



Plenary sitting

B10-0485/2026

19.10.2026

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 136(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the escalation of Russian strikes in the EU, particularly on Black Sea shipping, threatening human life, regional stability and food security (2026/2933(RSP))

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on behalf of the S&D Group

European Parliament resolution on the escalation of Russian strikes in the EU, particularly on Black Sea shipping, threatening human life, regional stability and food security (2026/2933(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Article 42(7) of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) and Article 222 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to its previous resolutions on Ukraine and on Russia, in particular those adopted since Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, and to its resolutions of 9 October 2025 on a united response to recent Russian violations of the EU Member States’ airspace and critical infrastructure¹, of 18 December 2025 on the continuous Belarusian hybrid attacks against Lithuania², of 30 April 2026 on ensuring accountability and justice in response to Russia’s continued attacks against the civilian population in Ukraine³ and of 18 June 2026 on Russia’s unacceptable provocative actions and drone incursions into Romania, the Baltic states and Finland⁴,
- having regard to the Charter of the United Nations and the fundamental principles of international law, including those enshrined in the Geneva Conventions of 1949,
- having regard to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) of 1982,
- having regard to the joint communications from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 19 March 2025 entitled ‘Joint White Paper for European Defence Readiness 2030’ (JOIN(2025)0120) and of 16 October 2025 entitled ‘Preserving Peace – Defence Readiness Roadmap 2030’ (JOIN(2025)0027),
- having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 28 May 2025 entitled ‘The European Union’s Strategic Approach to the Black Sea Region’ (JOIN(2025)0135),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 18 February 2026 on the EU’s eastern regions bordering Russia, Belarus and Ukraine – Strong regions for a safe Europe (COM(2026)0082),
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 16 March 2026 on advancing the European Union’s capacity to counter hybrid threats,

¹ OJ C, C/2026/1530, 15.4.2026, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2026/1530/oj>.

² OJ C, C/2026/2161, 6.5.2026, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2026/2161/oj>.

³ Texts adopted, P10_TA(2026)0161.

⁴ Texts adopted, P10_TA(2026)0231.

- having regard to its resolution of 12 March 2025 on the white paper on the future of European defence⁵,
 - having regard to its resolution of 16 September 2026 on hybrid warfare and the protection of the EU’s territorial integrity and critical security and defence infrastructure⁶,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the European Council of 16 October 2026,
 - having regard to Rule 136(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Russia has been waging an illegal, unprovoked and unjustified full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine since 24 February 2022, in flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law; whereas this war is a direct threat to European security and stability and is now spilling over into the Black Sea, next to the maritime borders of two countries that are both EU Member States and NATO members;
 - B. whereas the Black Sea is one of the world’s most important shipping corridors for trade, energy and food;
 - C. whereas on 5 October 2026, a Turkish-owned cargo ship carrying corn caught fire after a drone attack and sank off the Romanian coast, with lives lost;
 - D. whereas on 6 October 2026, sea and aerial drones struck the cargo ships *Alfa Watan* and *Able* in Bulgaria’s exclusive economic zone, the first attack on shipping there; whereas the *Alfa Watan* sank within minutes and its crew remains missing, the search having been suspended on 7 October 2026, while the 18 crew members of the *Able* were evacuated to a Bulgarian ferry;
 - E. whereas on 13 October 2026, drones struck the Malta-flagged, Ukrainian-owned cargo ship *Chelsea 3* and the cargo ship *HS Dignity*, 17 to 18 nautical miles off the Bulgarian coast and in the immediate vicinity of Bulgaria’s territorial waters; whereas *HS Dignity* sank, with five crew members rescued and 11 missing; whereas the 15 crew members of the *Chelsea 3* – seven Ukrainian and eight Azerbaijani nationals – were rescued and brought to the Bulgarian port of Varna, where several received medical treatment;
 - F. whereas these attacks have cost lives and left more than 20 seafarers of several nationalities, including Syrian nationals, missing; whereas seafarers are civilians and workers who keep supply chains running and are entitled to protection under international law;
 - G. whereas the Bulgarian authorities state that they do not yet have conclusive evidence to attribute responsibility, while the Bulgarian Prime Minister Rumen Radev stated that the outcome benefits the Russian Federation and summoned the Russian ambassador; whereas Ukraine attributes the attacks to Russia, while the Russian embassy in Sofia denied Russia’s involvement and suggested that a third party may be responsible;

⁵ OJ C, C/2025/3151, 20.6.2025, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2025/3151/oj>.

⁶ Texts adopted, P10_TA(2026)0303.

whereas investigations are ongoing, with the EU providing satellite imagery at the request of Bulgaria and Romania, and Bulgaria having requested technical assistance from the EU, NATO and the European Maritime Safety Agency;

- H. whereas on 15 October 2026, two chemical tankers, the San Marino-flagged *Wine Trader* and the Comoros-flagged *Yara J*, caught fire after being struck by drones while anchored off the Sulina Canal, the gateway to the Danube's inland shipping routes; whereas according to Reuters news agency, the *Yara J* was hit some 8 to 10 nautical miles from Sulina, in Romanian territorial waters, and the *Wine Trader* some 13 nautical miles away, just outside Romanian territorial waters; whereas seven of the 12 crew members of the *Wine Trader* are reported missing, rescue work having been initially delayed by very high waves, while the crew of the *Yara J* is reported to be safe; whereas the Romanian defence minister described the attack on the tankers as 'of significant gravity' and an investigation is under way; whereas the Romanian President Nicușor Dan confirmed that drones struck both vessels and described the situation in the Black Sea as serious, without attributing responsibility; whereas no responsibility has been officially attributed;
- I. whereas on 15 October 2026, the Romanian Ministry of National Defence detected a group of aerial targets near Snake Island and a drone that had entered Romanian airspace above territorial waters south-east of Sulina, prompting a Romanian RO-Alert and the scrambling of Romanian F-16s and Spanish F-18s on NATO air-policing duty; whereas on the evening of 17 October 2026, Romanian F-16 fighter aircraft reportedly shot down two jet-powered Geran-type attack drones, the Russian-produced variant of the Iranian-designed Shahed, over the Black Sea near Sulina, the first about two minutes after it entered Romanian airspace; whereas according to Romanian media citing the Ministry of National Defence, Romania has recorded 54 drone intrusions into its air and sea space since the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, 35 of them in 2026;
- J. whereas the attacks on merchant shipping have moved progressively from the waters off Odesa to the exclusive economic zones of Romania and Bulgaria, where several commercial vessels have been struck and at least two sunk in the past 10 days, and now to the territorial waters of a Member State; whereas the Bulgarian Prime Minister stated that there was 'no logic' for Ukraine to attack its own ships and crews, while acknowledging that no conclusive evidence of responsibility has been established; whereas the NATO Secretary General, Mark Rutte, announced on 15 October 2026 that the alliance will adjust its deterrence and defence posture in response, and Romania has proposed that it and Bulgaria produce a joint letter calling for a rotating NATO joint military command for the Black Sea;
- K. whereas Russia has repeatedly attacked civilian vessels, ports and export infrastructure in and around Ukraine, including a cargo terminal in the port of Mykolaiv which was damaged by Russian drones on 13 October 2026; whereas Ukraine has accused Russia of seeking to weaponise hunger by attacking a lifeline for global food security;
- L. whereas the President of the Commission stated that the Black Sea had become another front of escalation in Russia's war in Ukraine and called the attacks unacceptable and for those responsible to be held accountable; whereas the NATO Secretary General stated that the alliance had strengthened its posture along the eastern flank and would

adjust its deterrence and defence posture as needed;

- M. whereas these attacks are part of a broader pattern of Russian hybrid warfare against the EU, including drone incursions into Romania, the Baltic states, Finland and Poland, as well as against the territory of Moldova, and acts of sabotage such as the arson attack of 23 September 2026 on a Starlink station in Poland, which the Polish authorities attribute to Russian intelligence services, a likely Russian attempt at arson in Lithuania against a company hosting Starlink ground antennas that support Ukraine, and the reported arson of Starlink antennas in Bulgaria;
- N. whereas the security of the EU is intimately linked to that of the Black Sea region, which is bordered by two Member States, Bulgaria and Romania, and by EU candidate countries;
- O. whereas under UNCLOS, coastal states hold sovereign rights in their exclusive economic zones and all states enjoy freedom of navigation; whereas deliberate attacks on civilian vessels and crews violate international law and, depending on the circumstances, may constitute violations of international humanitarian law;
- P. whereas Bulgaria has strengthened its radar surveillance, increased its kinetic response capabilities and deployed additional uncrewed reconnaissance systems, and has informed its allies and asked them for help with air and sea surveillance, stating that the incidents have pushed its defensive capabilities to the limit; whereas Bulgaria and Romania are preparing a joint letter to NATO and, together with Türkiye, are promoting a moratorium on attacks on merchant ships in the Black Sea; whereas the NATO Secretary General has stated that the alliance will adjust its deterrence and defence posture as needed; whereas Bulgaria has formally asked the NATO Secretary General and the Supreme Allied Commander Europe for combat aircraft, counter-drone systems and additional allied forces on its territory, and has proposed a moratorium on attacks on civilian shipping; whereas Romania has proposed to Bulgaria and Türkiye a joint NATO command for the Black Sea, with rotating leadership and its headquarters on the Romanian coast from 2028; whereas at Romania's request, the North Atlantic Council is to hold a special session on Black Sea defence and deterrence on 20 October 2026;
- Q. whereas the European Council, in its conclusions of 16 October 2026, reaffirmed the strategic importance of security, stability and freedom of navigation in the Black Sea; whereas it declared that attacks against civilian shipping, including Member State-flagged vessels, such as the recent attacks in Bulgaria's and Romania's exclusive economic zones, are unacceptable and constitute a serious violation of international and maritime law, including UNCLOS; whereas it called for the immediate restoration of safe passage for all civilian shipping in the Black Sea, and noted that Russia is once again weaponising food and undermining global food security;
- R. whereas the EU's strategic approach to the Black Sea region, as set out in the joint communication of 28 May 2025, identifies a Black Sea maritime security hub as a flagship initiative to strengthen maritime situational awareness, protect critical infrastructure and improve regional resilience; whereas Bulgaria and Romania have developed a joint concept for the establishment of the hub as a civilian-led, cooperative structure, comprising complementary centres in Constanța and Varna, with Constanța

focusing on maritime situational awareness and the protection of critical maritime infrastructure and Varna focusing on resilience against hybrid and cyber threats, civilian crisis management, capacity building and environmental security; whereas the timely operationalisation of this initiative requires adequate and dedicated EU financial support; whereas Parliament has called for its creation in its resolutions on the general EU budget for 2026 and 2027; whereas the Eastern Flank Watch and the European Drone Defence Initiative are the first initiatives of the Defence Readiness Roadmap 2030, and NATO has launched the Baltic Sentry and Eastern Sentry operations;

- S. whereas disruption of maritime trade in the Black Sea threatens the supply and affordability of food and energy, with the heaviest impact on low-income households and import-dependent countries;
- T. whereas protection against these threats is a European public good and must be financed through genuine reinforcement of the EU budget rather than the redeployment of funds for cohesion, social, research and other policies on which the resilience of citizens and regions equally depends;

Condemnation, responses and accountability

1. Condemns in the strongest terms the latest attacks against civilian vessels in the western Black Sea, which have killed and endangered seafarers, destroyed civilian ships and gravely threatened freedom of navigation, maritime safety and regional stability; stresses that deliberate attacks on civilian vessels and crews violate international law and can never be justified;
2. Expresses its deepest condolences to the families of the seafarers killed, its solidarity with the families of those who are missing and with the injured and surviving crews, and its full solidarity with Bulgaria, Romania and all Black Sea states exposed to Russian aggression; commends the Bulgarian maritime rescue services and border police and passing merchant vessels for their swift response; calls for continued efforts to locate the missing crew members and for EU search and rescue and technical support, assistance for survivors and support for victims' families, regardless of vessel flag or crew nationality;
3. Recalls that attacks in, or in the immediate vicinity of, Member States' territorial waters and in their exclusive economic zones, where coastal states hold sovereign rights, threaten the security of the EU as a whole and require a common EU response; reiterates that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all Member States are foundational principles of the EU;
4. Stresses that seafarers are workers entitled to protection; calls on the Commission, the Member States and the social partners, including maritime trade unions, to ensure that the safety and rights of seafarers operating in conflict-affected waters, including risk assessment, insurance, hazard compensation and repatriation rights, are reinforced, and to promote such protection at the International Maritime Organization and the International Labour Organization;
5. Underlines that the pattern, location and timing of these attacks are consistent with Russia's broader strategy of intimidation, its testing of the EU's capabilities and

resolve, extending into the maritime domain, and its long-standing campaign against European Black Sea trade; notes that the national authorities have not yet conclusively attributed these attacks and calls for the swift completion of investigations and the sharing of findings with the EU and its Member States, and with NATO partners; welcomes Bulgaria's decision to summon the Russian ambassador and calls on the Member States to coordinate their diplomatic action at EU level; stresses that these attacks fit a clear pattern of Russian escalation of its war of aggression against Ukraine, in which Russia has systematically targeted civilian shipping; holds Russia responsible, therefore, for this escalation of its war of aggression in the western Black Sea; rejects any attempt to deflect responsibility through insinuations of third-party involvement that are not backed by evidence;

6. Welcomes the European Council conclusions reaffirming the strategic importance of security, stability and freedom of navigation in the Black Sea and condemning Russia's systematic attacks; joins the European Council's call for the immediate restoration of safe passage for grain cargo ships through the Black Sea, but regrets that this call has not, so far, been accompanied by the corresponding measures to ensure that safe passage;
7. Calls for the EU and its Member States to respond with swift and calibrated measures, including further listings under the sanctions regime for Russia's destabilising activities and, once attribution is established, targeted sanctions on those responsible; further calls for dedicated financial support for the coastal and port regions most exposed to these threats, which also bear significant economic and social costs;
8. Stresses that the escalation of attacks on civilian shipping makes the rapid operationalisation of the Black Sea maritime security hub an urgent priority for European security; calls for the Black Sea maritime security hub to be established and put into operation as soon as possible, jointly initiated and co-hosted by Bulgaria and Romania, as a civilian-led platform for maritime domain awareness, early warning, information exchange, resilience against hybrid threats and cyberthreats, civilian crisis management and the protection of critical maritime infrastructure; stresses that the hub should support cooperation and capacity building in maritime security, including the coordination of mine countermeasure operations, search and rescue, and environmental protection, in full complementarity with existing EU and NATO structures; calls on the Commission and the Council to ensure adequate and dedicated financial support for the implementation of the EU's strategic approach to the Black Sea region, including the swift operationalisation of the Black Sea maritime security hub; calls on the Member States and the European Defence Agency to advance the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) projects on critical seabed infrastructure protection, harbour and maritime surveillance and protection, integrated multilayer air and missile defence systems, and counter unmanned aerial systems; calls, furthermore, on the Commission and the Council to speed up work on the European defence project of common interest dedicated to the integrated defence of the maritime environment and the seabed, using all national and EU instruments available to this end and ensuring that they also contribute to the security of the Black Sea regions;
9. Calls on the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) to ensure

that the security threats to the Black Sea region are fully reflected in the forthcoming EU security strategy; further calls on the Commission and the VP/HR, in cooperation with the Member States concerned, to develop a coordinated European framework for the security and safety of civilian navigation in the Black Sea, as part of the implementation of the EU's strategic approach to the region, building on current and planned European capabilities and incorporating early-warning systems for threats to civilian shipping, real-time information exchange, common maritime situational awareness, satellite-based surveillance, common protocols for responding to incidents involving commercial vessels, and arrangements for emergency assistance and search and rescue;

10. Calls on the Member States to strengthen national maritime surveillance and to share information; calls for a common maritime situational awareness picture integrating satellite, surface and subsea sensor data, connected to the Hybrid Fusion Cell within the Single Intelligence Analysis Capacity; welcomes the satellite imagery provided by the EU to Bulgaria and Romania and calls for a permanent mechanism for the rapid provision of satellite and intelligence support on request; stresses the need to ensure the interoperability of existing European and national maritime information systems and to make full use of the capabilities of relevant EU agencies, including the European Maritime Safety Agency, the European Union Satellite Centre and the European Union Agency for Cybersecurity;
11. Welcomes the national measures taken by Bulgaria and Romania; stresses that Member States on the Black Sea cannot be left to face this threat alone; calls on NATO to strengthen its posture so that it is able to deter, prevent and respond proportionately; calls for the urgent deployment of layered and interoperable air and maritime counter-drone capabilities in the western Black Sea by Member States and NATO allies, including surveillance, early warning, rapid response and capabilities against uncrewed aerial and surface vessels; further calls on NATO to consider a Black Sea initiative, building on discussions on a 'Black Sea sentry', to protect shipping and crews through enhanced air and maritime surveillance; underlines the importance of closer regional cooperation between Bulgaria, Romania and Türkiye, including through existing Black Sea mine countermeasure arrangements, and of strengthening cooperation with Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova in the field of maritime safety and resilience; supports the gradual involvement of interested EU Member States and regional partners in the Black Sea maritime security hub, in accordance with its civilian mandate and with full respect for national sovereignty and international law;
12. Underlines that the protection of Black Sea shipping and Danube transport routes is essential to food security and the livelihoods of farmers, transport workers and port communities; calls on the Commission to monitor the risks to maritime trade, the supply of food, energy and agricultural input, as well as the effects on their prices, to prepare contingency measures, including strategic stocks of food and raw materials, to support import-dependent partner countries, and to support secure and resilient alternative export routes for Ukrainian agricultural products, while protecting consumers from price shocks; believes that strengthened maritime security and surveillance capabilities must be accompanied by sustained diplomatic efforts aimed at preventing further escalation and restoring safe and unimpeded civilian navigation in the Black Sea; calls for continued diplomatic and practical efforts to safeguard maritime trade routes, reduce

risks for commercial shipping and ensure that disruptions to essential supplies do not disproportionately affect vulnerable populations and import-dependent countries; encourages the Commission and the VP/HR, in cooperation with relevant regional and international partners, to explore, in particular, verifiable arrangements for the cessation of attacks against civilian commercial vessels, ports and other civilian maritime infrastructure; stresses that such arrangements must fully respect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and its right of self-defence and must contribute to the broader objective of achieving a just and lasting peace in accordance with international law;

13. Condemns the Russian shadow fleet's role in maritime accidents, sabotage and sanctions evasion; welcomes recent interdictions of shadow fleet vessels by Member States and calls for monitoring, inspection, boarding and enforcement to be stepped up and coordinated, drawing on the US Proliferation Security Initiative as a model, and for a comprehensive list of shadow fleet vessels to be published; calls on the Council and the Commission to step up pressure on Russia's war economy through further sanctions packages targeting revenues, the shadow fleet and maritime services, and by closing circumvention routes, including re-exports through third countries, and to ensure effective enforcement; warns that easing sanctions or granting Russia new revenue streams, such as the announced arrangement regarding Russian diesel, risks financing the war and sends the wrong signal; welcomes the VP/HR's statement that pressure, not concessions, is the fastest way to end the war;
14. Calls for the mutual defence clause in Article 42(7) TEU to be further operationalised for armed aggression and severe hybrid scenarios, including in maritime areas, through a playbook tested in regular exercises; recalls the solidarity clause in Article 222 TFEU; notes that affected Member States have informed their allies and requested support, and stresses the EU's readiness to act in full solidarity with any Member State under attack;
15. Warns that orchestrated foreign information manipulation and interference campaigns are a key instrument in recent Russian escalation; calls on the Commission, the European External Action Service and the Member States to use the rapid alert system and communication playbooks to provide accurate and timely information to citizens and the maritime industry;
16. Calls on the Commission, the Member States and the VP/HR to strengthen cooperation with the International Maritime Organization in addressing threats to civilian shipping in the Black Sea, including through its mechanisms for maritime safety, the technical assessment of incidents, the exchange of information and the development of measures to protect seafarers and commercial vessels; stresses the importance of ensuring that incidents involving civilian shipping are thoroughly investigated and that the findings contribute to effective preventive measures and, where appropriate, accountability under international law;

Support for Ukraine

17. Underlines that Ukraine is the key battleground against Russian hybrid and conventional aggression and is Europe's first line of defence; stresses that the outcome of the war and the stance of the international community will determine Russia's future conduct in Europe and beyond; reiterates that Ukraine's security is Europe's security;

18. Expresses its dismay that, after more than four years of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, international efforts to assist Ukraine have still not been sufficient to end the war and prevent Russia from continuing to escalate its war of aggression against Ukraine as well as its hybrid attacks against European countries that support Ukraine's legitimate defence; urges the EU, its Member States, and their transatlantic allies and international partners to undertake even more effective military, political and diplomatic efforts, and to massively increase their military support for Ukraine, in particular in the area of air defence and deep strike capabilities, and to substantially enhance economic pressure on Russia in order to definitively stop Russia's war of aggression, enable Ukraine to liberate its people and re-establish full control over its entire territory within its internationally recognised borders;
 19. Calls on the Member States and their defence industries to deepen cooperation with Ukraine, drawing on Ukraine's unparalleled experience in drone and counter-drone warfare to improve their ability to protect their citizens and defend their territory; reiterates its call for a European-led integrated air protection zone over uncontested territory of Ukraine, as a form of forward defence against Russia's increasingly frequent and deliberate attacks against European territory;
 20. Reiterates its support for a just and lasting peace for Ukraine based on international law, accountability and Russian reparations, with credible security guarantees and with the EU at the table;
 21. Reiterates its firm conviction that, as part of international efforts to ensure justice and accountability, Russia will have to pay for the massive damage caused in Ukraine; calls, therefore, for the EU to use the cash balances associated with Russian sovereign assets immobilised under EU sanctions to back a reparations loan that would serve to support Ukraine's defence and reconstruction and increase pressure on Russia to end its war of aggression;
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22. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Secretary General of NATO, the International Maritime Organization, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the President, Government and Parliament of Ukraine.