MS DAILY BRIEF - 15 October 2022

Cupons

Morocco buys Spanish corvette "Avante 1800". Navy seeks ships with high autonomy

The Moroccan government has approved the completion of a project to purchase a warship from Spain.

The final text of the Moroccan government's approval of a €95 million loan agreement from Spanish bank Santander was published in the Official Gazette on Tuesday.

The Moroccan press reported that Rabat has acquired, with financing from the Spanish bank Santander, the warship "Avante 1800" to be built by the Spanish company Navantia in the city of Cadiz, in a transaction worth around €140 million.

The deal is expected to be strengthened by the purchase of two additional warships from Navantia. The company said it will design and build a special version for Morocco.

The Moroccan Navy is looking for OPV patrol vessels with a high range due to the large area of the Moroccan exclusive economic zone.

The "Avante 1800" corvette, in combat version, has a length of 89.80 metres, a width of 13.2 metres and a displacement of 1900 tonnes. It has a maximum speed of 25 knots, a range of 3000 nautical miles and the capacity to stay at sea for 21 days.

Source: https://www.defenseromania.ro/marocul-cumpara-o-nava-de-razboi-spaniola-avante-1800_618783.html

Ukraine's Foreign Ministry announced Russian plans to sabotage "Turkish Stream" and blame Ukraine

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Thursday urged Western partners to warn Russia about Russian energy terrorism, stating the impossibility of lifting sanctions against Moscow or restarting Nord Stream 2. According to European Truth, this is stated in the Foreign Ministry's commentary. The agency points out that Russia has previously tried unsuccessfully to persuade European governments to make concessions, including lifting sanctions, using energy blackmail. "That's why Putin decided to switch from blackmail to terrorism - physical damage to energy infrastructure. His goal is to destroy supply routes and issue an ultimatum: launch Nord Stream 2, because you have no other option. There have already been public hints of this from Russian officials." , - believes the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They add that Ukraine regularly informs foreign partners about possible Russian sabotage aimed at destroying alternative ways of supplying energy carriers. Thus, earlier, Volodimir Zelenski publicly warned about the Russian Federation's preparedness for possible damage to the Ukrainian gas transmission infrastructure. Even in October 2021, Germany did not believe that Nord Stream 2 threatened energy security "We also have data about possible similar Russian plans regarding Turkey," the Foreign Ministry says. Kiev rejects Moscow's accusation that it is involved in planning or carrying out any actions against the energy infrastructure, calling it an "informational cover-up for Russia's own malicious plans." "The Ukrainian side insists that the only way for partners to prevent Russian energy terrorism is to take a firm stand now and publicly declare that launching Nord Stream 2 or lifting sanctions against Russia will not be under any circumstances," they believe. in the Foreign Ministry The day before, Russian President Vladimir Putin said again that Russia could supply gas to Europe via the surviving branch of Nord Stream 2 or an alternative route through Turkey (i.e., Turkish Stream). Recall that North Stream-2 did not pass certification before the Russian invasion of Ukraine and is not yet in use, and has been under sanctions since.

Source: https://www.blackseanews.net/read/195507

Major flaws found on South Korea's ROKS 214 submarine fleet

Jeong Ji (SS-073), the second KSS-II Son Won Il-class submarine, at the Busan naval base during MADEX 2019. Major defects found on South Korea's Type 214 submarine fleet According to a report presented by National Assembly member of the People's Power Party Shin Wonsik, major defects have been found on all nine of the Republic of Korea Navy's (ROKN) Son Won-il class submarines, modified versions of the German Type 214 also known as KSS II. This is a major blow to the ROKN's submarine force, which relies heavily on the vessels.

According to Shin, defects in the inverter module cables were found on 7 of the Son Won-il class submarines, while 2 of them had "functional" defects in the inverter modules themselves. The modules, manufactured by German company Siemens, are a critical component in a submarine's propulsion system, with twelve installed in each submarine. Naval News reported earlier this year that three of the Son Won-il class submarines suffered from problems with the system. Shin's most recent briefing confirmed that the problem is

much more extensive than previously thought. To make matters worse, the exact cause of the cable-related faults remains unknown, meaning that seven of the ROKN submarines have been deployed without the necessary repairs. This has led to numerous incidents, including one involving the third ship of the class, ROKS An Jung-geun, which had to be towed back to shore after becoming stranded in the middle of the East Sea when the inverter modules suddenly failed last January. year. "The biggest problem with this is that ROKN continued to operate the ships without having discovered the cause of the problem, as if there were no problems with the propulsion system... Their claim that there are no problems contradicts the fact that they are trying to replace the modules. ROKN's top personnel need to figure out what's going on." Shin Wonsik, a member of the Shin National Assembly went on to say that the problem is "most likely" the result of depolymerization of the outer sheath of the cables rather than structural defects in the cables themselves, given that they have three layers of protection. However, there could be additional problems. For example, ROKS Jeong Ji, the second ship in the class, has not been installed since October 2019 due to a leak in its cooling system that damaged the inverter module. Naval News interviewed ROKS Captain Jung Ji during MADEX 2019. Furthermore, the inverter modules may have been caused further damage by rust that was generated by the wiring. The Defense Acquisition Program Administration paid Siemens 7.1 billion Korean won (about $5 million) for the repairs. The repair process for each modified Type 214 submarine, including the time needed to transport the modules to Germany, is expected to take six months. This is likely to adversely affect the readiness of the submarine fleet in the coming years. The current administration has blamed the previous administration for this failure.

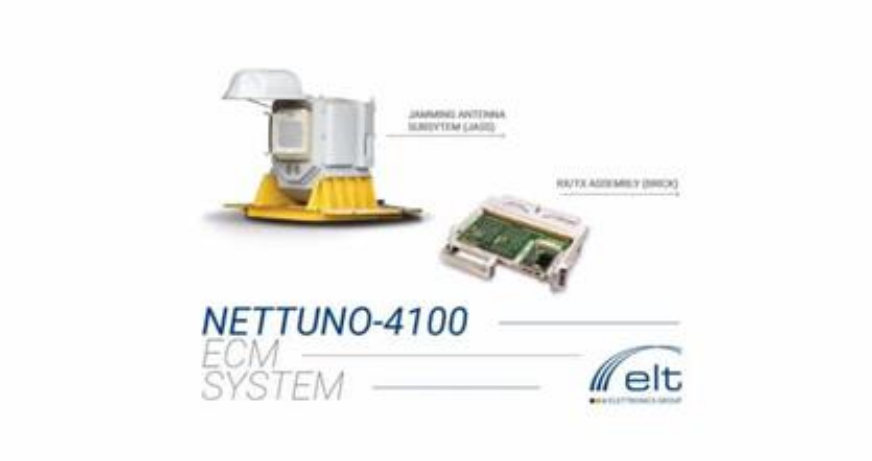
"The importance of the submarine to our military strategy is growing every day... the fact that the previous administration ignored this issue despite the very serious security situation our nation finds itself in is irresponsible and deplorable." - Shin Wonsik, Member of the National Assembly

However, some South Korean observers have also written online that the current administration should also take responsibility and stop redirecting criticism.

About the Son Won-il class (Type 214) The Son Won-il class were acquired as part of the KSS-II programme and are based on the Type 214, a diesel-electric submarine developed by Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werft. The vessels, named after ROKN's first Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Son Won-il, were a major milestone due to their use of air-independent propulsion. Of the nine submarines in ROKN's inventory, the first three were built by Hyundai Heavy Industries (HHI), with the remainder split between HHI and Daewoo Shipbuilding & Marine Engineering. The first vessel was commissioned in 2007. The last ship in the class, ROKS Shin Dol-seok, entered service in 2020. Son Won Il class specifications: Displacement: 1,690 t surface / 1,860 t submerged Length: 65 m Length: 6.3 m Draught: 6 m Weapons: 8 x 533 mm torpedo tubes, 4 capable of using subharpoon Propulsion: 2 x MTU 16V-396; 2 x Piller; AIP system: 2 x HDW PEM; 1 x Siemens Permasyn (2.85 MW) Speed: 10 knots surface; 20 knots submerged Range: 12. 000 nautical miles surface; 420 submerged Crew: 27

Source: https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2022/10/major-defects-found-on-south-koreas-type-214-submarine-fleet/

Elettronica signs MoU to support future Greek Corvette programme



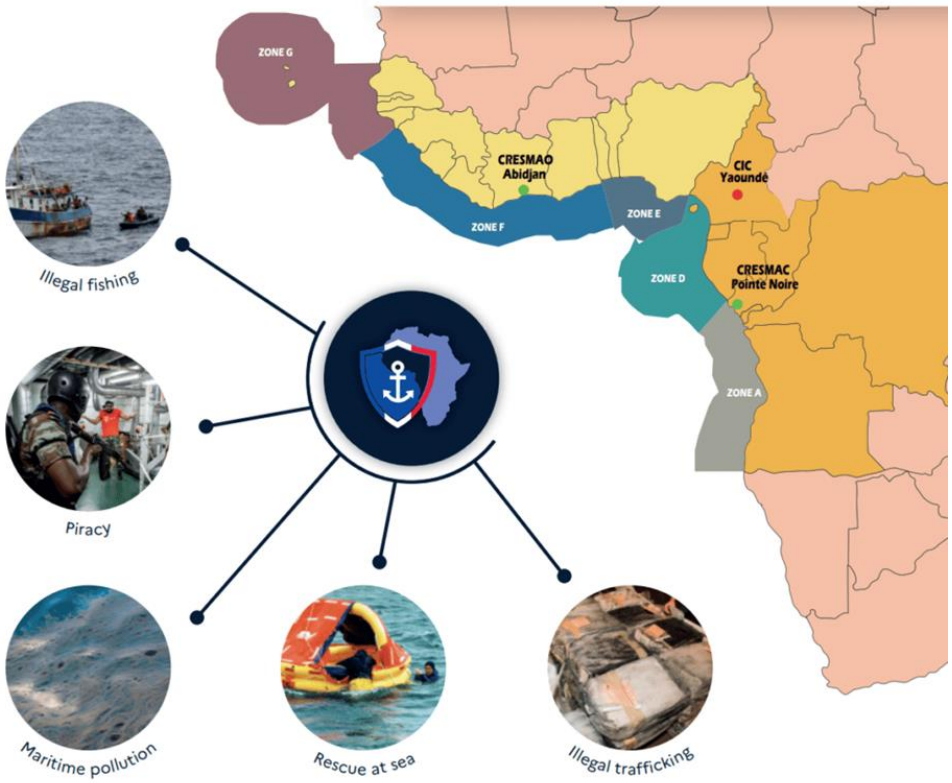
Elettronica together with other Italian and Greek companies have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to support the future programme to supply four corvettes to the Hellenic Navy. Elettronica signed yesterday morning at the Italian Embassy in Athens, in the presence of Ambassador Falcinelli and industrial leaders of various Italian and Greek companies active in the defence sector, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Hellenic Aerospace Industry, a leading company in the Greek defence sector. The MoU falls within the scope of the ongoing tender for the supply of 4 corvette-class naval units to the Hellenic Navy, with Fincantieri as the lead company. A strategic programme heralds a resumption of Greece's important international defence programmes and will hopefully fuel strategic cooperation between the two countries. Specifically, the Elettronica proposal includes the state-of-the-art EW (Zeus) integrated self-protection system. The signing of the above-mentioned Memorandum of Understanding, in addition to developing industrial cooperation between Italy and Greece, could give a boost to the Greek Ministry of Defence's final decision to purchase a technologically advanced all-Italian solution.

Source: https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2022/10/elettronica-inks-mou-to-support-greek-future-corvette-program/

The major African exercise NEMO 2022 starts

The multinational maritime exercise Grand African NEMO 2022 began on 11 October in a wide area stretching from Senegal to Angola. The exercise, involving 17 of the 19 countries bordering the Gulf of Guinea and 8 partner countries, is scheduled to last until 16 October 2022.

Four French units are taking part in this large-scale exercise: the French ship Germinal and the French landing helicopter Dock Tonnerre deployed in the area as part of Operation Corymbe, a maritime patrol aircraft Atlantique 2 and the maritime surveillance aircraft Falcon 50. This exercise is supported by the Sub-Regional Fisheries Commission, the Western



Central Fisheries Committee, the United Nations with UNODC, as well as the European programmes GoGIN, PESCAO and WeCaps. Since 2018, Grand African NEMO has become the most important annual maritime security event in the Gulf of Guinea. This fourth edition aims to share know-how and improve the operational level of participants in the fight against illegal fishing, piracy, maritime pollution, illegal trafficking and rescue at sea. Around forty units at sea and five aircraft have been mobilised to take part in the various exercises designed around the main security challenges facing nations in the region.

By co-leading this ambitious exercise, France and its African partners are making a decisive contribution to improving maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea. Following Grand African NEMO 2022, the Chiefs of Staff of the navies bordering the Gulf of Guinea will meet in Paris on 20 October for a symposium on three topics: training and operational readiness, maritime intelligence sharing and environmental safety.

Covering 5,707 kilometres of West African coastline from Senegal to Angola, the Gulf of Guinea is a key maritime region. Located at the crossroads of major shipping routes, the region is home to important natural resources, including oil, fish and minerals, which are ripe for greed and illicit activities. African NEMO exercises Since the Yaounde summit in 2013, the French Navy has held joint African NEMO patrols three to four times a year and a major annual Grand African NEMO exercise, which brings together a larger number of units and operational centres.

Source: https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2022/10/grand-african-nemo-2022-exercise-kicks-off/

Container damaged by fire reportedly sank in Red Sea

A week after a container ship owned and operated by UAE shipping companies caught fire, reports indicate that the vessel sank. Professional salvors were trained to provide rescue services to the vessel after it was abandoned about 123 nautical miles northwest of the port of Jizan in Saudi Arabia. "It is reported that the TSS Pearl sank approximately 200 miles

southeast of Port Sudan," writes consultancy WK Webster in an update for clients. "Several containers are reported to be floating at the site of the sinking, but it is currently unconfirmed whether any of the vessel's superstructure remains visible." Few further details are available with speculation that the ship is likely in a deep part of the Red Sea, meaning it is a total loss. It is not known if the fire was extinguished after the ship was abandoned and if rescue crews were able to reach the vessel. Webster reports that a fire expert was trained to investigate the cause of the fire and began work before the ship was lost.

The fire broke out on October 5, as the 14-year-old container was transiting from Jeddah to Aden. The TSS Pearl, which was built in China, was registered in Panama, owned by Rafidain Shipping and operated by another company Tehama Shipping of the United Arab Emirates. The 626-foot vessel had a capacity of 1,850 TEU and carried 27,155 dwt. The crew of 25 was evacuated from the ship after fire broke out in a stack of containers just in front of the accommodation block. Saudi Arabian Border Police managed the evacuation of the vessel and reported that the crew was not injured and taken to Jizan port. Japan's NYK Line provided further details of the rescue operation. They report that their car carrier Orion Leader (57,500 gross tons) was sailing in the Red Sea from Laem Chabang, Thailand, to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, when it received an emergency call about a container on fire. At 00.30 on 6 October, the motor carrier rescued eight seafarers by launching its lifeboat and subsequently transferred them to the bulk carrier St. Dimitrios, which was also engaged in the salvage operation.

Source: https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/fire-damaged-containership-reportedly-sunk-in-red-sea

HMS Prince of Wales sets sail for docking with shaft damage to be repaired

The Royal Navy aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales has left her home port of Portsmouth to return to Rosyth, Scotland, where she will enter dry dock for repairs to the starboard propeller shaft. The Prince of Wales suffered a port propeller shaft failure on 27 August, immediately departing for a transatlantic voyage, and sister ship HMS Queen Elizabeth had to step in to complete the mission. The Prince of Wales returned to Portsmouth, where an underwater inspection revealed that a coupling on her starboard shaft had failed, resulting in damage to both the shaft and rudder. She was scheduled to have her starboard propeller removed while at Portsmouth and to leave for the shipyard by 3 October, but technical problems pushed her departure back to the 8th. According to the Royal Navy, the quickest and safest way to repair her is to dock the ship at Rosyth, the yard that built her and one of the few yards in the UK capable of handling a ship of her size. The extent of the

damage will be investigated once she is out of the water, but until then it is not known when she will be back in service.

"While our plans to push the boundaries of UK carrier innovation are temporarily put on hold, I am extremely proud of the ship's company, which has risen to the challenge of preparing for repairs while facing the short-term disappointment of a delayed deployment," said. master captain Richard Hewitt in a statement. The shaft damage is the latest in a series of failures for the Prince of Wales since it was commissioned in late 2019. The aircraft carrier suffered minor leaks in May 2020, and another damage in October 2020 sent her back to the shipyard for major repairs. She reportedly spent just 20 days at sea in all of 2020. In October 2021, the Royal Navy said she was fully operational, but the recent breakdown put her on indefinite hold. HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Queen Elizabeth are the Royal Navy's first new aircraft carriers of a new generation and have brought a long-awaited return to full-fledged carrier aviation for the service. They are designed for use with STOVL or VTOL aircraft such as the F-35B and rely on an electromagnetic launch system rather than a conventional catapult for launch operations.

Source: https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/royal-navy-carrier-heads-for-drydock-to-repair-shaft-damage

Titan plans to build the world's largest bio-LNG plant in Amsterdam

As the shipping industry continues to seek sources for future alternative fuels, Dutch fuel supplier Titan plans to build the world's largest bio-LNG (biomethane liquefaction or LBM) plant. Titan will build and operate the plant at its location in the port of Amsterdam, enabling it to supply ships and trucks. When completed, the plant will have the capacity to produce 200,000 tonnes of bio-LNG annually. "Titan is committed to decarbonising transport by supplying bio-LNG and any other renewable fuels, such as hydrogen-derived methane, also known as E-LNG. Strategic collaborations in the value chain are key to increasing alternative fuel production at the scale needed for transportation," said Ronald van Selm, CTO at Titan. Titan says the bulk of the bio-LNG volumes produced by the plant will be supplied to Titan's launch customer's Liquefied Natural Gas (LBM)-powered vessels. For the remaining volumes, fueling stations for truck and industrial customers are also in the field. LBM will replace fossil fuels, avoiding about one million tonnes of CO2 equivalent emissions per year, equal to the annual emissions of about 25% of all diesel cars in the Netherlands. Two key milestones have already been reached for the plant which Titan expects to start production in 2025. Contracts have been signed with biogas producer BioValue for the exclusive takeover of the biogas produced on site and with Linde Engineering for the basic

engineering. BioValue, one of the largest biogas suppliers in the Netherlands, will supply a significant part of the biogas needed for the total LBM production. For this, BioValue, which is considered to be a pioneer biogas producer with six production sites in the Netherlands, will build a new biogas plant adjacent to the Titan plant. The remaining biogas will be sourced from other production facilities across Europe that are connected to the existing gas grid. According to the company, the hybrid supply configuration enables the scale needed to decarbonise the maritime industry. Titan selected Linde Engineering to perform engineering based on Linde's proprietary liquefaction technology. Titan also says that producing LBM in the most sustainable way is a key project target and has been integrated into the plant design. Importantly, the project will supply biogas only from sustainable feedstocks that are compliant with the latest EU Renewable Energy Directive and are certified for sustainability and international carbon certification (ISCC). Other sustainable integrations in the plant include the capture and use of biogenic CO2 side stream and hydrogen ready design. This enables future production of e-methane in which biogenic CO2 is combined with green hydrogen. For this, a connection to the planned hydrogen backbone in the Port of Amsterdam is envisaged. The project aligns with EU regulations such as those proposed in the Fit-For-55 package and the recently published RePowerEU plans. The plant will be located next to the Titan berth in the Port of Amsterdam, from which the land will be leased. It is the latest step in an effort to reposition Titan, which launched a decade ago as an LNG supplier. The company is expanding its approach to decarbonisation with all carbon-neutral fuels and its supply infrastructure. Titan is expanding its role as a physically independent supplier of low and zero carbon fuels, such as LBM and hydrogen-derived e-methane, to meet future demands from shipping and other industries.

Source: https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/titan-plans-to-build-world-s-largest-bio-lng-plant-in-amsterdam

Carnival Cruise Line partners with Philippine schools

Carnival Cruise Line is partnering with the Philippine Merchant Marine Academy (PMMA) and STI, one of the largest networks of colleges and schools in the Philippines, to help Filipinos pursue maritime studies and work aboard the line's fleet of 24 cruise ships. Carnival Cruise Line Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer Bettina Deynes and Vice President of Crew and Voyage Operations Richard Brearley were recently in Manila, Philippines to announce the dynamic partnership. PMMA will provide training programs in various areas of the merchant marine to prepare Pinoy students for onboard training on Carnival ships, as well as collaborating with Carnival in selecting students who will receive cadet, internship and employment opportunities. STI Educational Services Group, Inc. (STI ESG) and STI Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering Institute (STI NAMEI) will develop curriculum in Manila for courses related to culinary and housekeeping. Part of the partnership involves exploring the possibility of recruiting STI NAMEI shipping and marine engineering graduates for potential employment with Carnival. According to Deynes, investing in the Philippines and partnering with PMMA and STI means offering new career opportunities to Filipinos. "In addition to bringing a lot of experience and knowledge, the Filipino community is strong among Carnival's shipboard team members and embodies our values and the essence of our fun brand, so Carnival wants to go beyond providing traditional roles. We want to broaden the roles they play. Are qualified to fill even non-traditional roles, such as those in nautical operations," she said. "Filipino people make up a large population of our workforce," Brearley added. "We are proud to take an extra step to help develop those future team members while they are still in school by giving them more career options." The partnership will also provide opportunities for maritime students not only in the nation's

capital, but also in other areas of the country. To this end, Carnival and its recruitment agency United Philippine Lines (UPL) have worked together to create a system that aims to develop potential seafarers outside Manila. Carnival is also working with its recruitment partner, United Philippine Lines, to create a system to develop the skills of potential seafarers in several regions of the Philippines. STI ESG President and COO Monico Jacob expressed the company's pride in working with Carnival. "Through our partnership with Carnival, our students can be confident that they will receive the best training and have somewhere to go once they graduate," Jacob said. Commodore Joel Abutal, PMMA superintendent, added, "We will help create jobs for the masses as well as improve the efficiency of the nation's transportation system, especially in the maritime sector."

Source: https://www.marinelink.com/news/carnival-cruise-line-partners-philippine-500196

US Navy wants 100 unmanned ships to monitor Middle East waters by next year

The United States and its allies want a force of 100 unmanned surface ships to patrol waters from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf by next summer, the commander of the US 5th Fleet said Tuesday. "We have set a goal of having 100 unmanned surface ships available for patrol in the waters around the Arabian Peninsula by the end of summer 2023 ... with the majority of the systems coming from our international and regional partners," the 5th US Fleet commander said. Vice Admiral Brad Cooper said during a speech at the US Coast Guard Academy. For the past year, US Central Command has been the test bed for an experimental force of long-range unmanned systems at sea, married with artificial intelligence tools ashore to look for military threats or illegal activity. Unlike some of the state-of-the-art drones used by the US military, the information and sensors for each individual system are unclassified, and their output is passed back to a maritime operations center for a human to make a decision when the AI system detects something out of the ordinary. The effort is known as Task Force 59.

"Every partner and every sensor can provide new information that can be added to what we simply call a digital ocean," Cooper said during the event held in cooperation with the U.S. Naval Institute and the William M. Wood Foundation. The largest test of the Task Force 59 core concept was earlier this year as part of International Maritime Exercise 22.

Fifty USVs were part of the 60-nation exercise that worked to create a unified picture of the 5th Fleet. "They are interconnected. They're controlled by satellite," he said. "They have high-fidelity 360-degree cameras. They have radar. They have [automatic identification systems] and they're out there all day, every day, looking," Cooper said. For uncertain contacts, the task force has access to other drones that can better investigate a contact at high speeds. "You can [send] a 100-knot USV and look a little closer without putting people in the mix. That's the optimal scenario of how we do business. Multiply that by every country in the region having a couple and you can quickly see your knowledge increase dramatically in a short period of time," he said. Key to the systems results is the AI portion of the maritime operations centers that flags contacts that need further investigation.

"They'll see every single thing that goes by, they'll take a picture. And then they'll map using AI - the living model of everything around them, as far as I can see. And when it's something different, they'll take a picture every second, send it back to a Navy command center. And then a human being makes a decision," he said. "Is it the fishing vessel? Okay, no big deal. Is it an Iranian Revolutionary Guard ship? Okay, that's a big deal. Or is there something to it?" In addition to the freedom to use unclassified systems, the task force is mandated to rapidly test different unmanned systems and AI providers to bring different platforms into the 5th Fleet. "We've worked with a number of companies, and over the last month, every week we've done an exercise with another partner, quickly figured out how we can improve AI, and implemented [the changes] within a week. ," he said. "We did an exercise with the Saudis. The next week we did an exercise with the Jordanians. The next week we did an exercise with the Israelis.... and then we repeated with NATO in a NATO exercise." Many of the USVs, such as the Saildrone Explorer or MARTAC's Mantas T-12 USV, are operated under contract with the 5th Fleet, which speeds the systems in and out of CENTCOM.

Early results from the experiment have prompted the larger Navy to rethink the fundamental assumptions of its unmanned surface vehicle program. Earlier this year, Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday, said he is rethinking the Navy's requirements for the medium unmanned surface craft based on the task force's experiments. "I don't know if we're going to have an unmanned medium or not. The things that [Vice Adm. Brad] Cooper is doing right now with [Task Force] 59 - using small unmanned [vehicles] on the ground in the air to detect the environment... to provide a common operational picture for allies and partners, as well as 5th Fleet headquarters, has changed my thinking about unmanned guidance," Gilday said in April.

Source: https://news.usni.org/2022/10/11/navy-wants-100-unmanned-ships-monitoring-middle-east-waters-by-next-year

Russia hasn't given up on Snake Island. Scutaru: Russian military harassment of Romania would put pressure on exclusive economic zone

The recapture of the Snake Island by the occupying forces of the invading Russian Army would not only put pressure on Ukraine, but would seriously affect Romania's interests and security, with a high risk that Romania would face harassment from the Russian Federation in our country's exclusive economic zone.

George Scutaru, former presidential advisor on national security issues and CEO of the think tank New Strategy Center, made an analysis in the Obiectiv EuroAtlantic show, broadcast weekly by DefenseRomania.

The discussion started from the study presented by the Romanian think tank in the United States, including to important US Congressmen, a study entitled "The Strategic Importance of Snake Island".

The study draws attention to the danger of Russia reoccupying Snake Island, and implicitly controlling the navigation channels in the region, from the mouth of the Danube to the Black Sea, but it is also a plea for our country's role, recalls George Scutaru.

The expert points out that the Russian Federation has not given up control of the region and therefore the reoccupation of the Snake Island. In his opinion, if the West lets its guard down, the Russian Federation will try to reoccupy the small island, which is a strategically important point.

"Our assessment is that before there is a possible ceasefire and diplomatic negotiation for a ceasefire, Russia will probably try to retake Snake Island," the New Strategy Center expert notes.

"Snake Island is of particular strategic importance. The Black Sea has two entrances: the well-known Straits and the Danube Gorge. Re-occupation of the island by the Russians would open up the danger of control over the Danube Gorge, possible harassment of naval traffic. The island is very close to the Odessa-Bosphorus shipping lane, a vital shipping channel for Ukraine's exports. At the same time, Snake Island is in the vicinity of perimeters in Romania's exclusive economic zone where important natural gas reserves have been discovered", says George Scutaru.

Romania can be decisive in reducing Russian influence in the region. The start of resource exploitation could lead to Russian harassment of Romania.

The expert says the New Strategy Center (NSC) predictions show that once Romania starts exploiting these resources, the risk of harassment from the Russian Federation will be very high.

The explanation lies in the quantity of these resources, which could make our country a major player in the region, competing with Moscow.

George Scutaru explains:

"Our estimate is that if Russia were to reoccupy the Snake Island, it would be very possible that when Romania starts building the infrastructure to exploit these gases in the exclusive economic zone, we would face harassment from Russia.

We see Russia sabotaging its own infrastructure in the Baltic Sea to keep the price of gas high to put pressure on the West. When we talk about the Russians we have to consider the worst," adds the NSC CEO.

"From the moment we exploit this natural gas, Romania will be able not only to ensure its own energy independence, but also to help countries like Moldova or Bulgaria to escape from Russian influence by exporting gas. Reserves are estimated at 200 billion cubic metres in our perimeters, the most prolific perimeter located in the south of the exclusive economic zone, far from the Snake Island, is Neptun Deep, which will be managed by a consortium formed by Romgaz and OMV Petrom with reserves estimated at 80-90 billion cubic metres.

For those of you who are following us, to get a sense of what these reserves mean, the Republic of Moldova, for example, has an annual consumption of 1.5 billion cubic metres per year, Bulgaria 3 billion, Romania between 11 and 13 billion, of which we import about 15-25% depending on the season. We can therefore play for at least a decade in terms of decreasing Russian influence", explained George Scutaru.

The full interview in which George Scutaru, CEO of New Strategy Center, analysed the Russian war from the perspective of the control of the region by Russian forces VIDEO

Support for Ukraine, including military support, is vital in this context

In addition to pleading Romania's case, New Strategy Center experts have stressed to the US Congress the importance of supporting and assisting Ukraine, including with anti-aircraft and anti-ship defences, to repel a possible Russian attempt to occupy the Snake Island.

"The message was that Ukraine must be supported with military, anti-aircraft and anti-ship equipment that would allow it to avoid a new landing on the Snake Island", concluded George Scutaru.

The Romanian think tank New Strategy Center, in partnership with the American think tank Center for European Policy Analysis (CEPA), presented the study "The Strategic Importance of Snake Island" at the CEPA Forum on 27-29 September 2022 in Washington, D.C., USA.

This is the first study carried out by a Romanian and an American think tank since the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February this year, on an issue of vital interest for Ukraine, Romania and NATO, for the freedom of navigation in the Black Sea and at the mouth of the Danube and for the energy security of the region.

Source: https://www.defenseromania.ro/rusia-nu-a-renuntat-la-insula-serpilor-scutaru-hartuirea-romaniei-de-catre-armata-rusa-ar-pune-presiune-pe-zona-economica-exclusiva_618812.html