab, disrupt Iranian arms trafficking, and build a sustainable, localized deterrence infrastructure.

With targeted U.S. support, a renewed NRF campaign to liberate the remainder of Al Hudaydah Governorate would cripple Houthi maritime capabilities and deny Iran its last significant geographic foothold in southern Red Sea waters.

By providing support to the NRF, a legitimate and effective ground force, the United States can reshape the conflict's dynamics while avoiding escalation or direct military entanglement and strengthening a pro Western actor with local legitimacy and battlefield credibility.

Disarming the Houthis also reduces pressure for preemptive Israeli strikes and regional war escalation. Additionally, improving security in the Red Sea supports broader Middle East stability, including diplomatic openings through Abraham Accords momentum.

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