



# 7<sup>TH</sup> MARINE AND MARITIME SECURITY FORUM



Milli Savunma ve Güvenlik Enstitüsü  
National Defence and Security Institute

**TASAM**  
TÜRK ASYA STRATEJİK ARAŞTIRMALAR MERKEZİ  
TURKISH ASIAN CENTER FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES



CO-EVENT | VISION DOCUMENT

## 7<sup>TH</sup> MARINE AND MARITIME SECURITY FORUM

“Turkish Naval Power from Seas to Oceans”

( 27-28 November 2025 | Wish More Hotel Istanbul )

Humanity lives on the lithosphere - land masses that rise and fall within the hydrosphere, which covers 72% of Earth’s surface. These land masses, which constitute humanity’s natural habitat, make up a relatively small part of the planet. In essence, every landmass can be considered an “island,” varying in size and characteristics. Some host multiple states and nations (continental islands), while others are home to only one country or form part of island chains. Some islands are small maritime towns or rural villages; others are uninhabitable due to their morphology. Beyond these, there are numerous islets, reefs, shallows, and rocks, often serving as economic activity zones or sources of international maritime disputes. In this context, Earth is increasingly conceptualized as a “Continental Islands Ocean.”

Today, approximately 45% of humanity lives within 150 km of coastlines, constantly exposed to maritime influences. The majority of states’ economic activities occur within this zone. As of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, over 680 million people - about 12% of the global population - live in areas no more than 10 meters above sea level. This number is projected to reach nearly one billion by 2050, highlighting a growing global dependency on the seas. Maritime trade is also essential: at least 80% of global merchandise is transported by sea - an even higher percentage in developed countries. About half of developed nations’ populations rely on marine resources for protein, and 80% of global tourism occurs in coastal regions.

These statistics underscore the importance of seas as a vast system of highways for people, goods, capital, knowledge, and culture. No landmass on Earth is untouched by maritime security, economic, legal, and sociocultural Dynamics - including landlocked countries, which remain connected through climate, ecosystems, and trade. This ongoing interaction has, for centuries, driven civilizations toward the sea.

Within this global maritime framework, Türkiye occupies a geographically strategic position as a country composed of two peninsulas. Located within the “Seven Seas,” Türkiye borders three seas and controls the Turkish Straits, a critical chokepoint in global maritime trade. With 8,483 km of coastline (3% of the world’s total), including the Black Sea, Marmara, Aegean, and Mediterranean, Türkiye possesses roughly 180 port facilities and 28 major coastal or port cities, home to around 60% of its population.



Most of Türkiye's labor force is based in coastal areas, which also generate approximately 60% of the country's GDP. Furthermore, around 95% of industrial production and foreign trade (imports/exports) is carried out via maritime routes.

The vast majority of Türkiye's arable land and tourism infrastructure - often called the "Smokeless Industry" - is located along or near the coast. These figures collectively demonstrate Türkiye's dependency on the seas, not just for political, military, and economic activity, but also for disaster response and humanitarian assistance.

The strategic significance of Türkiye's maritime jurisdictions and potential energy resources has become a central pillar of the country's geopolitical and energy strategies. Türkiye maintains expansive maritime jurisdictions in the Mediterranean, Black Sea, and Aegean. Discoveries of energy reserves - particularly in the Eastern Mediterranean - have reinforced Türkiye's strategic standing but have also intensified disputes over maritime borders.

In addition to the Eastern Mediterranean, energy exploration in the Black Sea and Aegean further supports Türkiye's energy security and contributes to its regional and international influence. Sustainable management of these resources will also support Türkiye's environmental and economic development goals.

Maritime energy exploration has reshaped Türkiye's energy security policies, prompting a shift toward domestic resource development to reduce dependency on imports. Efficient use of maritime resources will be key to achieving both energy security and long-term economic development.

Türkiye's access to vital Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) and maritime chokepoints reinforces its pivotal role in sustaining global maritime trade. However, underutilization of the country's maritime economy continues to be a strategic challenge. To realize its maritime awakening, Türkiye must commit to a long-term, resolute national agenda for becoming a true maritime nation.

Efforts such as this forum can rehabilitate the "sea blindness" observed in international relations literature by fostering spatial maritime awareness and public engagement. This will nurture the knowledge base required by both administrative institutions and private capital, contributing to the development of maritime studies in Türkiye.

The Marine and Maritime Security Forum centers on Modern Maritime Studies, encompassing: navies, merchant fleets, shipping companies, ports and port management, shipyards and naval engineering disciplines, fishing, seabed mining (including metallurgy, geology, oceanography, hydrography, and seismology), marine tourism, marinas and their management, maritime law, naval



education institutions and programs, marine environmentalism, and support sectors (search and rescue, piloting, navigation and communication, vessel traffic services, maritime meteorology, etc.). It also includes cultural and sporting dimensions like maritime literature, naval history, and water sports.

The forum aims to generate public awareness of maritime power, both in Türkiye and among international partners, by addressing changing maritime dynamics through a broad historical vision and multi-sectoral collaboration with national/international civil and military maritime institutions.

Issues such as the Montreux Convention, disputes in the Aegean, maritime jurisdiction conflicts in the “Blue Homeland,” maritime crimes, mass migration, energy transport security, and the Cyprus issue - all heavily tied to the sea - fall within the domain of maritime geopolitics. Advancing academic awareness of maritime geopolitics and engaging in discussions that define goals, identify needs, and develop the capabilities necessary to convert maritime potential into national prosperity is a strategic imperative for Türkiye.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is quickly becoming the Century of Seas and Oceans. With crises, rivalries, alliances, and cooperation increasingly centered on the narrow, internal, and marginal seas of the Eurasian Continental Island, Türkiye’s pursuit of a strong, respected international position is closely tied to its access to Blue Civilization. Since 2019, the **Marine and Maritime Security Forum** has been held annually to meet these growing needs.

## Main Theme

**Turkish Naval Power from Seas to Oceans**

## Sub-Themes

**New Perspectives and Regional Studies in Maritime Geopolitics**

Mediterranean, Aegean, Black Sea, Oceans, and the Poles

**Contemporary Threats and Maritime Crimes in Naval Security**

**Current Trends in the Use of Turkish Naval Diplomacy**

**Current Concepts in Maritime Capacity Building**

Maritime Power | Naval Power | Fleet Power

**New Opportunities in Maritime Geoeconomics and Türkiye**

- Administrative and Institutional Structure of Turkish Maritime Affairs
- Vision and Future of Türkiye’s Maritime Ecosystem
- New Trends in the Blue Economy
- Vision and Future of Turkish Maritime Trade



- Vision and Future of Turkish Maritime Transport
- Vision and Future of Turkish Maritime Tourism
- Türkiye's Shipbuilding Capabilities and Vision of the Shipyard Sector
- Turkish Ports: Strategies for Hinterland, Gateway, and Foreland Development

#### **Ocean Policies**

#### **Environmental Security in Maritime Studies**

#### **Digitalization Era and Emerging Threats in Global Maritime**

#### **Use of Seas in Disaster Response and Maritime Bridge Strategies**

#### **Maritime Geoculture**

#### **Energy Potential of the Seas and Its Sustainable Use**



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