

US Warship in Georgia for Joint Exercises

By [Global Research](#)

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Tbilisi — A US warship arrived in [Georgia's](#) Black Sea waters Thursday for exercises with the country's coast guard, the [US embassy](#) said, in the latest of a series of such visits that have infuriated Russia.

The USS John L. Hall guided-missile frigate arrived in the vicinity of the Georgian port of Poti, an embassy spokesman said, about 30 kilometres (19 miles) from the de facto border with the Russian-backed breakaway Georgian region of Abkhazia.

"The aim of the visit is to conduct joint exercises with the Georgian coast guard," said the embassy spokesman, who declined to be named. He said the ship would be in Georgian waters for "a few days" but declined to provide further details.

At least seven US warships have visited Georgian ports since its August 2008 war with Russia, including the USS Mount Whitney, the flagship of the US Sixth [Fleet](#), which visited a few weeks after the conflict.

Russian officials have criticised the visits as provocative, while Tbilisi has accused Moscow of stoking tensions by deploying patrol ships off the coast of Abkhazia.

Georgia's coast guard has been attempting to enforce a naval blockade of Abkhazia and last year seized several Turkish-operated vessels for attempting to trade with the rebel region.

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