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U.S. Rules Out Military Response to Russia-Ukraine Naval Escalation, Official Says

December 07, 2018

Sergei Malgavko / TASS

The United States is not discussing the possibility of a military response to the recent naval flare-up in the Kerch Strait, the highest-ranking U.S. military officer said on Thursday.

Russian vessels fired on and seized three Ukrainian naval ships on Nov. 25 as they attempted to pass through the narrow Kerch Strait into the Sea of Azov, which lies between Russia and Ukraine. Last week, U.S. President Donald Trump canceled his scheduled meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin at a G20 summit over Moscow's actions in the Kerch Strait.

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"There is not a discussion ongoing right now about a military dimension in response to the

Sea of Azov," U.S. Gen. Joseph Dunford, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters at a conference organized by The Washington Post.

On Tuesday, a senior U.S. State Department official warned that Moscow must release the Ukrainian sailors or face growing consequences.

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