



EUNAVFOR ASPIDES Informational Message to the Shipping Industry

Larissa, 8th June 2026

Incidents in Red sea, Bab-El-Mandab and Gulf of Aden

Days with no incident: 252

Last reported incident: 29 September 2025

General situation

Since 28 February 2026, United States and Israel have been conducting strikes against targets on Iranian territory. Iran's response has affected countries across the region, extending beyond the Arabian Gulf to include targets in both Turkey and Cyprus. Iranian's Proxies in Irak and Lebanon have joined the conflict and conducted military actions in support of Tehran.

Recent developments in the conflict involving Iran, Israel and the United States have led to a marked deterioration of the regional security environment. Houthi forces have renewed hostile activities against Israel and lately, declared their intention to target shipping associated with Israeli interests in the Red Sea. The risk of missile, UAV and maritime attacks against commercial vessels has consequently increased in the Red Sea, Bab el-Mandeb Strait and Gulf of Aden. Merchant vessels are therefore advised to maintain a high level of vigilance and continue close coordination with maritime security authorities.

Current Situation

The security situation in the Middle East has evolved following the latest resumption of direct military strikes on 8 June 2026, and the subsequent missile launch by Houthi forces against Israel. The Houthi response is consistent with their longstanding alignment with Iran's strategic narrative and regional posture.

The Houthi spokesperson announcement has declared a total ban on Israeli maritime navigation in the Red Sea and stated that "*all movements associated with the enemy will be considered legitimate military targets*". They further warned that any escalation would be met with a corresponding response and affirmed that their military operations would intensify in line with developments on the ground.



Threat Assessment

Considering Houthi's pattern of behaviour, while announcements of transit bans have served as an indicator of implementing upcoming hostile actions, the threat level for merchant vessels transiting the Red Sea (RS), Bab el-Mandeb Strait (BaM), Gulf of Aden (GoA), and the Arabian Sea (AS) is assessed as follows:

Category	Assessment	Description
a.	Low	For merchant vessels not affiliated to Israel or the United States.
b.	High	For any vessels or shipping companies (incl. fleet) affiliated to Israeli and US interests (fully/partially owned, flagged)

This assessment reflects the threat level for Israeli and US-affiliated vessels and companies as **High**, and a decrease of the threat level for all other vessels from **Medium** to **Low**. The threat level for Israeli-affiliated vessels and companies remains assessed as High, following the latest Houthi statement announcing the implementation of a transit ban against Israeli navigation and reiterating that Israeli-affiliated vessels remain legitimate military targets.

Recommendations

EUNAVFOR ASPIDES recommends that merchant vessels linked to Israeli or U.S. interests avoid transiting the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden until the threat level decreases. Other ships should continue to send their requests for support to the MSCIO.

While it remains too early to fully assess the scope and duration of the renewed threat, previous patterns indicate that attacks could involve anti-ship missiles, UAVs, USVs and small craft.

Merchant vessels required to transit the eastern Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea should exercise heightened vigilance and maintain close coordination with MSCIO.

In response to the increased threat environment, EUNAVFOR ASPIDES has reinforced protective measures to support vessels. As available military assets remain unchanged, ships requesting Close Protection may experience more waiting times.

EUNAVFOR ASPIDES' recommendations to the maritime community remain unchanged and should continue to be observed rigorously:

- Avoid entry into Yemeni territorial waters at all times.
- When feasible, navigate closer to the African coastline to reduce exposure to potential threats.



- Maintain constant communication with MSCIO, and UKMTO and adhere strictly to official guidance, risk-assessment protocols, and best management practices.
- Conduct a voyage-specific risk assessment, taking into consideration any direct or indirect affiliations between the vessel, its ownership, or its cargo and countries of interest.

EUNAVFOR ASPIDES remains committed to safeguarding Freedom of Navigation by providing Monitoring and Close Protection services throughout the Red Sea, Bad-el-Manded Strait, and Gulf of Aden.

The operation continuously monitors the evolving threat environment and remains fully committed to its defensive and de-escalatory mandate in support of the international maritime community.

Communication and Coordination

All vessel masters are reminded that the MSCIO remains available as a point of contact for any incident, suspicious activity, or unusual observation.

Such reporting is vital to ensuring the safety of seafarers, the security of commercial shipping, and the preservation of freedom of navigation under the protection of Operation ASPIDES.

Further information, including operational updates and recommendations, is available on the MSCIO official webpage at <https://mscio.eu>.

For specific enquiries or to obtain pre-transit support, please contact: postmaster@mscio.eu.

End of communication.