

Black Sea: U.S., Ukraine to Lead Naval Exercise with 32 Nations from Six Continents

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Global Research, June 23, 2021

[Anti-bellum](#) 22 June 2021

Region: [Europe](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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The annual U.S.-led multinational naval exercise in the Black Sea, Sea Breeze, will begin on June 28 and continue until July 10. As with previous iterations this year’s exercise will be co-hosted by the U.S. and Ukraine.

Though as the name indicates primarily a series of maritime drills, Sea Breeze also includes air and land components.

Currently [there are three warships from NATO nations in the Black Sea](#): the U.S. interceptor missile/guided-missile destroyer *USS Laboon*, the British destroyer *HMS Defender* and Dutch frigate *HNLMS Evertsen*. The first is part of the carrier strike group attached to the *USS Dwight D. Eisenhower* aircraft carrier and the latter two to the new *HMS Queen Elizabeth* carrier.

As the massive Defender Europe 21 war games wrapped up this week, several components of which were held in the Black Sea, the [public relations bureau of U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa and U.S. Sixth Fleet announced](#) that this year’s Sea Breeze will include military personnel, ships, planes and equipment from the most nations ever: 32. From six continents. Participating countries are: Albania, Australia, Brazil, Britain, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, France, Georgia, Greece, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Morocco, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Senegal, Spain, South Korea, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates and the U.S. All are NATO members or partners except for Brazil and Senegal, but Brazil has been contributing to war games held by the U.S. in Africa and Europe lately and may well soon join its neighbor Colombia as a NATO partner; and Senegal, which is also now participating in the U.S./NATO African Lion military exercise, may join fellow African NATO partners Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia.



U.S. Navy graphic

The war games will include 5,000 troops, 32 ships, 40 aircraft and 18 special operations and diving teams.

The American chargé d'affaires to Ukraine, Kristina Kvien (a graduate of the U.S. Army War College), was quoted by U.S. Navy stating: "The United States is proud to partner with Ukraine in co-hosting the multinational maritime exercise Sea Breeze, which will help enhance interoperability and capabilities among participating nations. We are committed to maintaining the safety and security of the Black Sea."

Interoperability is a NATO catchword for military integration. This year's maneuvers will include amphibious warfare, land warfare, air defense, special operations and anti-submarine warfare facets.

Only one of the six (recognized) nations on the Black Sea is not a NATO member (Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey) or a NATO Enhanced Opportunities Partner (Georgia and Ukraine): Russia. It is that country that troops, ships and military aircraft from 32 nations on six continents will be deployed against in a few days.

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