

THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF THE BLACK SEA AND THE DANUBE MOUTHS FOR THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AT THE BEGINNING OF 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract: *The return of the Black Sea issue in its entire geopolitical and geostrategic expression, as well as all its implications in the 21st century framework is a reality which not only surprises, but more than that, it tends to become more and more obvious in the global area. Today, the Black Sea is the densest area in the world in geopolitical and geostrategic interests involving key global players: the Russian Federation, the US, NATO, EU, and China. The Black Sea is the buffer between Europe and Asia, and the eastern border of Western communities. NATO enlargements (1999, 2004, 2008) and the EU enlargement (2001 and 2007) as well as these organizations' global aspirations, stated or implied, have been conferring the Black Sea a special statue in the organic equation of the new global order resettlement. The discovery of huge reserves of oil and natural gas in the Caucasus and Central Asia led to the emergence of economic interests in the Black Sea, turning it into a current geostrategic stake.*

Tsarist Russia had been concerned, since ancient times, with controlling the Black Sea and the Danube, and after the annexation of Crimea, their importance was amplified, the wish being to turn the Black Sea into a "Russian lake" thus getting access to the warm seas... Using a constructivist approach, this article briefly presents the importance of the Black Sea and the Danube to the Russian Federation at the beginning of 21st century.

Keywords: *strategic importance; Black Sea; Danube Mouths; Crimean Peninsula; Russian Federation.*

Motto:

"No one should make any illusions about the possibility of gaining military superiority over Russia. I'll never allow something like this to happen."

quote from **Vladimir Putin**

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