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Greek Ship Rammed Vessel, Turkey Says

Agence France-Presse

ANKARA — Turkey's top military commander said Thursday that a Greek warship tried to ram a Turkish submarine Wednesday night but instead hit another Turkish boat in the Aegean Sea, and he accused Greece of "committing a serious aggression."

Greece denied the accusation, accusing a Turkish patrol boat of hitting a Greek minesweeper.

"It's the first time that such an aggression took place," General Ismail Hakki Karadayi, chief of the Turkish General Staff, said in Ankara.

"A Greek patrol boat tried to ram our submarine while the submarine was ascending to the surface during our planned exercises in the Aegean," he said.

"One of our patrol boats came in between the two and the Greek ves-

sel hit it, causing minor damage."

Turkish military sources said the incident took place in international waters off Turkey's Izmir Bay and between the Greek islands of Lesbos and Chios.

General Karadayi said Turkey had informed all parties concerned that it would hold the submarine training exercises in the area.

"We are trying to avoid confrontations in the Aegean Sea," he said. "But sometimes there is some harassment."

The private television station NTV said a senior Greek diplomat in Ankara was summoned to the Foreign Ministry and handed a strong protest note regarding the incident.

NTV said Turkey would file a complaint to its North Atlantic Treaty Organization allies over what Ankara sees as Greek aggression.