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Condemnation rains in over Russian strike on Greek bulker in the Black Sea



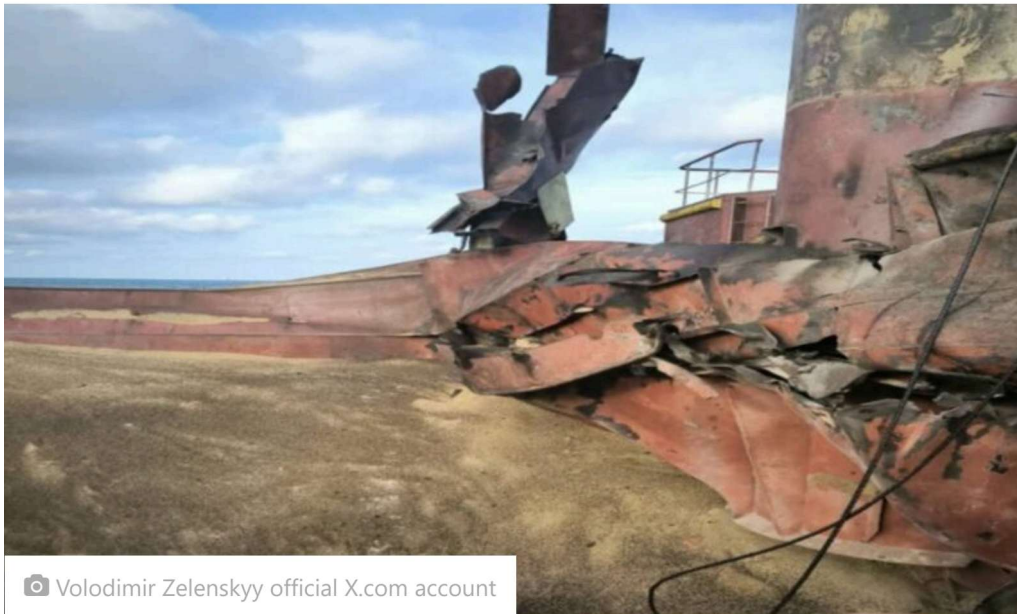
Sam Chambers

• September 13, 2024

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113,955

2 minutes read



Volodimir Zelenskyy official X.com account

There has been widespread international condemnation of a Russian missile strike on a Greek-operated bulk carrier off Romania this week, although security analysts are unsure whether this was a hit specifically aiming at a merchant ship or a misguided strike as part of a wider campaign against Ukrainian infrastructure in the region.

Marking the first confirmed strike on a merchant ship in the Black Sea this year, [the Saint Kitts and Nevis-flagged Aya was struck by a Russian-launched missile on Wednesday night](#) after departing from the port of Chornomorsk, Ukraine with a cargo of grain bound for Egypt.

The ship sustained damage to its port side, including a cargo hold and a crane. The vessel was built in 1997 and is operated by Piraeus-based VRS Maritime Services.

Data from MarineTraffic shows the ship left from Chornomorsk port in Ukraine at 7:31 am local time on Wednesday and made an urgent diversion having crossed international waters. Having been hit in

Romania's exclusive economic zone by a Kh-22 cruise missile with a 1,000 kg warhead which was launched from a Russian Tupolev Tu-22M bomber, the ship veered starboard and made for Romania's territorial waters with images released showing much of the ship's deck badly mangled. The vessel is currently anchored off Constanta, Romania's largest port.

Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy confirmed the incident via social media yesterday. He said that a Russian missile hit "an ordinary civilian vessel" carrying wheat cargo bound for Egypt after the ship had left Ukrainian waters.

Ukrainian foreign minister Andrii Sybiha said the strike was "a brazen attack on freedom of navigation and global food security" while the US ambassador to Ukraine "strongly condemned" the attack and said Russia was responsible. A United Nations spokesperson said the incident was a "stark reminder" of the threats still faced in the Black Sea by civilian vessels. Russia, for its part, has remain tight-lipped on the incident, the [first confirmed attack on a merchant ship in the Black Sea since last November](#).

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly requests the Russian Federation to stop any attack on commercial ships and to respect the freedom of navigation enjoyed by the states in the Black Sea," Romania's Foreign Ministry stated.

According to the Romanian ministry, the ship was 55 km from Sfântu Gheorghe, a commune in Tulcea county in Romania's exclusive economic zone when it came under attack. An exclusive economic zone is the maritime area adjacent to a nation's territorial waters.

Whether the ship was an intentional target remains unclear. Kristian Bischoff, a threat analyst at Risk Intelligence, pointed out, via a post on social media, that the Russians have recently stepped up targeting of infrastructure on Zmiinyi Island (also known as Snake Island, [made famous in the early days of the war between Ukraine and Russia](#)) and nearby offshore platforms. The Russian missiles used tend to lock on to radio signatures or radar, and if no major radar installations are in place

on, for example, Zmiinyi Island, the missiles then lock onto the next major signature nearby, which could well be vessels passing by.

#Greece

#Romania

#Russia

#Ukraine

Comments

**Reign**

September 15, 2024 at 4:59 am

Were they heavy rains or light rains?

**Sbu Dube**

September 15, 2024 at 8:16 pm

Maybe it was a Ukrainian strike.

**Robert Hudson**

September 15, 2024 at 11:47 pm

Problem is that an agreement was reached to allow grain shipments from Ukraine. That timed out with virtually all the west insisting that the war carried on and now even into Russia (With our weapons).

What would you do if you were them.

Sadly BIG money in arms. BIG money shelled out by millions of small time citizens to fund a war that has NOTHING to do with us. Forget the project fear saying we are next. It is laughable!!!

Finally don't you think Putin's army has been very reserved not invading more of Ukraine. Lot more there to take if we were NEXT!

 Volodimir Zelenskyy official X.com account