

# **NATO: Russia has significantly increased number of frigates and submarines in Black Sea**



Russia has lately significantly increased the number of its frigates and newest submarines in the Black Sea.

Commodore Jeanette Morang, Commander Surface Forces NATO made this statement on the air of Ukrainian DOM TV channel.

According to her, the Black Sea is of great value for international trade and, therefore, freedom of navigation and access to trade routes and coastal infrastructure remains an urgent need of the Black Sea countries and a necessary condition for their economic well-being. "As you probably know, about 80% of all trade operations are carried out by sea, and our goal is to ensure that every nation has a right to free access to the sea," Morang added.

At the same time, she noted, the Black Sea has its own peculiarities. "First of all, it should be mentioned that the passage of vessels is regulated by the Montreux Convention. Pursuant to the Convention, the countries lacking access to the Black Sea cannot remain in it for more than 21 consecutive days. Another feature is

Russia's desire to change existing borders and rapidly build up its military presence in the region. The Russian Federation has lately significantly increased the number of its frigates and newest submarines in the Black Sea. This activity came as no surprise to the Alliance. We are convinced that it is important to strengthen our presence in the region as well," Commander Surface Forces NATO said.

She added that the Alliance stood for stability in the region and the economic well-being of the countries bordering the Black Sea. NATO is convinced that all countries of the Black Sea region share these views, Morang stressed.

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