

AU Head Tells Putin Africans Are 'Victims' of Ukraine Conflict

By [AFP](#)

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African Union head Macky Sall on Friday urged Russian President Vladimir Putin to take into account the suffering in African countries from food shortages caused by the conflict in Ukraine.

Putin hosted the Senegalese president at his Black Sea residence in Sochi on the 100th day of Moscow's offensive in Ukraine, with global food shortages and grain supplies stuck in Ukrainian ports high on the agenda.

Sall asked Putin to "become aware that our countries, even if they are far from the theatre (of action), are victims on an economic level" of the conflict.

He said it was important to work together so that "everything that concerns food, grain, fertilizer is actually outside" of Western sanctions imposed on Moscow over Russia's military

campaign in Ukraine.

Sall also said that due to Western sanctions "we no longer have access to grain from Russia and especially fertilizer" which is crucial for Africa's "already deficient" agriculture.

"That really creates serious threats to the food security of the continent," Sall added.

In his remarks in front of reporters, Putin did not mention grain supplies but said Russia was "always on Africa's side" and was now keen to ramp up cooperation.

"At the new stage of development, we place great importance on our relations with African countries, and I must say this has had a certain positive result," Putin added.

Moscow's military campaign in Ukraine and a barrage of international sanctions on Russia have disrupted supplies of fertilizer, wheat, and other commodities from both countries, pushing up prices for food and fuel, especially in developing nations.

Cereal prices in Africa, the world's poorest continent, have surged because of the slump in exports from Ukraine, sharpening the impact of conflict and climate change and sparking fears of social unrest.

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