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OFFERED BY MR. KEATING OF MASSACHUSETTS

At the end of title XVIII, add the following:

Subtitle D—Black Sea Security Act of 2023

SEC. 1861. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the “Black Sea Security Act of 2023”.

SEC. 1862. 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 support efforts to prevent the spread of further armed conflict in Europe by recognizing the Black Sea region as an arena of Russian aggression;

(2) littoral states of the Black Sea are critical in countering aggression by the Government of the Russian Federation and contributing to the collective security of NATO;

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

(4) the United States condemns attempts by the Russian Federation to change or alter boundaries in the Black Sea region by force or any means contrary to international law and to impose a sphere of influence across the region;

(5) the United States and its allies should robustly counter Russia’s illegitimate 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 along NATO’s eastern flank, and bolster the democratic resilience of its allies and partners in the region;

(7) the United States should work within NATO and with NATO Allies to develop a regular, rotational maritime presence in the Black Sea;

(8) the United States should also work with the European Union on coordinating a strategy to support democratic initiatives and economic prosperity
in the region, which includes two European Union members and four European Union aspirant nations;

(9) Turkey’s behavior towards some regional allies and democratic states has been counterproductive and has contributed to increased tensions in the region, and Turkey should avoid any actions to further escalate regional tensions;

(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 states;

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

(17) Turkey, in coordination with the United Nations, has played an important role in alleviating global food insecurity by negotiating two agreements to allow grain exports from Ukrainian ports through a safe corridor in the Black Sea;

(18) Russia has a brutal history of using hunger as a weapon and must be stopped;

(19) countering the PRC’s coercive economic pursuits remains an important policy imperative in order to further integrate the Black Sea states into
western economies and improve regional stability;

and

(20) Turkey’s continued delay in ratifying Sweden and Finland’s accession to NATO undermines the strength of the alliance and inhibits the united international response to Russia’s unprovoked war in Ukraine.

SEC. 1863. UNITED STATES POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States to—

(1) actively deter the threat of Russia’s further 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) advocate within NATO and among NATO Allies to develop a regular, rotational maritime presence in the Black Sea;

(4) support and bolster the economic ties between the United States and Black Sea partners and mobilize the Department of State, the Department
of Defense, and other relevant Federal departments and agencies by enhancing the United States presence and investment in Black Sea states;

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

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

(7) 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. 1864. BLACK SEA SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.

(a) BLACK SEA SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the National Security Council, in coordination with the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and other relevant Federal departments
and agencies, is authorized to direct an interagency strategy to increase coordination with NATO and the European Union, deepen economic ties, strengthen energy security, support efforts to bolster their democratic resilience, and enhance security assistance with our regional partners in accordance with the values and interests of the United States.

(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 regional partners in accordance with the values and interests of the United 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 with regional partners in accordance with the values and interests of the United States.

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

(5) Increasing United States coordination with the European Union and NATO to maximize effectiveness and minimize duplication.

(c) ACTIVITIES.—

(1) SECURITY.—The strategy established under subsection (a) should include the following elements related to security:

(A) A plan to increase interagency coordination on the Black Sea region.

(B) An assessment of whether a United States-led initiative with NATO allies to increase coordination, presence, and regional engagement among Black Sea states is advisable.

(C) A strategy to increase security assistance toward Black Sea states, focused on Ukraine, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, and Georgia.
(D) Prioritization of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance systems to monitor Russia’s operations in the Black Sea region.

(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 Allied and partner military activity in the greater Black Sea region.

(F) An assessment of the challenges and opportunities of establishing a regular, rotational NATO maritime presence in the Black Sea, including an analysis of the capacity, capabilities, and commitment of NATO members to create this type of mission.

(G) An overview of Foreign Military Financing, International Military Education and Training, and other United States security assistance to the region.

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

(I) 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.

(J) A plan to promote greater freedom of navigation 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 law initiatives, and mitigating economic coercion by Russia and the PRC.

(B) A strategy for all the relevant Federal departments and agencies that contribute to United States economic statecraft to expand their presence and identify new opportunities for private investment with regional partners in accordance with the values and interests of the United States.

(C) Assessments on energy diversification, focusing on the immediate need to replace energy supplies from Russia, and recognizing the
long-term importance of broader energy diversification, including clean energy initiatives.

(D) Assessments of potential food security solutions, including sustainable, long-term arrangements beyond the Black Sea Grain Initiative.

(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 initiatives 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 regional connectivity by sending high-level representatives of the Department of State or other agency partners to—

(A) the Black Sea region not less frequently 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.—Not later than 360 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the interagency shall identify any necessary program, policy, or budgetary resources required, by agency, to support implementation of the Black Sea Security Strategy for fiscal years 2024, 2025, and 2026.

(e) RESPONSIBILITIES OF FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES.—Nothing under this section shall be deemed to authorize the National Security Council to assume any of the responsibilities or authorities of the head of any Federal department, agency, or office, including the foreign affairs responsibilities and authorities of the Secretary of State, to oversee the implementation of programs and policies under this section.

SEC. 1865. DEFINITIONS.

In this subtitle:

(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.