

# LIMITS IN THE SEAS

**No. 59**

**TERRITORIAL SEA BOUNDARY:  
SOVIET UNION-TURKEY**

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Soviet Union-Turkey Territorial Sea Boundary

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The Governments of the Republic of Turkey and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics signed a protocol on April 17, 1973, concerning the territorial sea boundary between the two states in the Black Sea. The Soviet Union ratified the protocol on January 3, 1974; Turkey has not. The Soviet Union is a party to the 1958 Geneva Convention on the Territorial Sea and Contiguous Zone; Turkey is not.

The protocol (unofficial translation) specified that,

#### **ARTICLE I**

The contracting parties have agreed that the territorial waters limit between the Turkish and Soviet territorial waters in the Black Sea begins at the last point on the shore of the land border between the Republic of Turkey and the USSR, stretching along a 290 degree azimuth to the outer limit of the territorial waters (12 nautical miles) of the Turkish Republic and the USSR.

#### **ARTICLE II**

The contracting parties will set up a Joint Turkish-Soviet Commission for Demarcating the Territorial Waters Limit with the participation of five persons from each side, on the basis of equality, for the purpose of demarcating the territorial waters limit between the Turkish and Soviet territorial waters in its actual location in the Black Sea.

#### **ARTICLE III**

The contracting parties will share equally all expenses in connection with the work involved in the demarcating of the territorial water limit between the Turkish and Soviet territorial waters in the Black Sea.

#### **ARTICLE IV**

This protocol is subject to ratification and the ratified documents will go into force on the day of their exchange.

The documents of ratification will be exchanged in Moscow in the shortest possible time.

Done in Ankara in April 1973 in two originals each being drawn up in two authentic texts in the Turkish and Russian languages.

The analysis of the Soviet Union-Turkey territorial sea boundary utilized DMAHC Chart N.O. 55180. (This chart has been discontinued by DMAHC).

The protocol states that the territorial sea boundary extends 12 nautical miles seaward, in a

northwesterly direction at an azimuth of 290°, from the point where the Soviet Union-Turkey land boundary meets the sea. The landward terminus is at 41°31'15"N.; 41°30'12"E. The seaward extent of the territorial sea boundary is at 41°36'00"N., 41°13'15"E., at a water depth of about 650 meters.

There is a discrepancy in the territorial sea boundary delimitation. The Turkish 12-nautical-mile limit intersects the territorial sea boundary at a distance of 13.5 nautical miles from the land terminus. The Soviet 12-nautical-mile territorial sea does intersect, however, the territorial sea boundary 12 nautical miles from the land terminus. Therefore, the length of the territorial sea boundary is 13.5 nautical miles and not 12 nautical miles, which is the territorial sea claim of the Soviet Union and Turkey (in the Black Sea).

# Territorial Sea Boundary: Soviet Union - Turkey

