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Russian Warship Fires 'Warning Shot' at Norwegian Fishing Boat During Drills, Captain Claims

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The Russian ship Admiral Levchenko. **Neill Rush (CC BY-SA 3.0)**

A Russian warship taking part in naval drills fired a warning shot at a Norwegian fishing boat in the Arctic Ocean earlier this month, the boat's captain told local media on Monday.

The confrontation occurred on Sept. 12 in the Barents Sea between the anti-submarine destroyer Admiral Levchenko — one of Russia's largest warships — and the Ragnhild Kristine, a small Norwegian fishing boat, according to Norwegian news outlet FriFagbevegelse.

While the Russian vessel was outside territorial waters, it was still within Norway's exclusive economic zone, where the Russian Navy was conducting planned live-fire naval drills as part of global exercises known as Ocean-2024.

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The fishing boat's captain, Oystein Orten, said the Admiral Levchenko warned them to "leave the area."

"I replied that moving was out of the question. We had longlines to take onboard," Orten said.

The 163-meter warship then sped toward the 15-meter fishing boat, blowing its horn for 15 seconds, before firing a warning shot that exploded in the water nearby.

"It was a powerful blast, our boat was shaking," Orten recounted, adding that his vessel sailed away while being followed by the Russian warship until it reached safety.

A Norwegian military spokesman confirmed an encounter between the Russian navy and the fishing boat but said there was no observation of a warning shot. "The fishermen might have experienced the situation differently," Lieutenant Colonel Vegard Finberg was quoted as saying by the Barents Observer.

Norwegian fishermen have repeatedly protested Russia's extensive naval exercises in the Barents Sea over the past several years, according to the Barents Observer.

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