

Black Sea: NATO Drill Practiced Strafing Russian Ships

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NATO reports that it conducted what is described as air defense exercises in the Black Sea on July 2. Evidently the maneuvers were independent of the 32-nation Sea Breeze naval and air exercises occurring simultaneously. And of the recent port visits and participation in exercises by the HMS Defender guided-missile destroyer and the HNLMS Evertsen frigate in the same sea, the first almost triggering an international incident if not a war on June 23.

U.S. and NATO warships, military aircraft, missiles and troops are so consistently in the Black Sea region in overlapping military exercises that it's a wonder any commercial vessels can find room to maneuver or that the sun ever breaks through on the sea's waves.

Two days ago NATO Air and Maritime forces (as distinct from or as a combination of NATO's Allied Air Command and NATO's Maritime Command) held an Air Defence Exercise (ADEX) in the Black Sea [“to improve Alliance cooperation, practise air-maritime communications and build stronger relationships between Allies.”](#) In shorthand, to prepare for war with Russia in and off the coasts of the Black Sea.

Participating in the not in the least imaginary or abstract warfighting scenario were combat aircraft from Greece, Romania and Turkey, a NATO AWACS aircraft, a Romanian C-27 transport aircraft, a Turkish military patrol aircraft and three frigates from the Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG 2): the Italian Navy flagship *Fasan*, the Romanian Navy's *Regina Maria* and the Turkish Navy's *Barbaros*. The three frigates are transiting across the Black Sea currently and will participate in the Sea Breeze war games – if they remember which NATO war game they've been assigned to on any given day.

A NATO press release on the exercise described it like this: “The air-maritime integration training demonstrates NATO's capabilities, readiness and resolve to protect Allied populations; with our ships and aircraft peacefully operating off the Romanian coast we also assure the Allies in the region.”

This is how NATO interprets “protecting allied populations”:

“While initially Turkish Air Force F-16 fighters simulated attacks on the NATO ships which trained defence drills against these attacked, the Greek and Romanian F-16s, in a separate event, conducted similar training manoeuvres with the Greek fighters attacking the ships which responded in a joint manner with the Romanian fighters. Subsequently, the Greek and Romanian fighters conduct air-to-air combat drills.”

One wonders if the NATO ships, to lend them an air of authenticity, flew the Russian flag for the occasion.

Try to keep an image of the above in your mind as you read these words of Allied Air Command Deputy Chief of Staff Brigadier General Andrew Hansen:

“Overall the air-maritime integration training demonstrates NATO’s capabilities, readiness and resolve to protect Allied populations; with our ships and aircraft peacefully operating off the Romanian coast we also assure the Allies in the region.”

It appears the world will only learn of the ongoing war – because it is that – when it’s been declared over.

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