To provide for security in the Black Sea region, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself and Mr. ROMNEY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

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A BILL

To provide for security in the Black Sea region, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-

tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Black Sea Security Act of 2022”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Black Sea region is of critical impor-
tance to the national security of six nations:
Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria, and Turkey.

(2) The Black Sea region has been a zone of increasing tension and conflict on the eastern border of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) following President Vladimir Putin’s 2014 and 2022 invasions of Ukraine and 2008 invasion of Georgia, which still has territories illegally occupied by the Russian Federation.

(3) Since the illegal attempted annexation of Ukraine’s Crimea region in 2014, the Russian Federation has enhanced the Black Sea Fleet to increase its presence in the region, enhanced its air and coastal defenses, disregarded international law regarding freedom of navigation to interrupt in regular shipping routes, and threatened freedom of navigation exercises in the Black Sea.

(4) Since its military interventions in the Black Sea region starting in 2008, the Russian Federation has undertaken persistent hybrid measures to further destabilize the region through malign influence campaigns.

(5) Since the 2022 invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, the unity among Black Sea countries has strengthened, particularly among
NATO member countries Romania, Bulgaria, and Turkey.

(6) The Russian Federation is leveraging its illegal claim over Black Sea waters and the territories of Black Sea region states to execute military exercises to threaten the territorial sovereignty of Ukraine and kill innocent civilians.

(7) Russia has a long history of using its position in the Black Sea and Crimea to threaten NATO allies, including the HMS Defender incident of June 2021, when a British ship was harassed by Russian ships while undertaking a freedom of navigation patrol in waters near the Crimean Peninsula.

(8) While NATO has conducted routine exercises in the region, the United States presence in the Black Sea has decreased since Russia’s annexation of Crimea due to competing security priorities among allies, a lack of available ships and resources, and a lack of a clearly defined regional strategy.

(9) While, in February 2022, Turkey blocked the entry of Russian warships into the Black Sea pursuant to the Convention regarding the Regime of the Straits, signed at Montreux, Switzerland July 20, 1936 (commonly known as the “Montreux Convention”), the Montreux Convention does not ac-
count for the increase in size, weight, and capabilities of modern warships, and Russia does not have the same limits on tonnage as non-littoral states.

(10) Turkey has resisted attempts to change its interpretation of the Montreux Convention to avoid weakening their position in the region.

(11) While NATO has long recognized the strategic importance of the Black Sea, Russia has sought to capitalize on at times divergent priorities among NATO members in the region to advance expansionist claims.

(12) On February 24, 2022, Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin instigated an unprovoked, unjustified, and unlawful war violating the territorial integrity of the sovereign country of Ukraine and is using the Russian Federation’s military presence on the Black Sea to kill innocent Ukrainian civilians.

(13) The Russian Federation’s unprovoked war on Ukraine has underscored the importance of the Black Sea region to United States national security interests.

(14) The Russian Federation’s unprovoked war has caused a food security crisis as 20,000,000-30,000,000 tons of Ukrainian grain remain unable
to leave Ukraine in an efficient and secure manner.

The war has also impeded Ukraine’s ability to produce and transport next year’s harvest.

(15) The Russian Federation’s actions in and around the Black Sea have also disrupted secure, reliable access to energy resources throughout Europe. Notably, Gazprom suspended natural gas supplies to Poland and Bulgaria on April 27, 2022, after the two countries refused to abide by a March 31, 2022, Russian decree that all payments be made in rubles, in violation of the terms of their contracts with Gazprom.

(16) The People’s Republic of China (PRC)’s coercive economic policies also threaten the economic stability of the Black Sea region.

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON BLACK SEA SECURITY.

(a) Sense of Congress.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) it is in the interest of the United States to prevent the spread of further armed conflict in Europe by recognizing the Black Sea region as an arena of Russian aggression;

(2) the littoral members of the Black Sea are critical in countering aggression by the Government
of the Russian Federation and maintaining the collective security of the NATO alliance;

(3) the repeated, illegal, unprovoked, and violent attempts of the Russian Federation to expand its territory and control access to the Mediterranean through the Black Sea constitutes a threat to the national security of the United States and the NATO alliance;

(4) the United States condemns attempts by the Russian Federation to change or alter boundaries in the Black Sea region by any means contrary to international law;

(5) the United States and its allies should robustly counter Russia’s illegal territorial claims on the Crimean Peninsula, along Ukraine’s territorial waters in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov, in the Black Sea’s international waters, and in the territories it is illegally occupying in Ukraine;

(6) the United States should continue to work within NATO and with NATO allies to develop a long-term strategy to enhance security, establish a permanent, sustainable presence in the eastern flank, and bolster the democratic resilience of its allies and partners in the region;
(7) the United States should also work with the European Union in coordinating a strategy to support democratic initiatives and economic prosperity in the region, which includes two European Union members and four aspirant nations;

(8) the United States should explore efforts to rebuild trust and bilateral relations with Turkey, a key ally in the Black Sea region and a bulwark against Iran;

(9) it is in the interest of the United States that NATO adopt a robust strategy toward the Black Sea, including by working with interested partner countries in the region to advance common security objectives;

(10) the United States should work to foster dialogue among countries within the Black Sea region to improve communication and intelligence sharing and increase cyber defense capabilities;

(11) countries with historic and economic ties to Russia are looking to the United States and Europe to provide a positive economic presence in the broader region as a counterbalance to the Russian Federation’s malign influence in the region;
(12) it is in the interest of the United States to support and bolster the economic ties between the United States and Black Sea partners;

(13) the United States should support the initiative undertaken by central and eastern European states to advance the Three Seas Initiative Fund to strengthen transport, energy, and digital infrastructure connectivity in the region between the Adriatic Sea, Baltic Sea, and Black Sea;

(14) there are mutually beneficial opportunities for increased investment and economic expansion, particularly on energy, climate, and transport infrastructure initiatives, between the United States and Black Sea states and the broader region;

(15) improved economic ties between the United States and the Black Sea states and the broader region can lead to a strengthened strategic partnership;

(16) the United States must address the food security challenges arising from closure of Ukraine’s Black Sea ports, as this global challenge will have critical national security implications for the United States, our partners, and allies;

(17) Russia has a brutal history of using hunger as a weapon and must be stopped; and
countering the PRC’s coercive economic
pursuits remains an important policy imperative in
order to further integrate the Black Sea countries
into western economies and improve regional sta-

SEC. 4. REPORT ON UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARD THE
BLACK SEA REGION.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the
date of the enactment of this Act, the National Security
Council, in coordination with the Department of State,
Department of Defense, the Department of the Treasury,
the Department of Commerce, the Department of Energy,
the United States Agency for International Development,
the Trade and Development Agency, the United States
Export-Import Bank, the Department of Agriculture, and
the United States International Development Finance
Corporation, shall deliver to the appropriate congressional
committees an interagency report that outlines current
United States efforts and policy options toward Black Sea
countries and the broader region and addresses the mat-
ters addressed in section 3, including NATO engagement
in the region.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The report required under sub-
section (a) shall include the following elements:
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(1) An overview of ongoing efforts by relevant United States Government agencies toward the Black Sea region, both through bilateral initiatives with Black Sea countries and any regional initiatives toward the region, to provide military and security assistance, economic support, and good governance initiatives.

(2) A description of current efforts and policy options that can be undertaken by the Department of State, the United States International Development Finance Corporation, the United States Export-Import Bank, the Trade and Development Agency, the Department of Energy, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Commerce, and the Department of Agriculture to promote economic growth, integration, and quality infrastructure (including for energy integration and independence) in the Black Sea littoral states and the broader region.

(3) A breakdown of initiatives to provide the following types of support, together with a breakdown of funding to support these efforts:

(A) Military assistance, including infrastructure in support of enhanced deployments and supply logistics in the region.
(B) Economic assistance, including support for the food security crisis.

(C) Countering Russian disinformation and propaganda in the Black Sea region.

(D) Energy diversification and regional market integration and supply to reduce dependence on energy from the Russian Federation and promote clean energy initiatives.

(E) Using economic statecraft tools, such as trade and monetary policy, equity investments and debt financing and political risk insurance, to increase the United States’ bilateral trade and investment in the region and opportunities for near-shoring production in the broader region for the European market.

(F) Fostering greater regional cooperation.

(G) Increasing access to global capital markets and enhancement of local and regional sources of capital for critical infrastructure and other investments.

(H) A plan for helping United States allies in the region to accelerate their transitions from legacy Russian military equipment and promote NATO interoperability.
(I) Strengthening rule-of-law and anti-corruption efforts.

(J) Addressing the PRC’s coercive economic actions.

(4) An assessment of NATO engagement in the region and policy options to address the changed regional security environment, including NATO’s presence in the region and an outline of NATO’s planned and recent military exercises in the region, in particular those under Headquarters Multinational Division Southeast (in Romania) and the four new battle groups in Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia.

SEC. 5. UNITED STATES POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States to—

(1) actively deter the threat of further Russian escalation in the Black Sea region and defend freedom of navigation in the Black Sea to prevent the spread of further armed conflict in Europe;

(2) advocate within NATO, among NATO allies, and within the European Union to develop a long-term coordinated strategy to enhance security, establish a permanent, sustainable presence in the eastern flank, and bolster the democratic resilience of United States allies and partners in the region;
(3) support and bolster the economic ties between the United States and Black Sea partners, and mobilize the United States International Development Finance Corporation, the Export-Import Bank, the Trade and Development Agency, the Department of State, the United States Agency for International Development, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Commerce to increase United States presence and investment in Black Sea countries;

(4) provide economic alternatives to the PRC’s coercive economic options that destabilize and further erode economic integration of the Black Sea littoral states;

(5) ensure that the United States continues to support Black Sea countries to strengthen their democratic institutions to prevent corruption and accelerate their advancement into the Euroatlantic community; and

(6) encourage the initiative undertaken by central and eastern European states to advance the Three Seas Initiative to strengthen transport, energy, and digital infrastructure connectivity in the region between the Adriatic Sea, Baltic Sea, and Black Sea.
SEC. 6. BLACK SEA SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.

(a) BLACK SEA DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY STRATEGY.—Not later than 360 days after [the date of the enactment of this Act], drawing from the policy options developed in the report in section 4, the National Security Council, in coordination with the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the United States International Development Finance Corporation, the United States Agency for International Development, the United States Export-Import Bank, the Trade and Development Agency the Department of Commerce, the Department of Energy, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of the Treasury, shall direct an interagency strategy, based on the findings of the report under section 4, to increase military assistance and coordination with NATO and the European Union, deepen economic ties, strengthen economic and energy security and enhance security assistance with Black Sea countries, and support efforts to bolster their democratic resilience.

(b) PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES.—The initiative established under subsection (a) shall have the following goals and objectives:

(1) Ensuring the efficient and effective delivery of security assistance to the Black Sea states, prioritizing assistance that will bolster defenses
against hybrid warfare and improve interoperability with NATO forces.

(2) Bolstering United States support for the region’s energy security and integration with Europe and reducing their dependence on Russia while supporting energy diversification.

(3) Mitigating the impact of economic coercion by the Russian Federation and the PRC on Black Sea states and identifying new opportunities for foreign direct investment from the United States and cooperating countries and the enhancement of United States business ties.

(4) Increasing high-level engagement between the United States and the Black Sea states, and reinforcing economic growth, financing quality infrastructure, and reinforcing trade with a focus on improving high-level economic cooperation.

(5) Increasing coordination with the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to maximize effectiveness and minimize duplication.

(c) Activities.—

(1) Security.—The strategy established under subsection (a) shall include the following elements related to security:
(A) A plan to increase interagency coordination toward the Black Sea region.

(B) A strategy for—

(i) the United States to increase NATO’s presence and capabilities in the Black Sea region, including land and air forces; or

(ii) a United States-led initiative with NATO member countries to increase coordination, presence, and regional engagement among Black Sea countries.

(C) A strategy to increase military assistance toward Black Sea countries, particularly Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, and Georgia.

(D) Prioritization of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems to monitor Russian operations in the Black Sea region, as well as upgrading from air policing to air defense missions.

(E) An assessment of the value of establishing a joint, multinational three-star headquarters on the Black Sea, responsible for planning, readiness, exercises, and coordination of all military activity in the greater Black Sea region.
(F) An overview of Foreign Military Financing, International Military Education and Training, and other United States security assistance to the region.

(G) A plan for communicating the changes to NATO posture to the public in allied and partner countries, as well as in the Russian Federation and Belarus.

(H) A plan for combating Russian disinformation and propaganda in the Black Sea region, utilizing the resources of the United States Government, including the Global Engagement Center.

(I) A plan to promote greater freedom of navigation, working primarily with Turkey, Ukraine, Romania, and Bulgaria to allow for greater security and economic Black Sea access.

(2) ECONOMIC PROSPERITY.—The strategy established under subsection (a) shall include the following elements related to economic prosperity:

(A) A strategy to foster dialogue between experts from the United States and from the Black Sea states on economic expansion, foreign direct investment, strengthening rule of
1 law initiatives, and mitigating economic coercion by Russia and the PRC.

(B) A strategy for the United States International Development Finance Corporation and all Federal departments and agencies that contribute to United States economic statecraft to identify new opportunities for private investment in Black Sea states.

(C) An evaluation undertaken by United States International Development Finance Corporation to establish regional offices in Georgia, Ukraine, or Romania.

(D) Assessments on energy diversification. The assessment should focus on the immediate need to replace energy supplies from Russia, and recognize the long-term importance of broader energy diversification, including clean energy initiatives.

(E) Assessments of potential food security solutions.

(3) DEMOCRATIC RESILIENCE.—The strategy established under subsection (a) shall include the following elements related to democratic resilience:

(A) A strategy to increase independent media and United States-supported media ini-
tiatives to combat foreign malign influence in
the Black Sea region.

(B) Greater mobilization of initiatives
spearheaded by the Global Engagement Center
and the United States Agency for International
Development to counter Russian propaganda
and disinformation in the Black Sea region.

(4) REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY.—The strategy
established under subsection (a) shall promote re-
gional connectivity by sending high-level representa-
tives of the Department of State or other agency
partners to—

(A) the Black Sea region not less fre-
quently than twice a year; and

(B) major regional fora on infrastructure
and energy security, including the Three Seas
Initiative Summit.

(d) IDENTIFICATION OF NECESSARY PROGRAMS AND
RESOURCES.—No later than 360 days after the date of
the enactment of this Act, the interagency shall identify
any necessary program, policy, or budgetary resources re-
quired, by agency, to support implementation of the Black
Sea Security Strategy for fiscal years 2024, 2025, and
2026.
SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(2) BLACK SEA STATES.—The term “Black Sea states” means Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia.

(3) THREE SEAS INITIATIVE INVESTMENT FUND COUNTRIES.—The term “Three Seas Initiative Investment Fund countries” means Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Austria, Croatia, Romania, and Bulgaria.