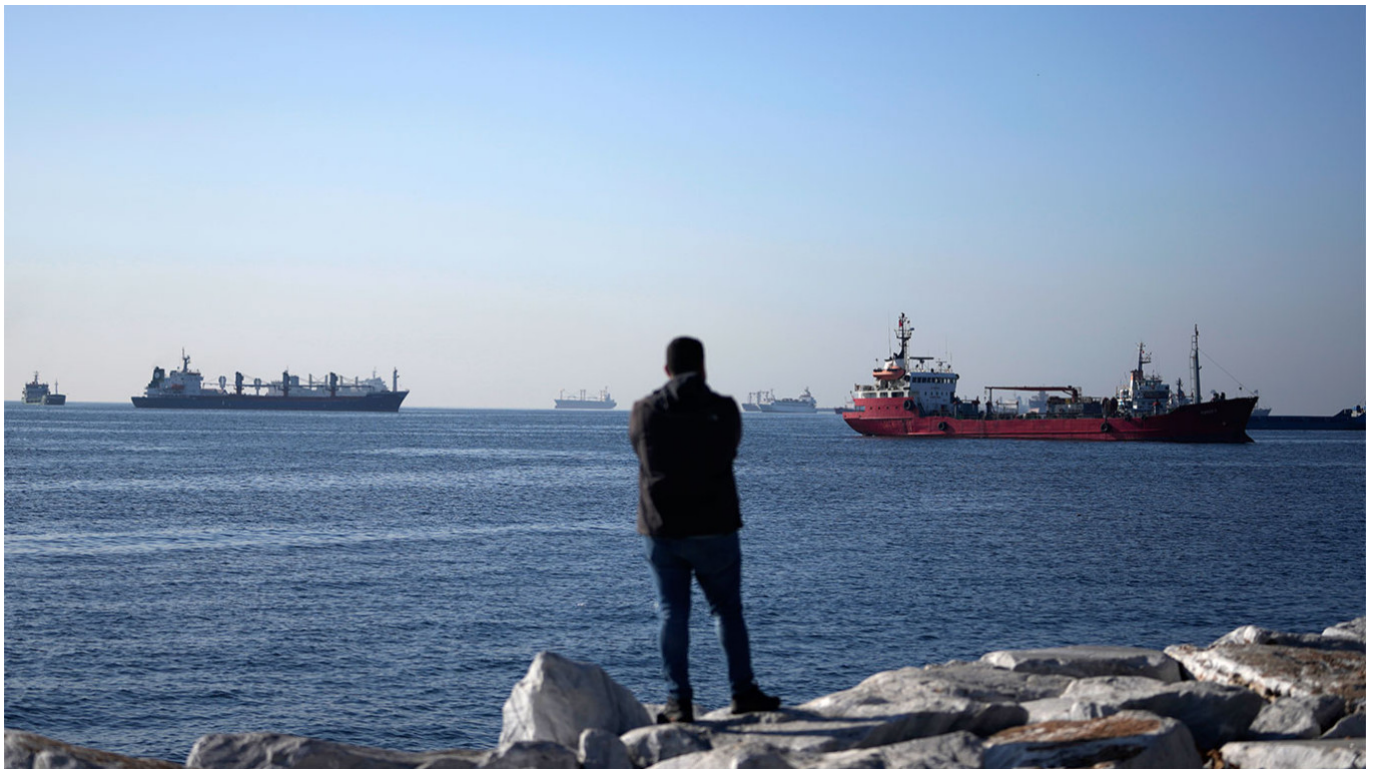


Putin Demands 'Real Guarantees' From Kyiv Before Restoration of Grain Deal

By [AFP](#)

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Cargo ships anchored in the Sea of Marmara waiting to pass through the Bosphorus Straits in Istanbul.
Khalil Hamra / AP / TASS

Russian President Vladimir Putin told Turkish leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday that he wanted "real guarantees" from Kyiv before potentially rejoining the grain deal.

In a phone call, Putin told Erdogan that Russia sought "real guarantees from Kyiv about the strict observance of the Istanbul agreement, in particular about not using the humanitarian corridor for military purposes," according to a Kremlin statement.

The Turkey and UN-brokered deal allowed Ukrainian grain exports to resume in August, easing a global food crisis caused by the conflict.

On Saturday, Russia accused Ukraine of misusing the safe shipping corridor for an attack on Russian ships in Crimea and suspended its participation in the agreement.

Putin told Erdogan that it was "necessary to conduct a thorough investigation into the circumstances of the incident" against the Black Sea fleet.

"Only after that will it be possible to consider the question of resuming work" within the deal, the Kremlin statement said, referring to both the investigation and guarantees it is seeking.

For the second time in as many days Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu discussed the deal with his Turkish counterpart Hulusi Akar, the Russian defence ministry said.

Ukraine has called Russia's claim a "false pretext" to withdraw from the deal.

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Despite Russia warning on Monday that it would be "dangerous" to continue grain exports without its participation, more cargo ships left Ukrainian ports On Tuesday.

Erdogan told Putin that he felt "confident" the issue of grain exports from Ukraine could be resolved and stressing that the way out of the grain crisis could be found if a "constructive approach" was taking, even suggesting that the issue could lead Russia and Ukraine back to the negotiating table in an attempt to negotiate and end to the war, the Turkish president's office said.

The grain deal, which was due to be renewed on Nov. 19, was intended to combat the global food shortages stoked by the Russian invasion of Ukraine in late February. It has already allowed more than 9.7 million tonnes of Ukrainian grain to be exported since the deal was reached in August.

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu, who announced Erdogan's plan to speak with Putin earlier in the day, said: "We believe we will overcome this... [The grain deal] benefits everyone."

Erdogan said on Monday that Turkey would pursue efforts to keep the agreement in force despite Russia's hesitation.

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