

Putin Says Grain Deal Goal 'Not Implemented' in Call With S.Africa's Ramaphosa

By [AFP](#)

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Russia's President Vladimir Putin (L) and South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa shake hands during a meeting in St. Petersburg on June 17, 2023. **Sergei Bobylev/TASS**

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Saturday said the main objective of the deal that allowed Ukrainian grain exports to resume was not achieved, in a call with his South African counterpart Cyril Ramaphosa.

The deal that eased fears of a global food crisis sparked by the offensive in Ukraine is due to expire late Monday — unless Russia agrees to renew it.

"The main goal of the deal, namely the supply of grain to countries in need, including on the African continent, has not been implemented," Putin said according to a Kremlin readout.

A memorandum on unhindered Russian food and fertilizer exports had been signed in parallel

to the grain deal.

Russia however says that obstacles to its own exports remain, and threatens to pull out of the grain deal over the issue.

"Vladimir Putin stressed that the obligations recorded in the relevant Russia-UN memorandum to remove obstacles to the export of Russian food and fertilizers still remain unfulfilled," according to the Kremlin statement.

On Friday Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said he was confident that Putin would agree the deal should be extended.

But when asked by Russian press agencies, the Kremlin spokesperson did not confirm Erdogan's claims.

"There is no statement about this from the Russian side," Dmitry Peskov said.

The deal, which Erdogan helped broker, has allowed Ukraine to ship more than 32 million tons of grain past Russian warships in the Black Sea.

Ramaphosa and Putin also talked about preparations for the upcoming BRICS summit in South Africa, the Kremlin said.

The Russian leader has been invited to attend despite an International Criminal Court warrant against him.

The two heads of state also discussed the Russia-Africa summit, scheduled at the end of July in St. Petersburg, and agreed to hold bilateral talks on the sidelines.

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