

Romania Blames Russia for Deadly Drone Attack on Cargo Ship

By [AFP](#)

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The capsized cargo ship Khoryv in the Black Sea. **ROMANIAN INTERIOR MINISTRY / Handout via REUTERS**

Romania said Friday that one sailor had died and three were missing after a drone struck and sank a ship in the Black Sea, with the country's president blaming Russia for the attack.

The cargo ship Khoryv, flying the Comoros flag, was "struck by a drone and sank near Romanian territorial waters," President Nicușor Dan wrote in a Facebook post.

Speaking to reporters, Dan said the attack was "clearly part of the escalation that Russia is carrying out in the context of the war in Ukraine."

Romania launched a rescue operation after the Khoryv sent a distress signal around 10:00 am local time, 13 nautical miles from the Romanian port of Constanta.

Romanian authorities said 10 Ukrainian and three Azerbaijani crewmembers were on board.

"Of the 13 people on board, 10 were rescued by another commercial vessel in the area, nine of whom were alive and one of whom had died. Three others are still missing," Romania's interior ministry said in a statement.

It added that the vessel "sustained major damage and capsized."

"Due to adverse weather conditions and poor visibility, an aerial rescue operation by helicopter is not possible," the Romanian Naval Authority said in a separate statement.

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Romanian Prime Minister Luca Niculescu said on Facebook the attack was "unacceptable and constitutes a flagrant violation of international law."

The strikes on civilian shipping in the waters off NATO and EU members Bulgaria and Romania have left scores of sailors missing or dead.

Seven ship crewmembers went missing on Oct. 15 off the coast of Romania when the Wine Trader, a chemical tanker, caught fire after a drone attack.

Romanian fighter jets also shot down two Russian drones over the Black Sea last weekend.

On Thursday, following a meeting of Romania's Supreme Council for National Defense, the presidency said that "threats to freedom of navigation and critical infrastructure have increased significantly."

Romania is looking into "accelerated development of maritime surveillance capabilities, mine countermeasures and effective countermeasures against drones that intrude unauthorized into national airspace and territorial waters," the presidency said.

NATO said after talks on Black Sea security on Tuesday that it was deploying additional planes, drones and radar systems to the area because of the attacks on ships.

Foreign Minister Dan Neculăescu said Romania was working with NATO allies including Bulgaria and Turkey to "fast-track the additional surveillance capabilities."

In his Facebook post, Dan said it was "time for Russia to take the peace initiatives put forward by the United States and Europe seriously, to accept the proposals for a ceasefire and to bring the war to an end."

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