

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004814/25
to the Commission
Siegbert Frank Droese (ESN)
(4 December 2025)**

Subject: Information about and assessment under international law of Ukraine's possible operations against ships belonging to Russia's so-called shadow fleet

1. Does the Commission have any information on whether Ukrainian state actors were involved in setting fire to, exploding or sinking ships belonging to Russia's so-called shadow fleet, despite these ships sailing under non-EU flags (¹)?
2. What view does the Commission take, in respect of international law, of military action being taken against ships that may be serving Russia's economic interests but are not sailing officially under the flag of the Russian Federation, and what are the implications for adherence to maritime law and legal certainty with regard to international maritime traffic?

Submitted: 4.12.2025

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(1 June 2026)**

The EU remains strongly committed to maintaining a maritime order based on international law and the rule of law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Moscow's military build-up, its shadow fleet, drifting mines and the jamming of ships' data systems, are security challenges that have dangerous spillover effects across the Black Sea region and require a collective response.

The EU strategic approach to the Black Sea region proposes a comprehensive approach, supporting the resilience and security of a region that is vital to Europe's stability and prosperity.

As part of this strategic approach, a Black Sea Maritime Security Hub will be established and designed as a comprehensive platform to enhance information exchange, maritime situational awareness and resilience in the Black Sea region, to facilitate cooperation in maritime security and protection of critical infrastructure.

Moreover, the EU is stepping up its action to tackle the Russian shadow fleet through all available instruments. Based on proposals from the High Representative/Vice-President and the Commission, the Council has adopted several restrictive measures to further constrain the Russian shadow fleet's enablers.

This work is continuing. The outreach to third countries and cooperation with like-minded partners are strengthened. Under the lead of the European External Action Service shadow fleet coordinator, the best practices are collected from Member States, encouraging robust enforcement actions and making the operations of the shadow fleet more costly.

¹ see <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2025/11/28/two-ships-of-russias-sanctioned-shadow-fleet-caught-fire-in-the-black-sea-off-turkiye>