

Kremlin Warns of Ukraine Export 'Risks' After Exiting Grain Deal

July 18, 2023



Wheat harvest in the DNR. **Dmitry Yagodkin / TASS**

The Kremlin [warned](#) Tuesday that exporting grain from Ukraine's Russia-blockaded ports carried "risks," one day after Moscow pulled out of a landmark deal to allow wartime exports of Ukrainian grain.

"Without appropriate security guarantees, certain risks arise here. If [a future agreement] is formalized without Russia, then these risks should be taken into account," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

"We can't say how much and which countries are ready to assume these risks," he told reporters, noting the Ukrainian ports' "immediate closeness to the area of hostilities."

Hours after Peskov announced Russia's exit from the grain deal Monday, the Russian military launched drone and missile strikes that struck and damaged Ukraine's Black Sea port of Odesa, a key departure site for grain exports under the deal.

Related article: [Ukraine Grain Deal 'De Facto' Over – Kremlin](#)

Russia's Defense Ministry said it destroyed sites used to plan Monday's deadly attack on the Moscow-built bridge connecting annexed Crimea to mainland Russia.

Peskov on Tuesday accused Kyiv of using the grain corridor established by the Black Sea grain deal for "combat purposes."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky [said](#) ship owners had expressed readiness to continue supplying grain through the corridor with Ukraine and Turkey's approval despite Russia's withdrawal.

The Turkey and United Nations-brokered Black Sea grain initiative, first agreed in July 2022 and extended multiple times, had allowed the export of more than 32 million tons of Ukrainian grain, easing a global food crisis.

Peskov said Russian leader Vladimir Putin had no immediate plans to discuss the suspended grain deal with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Later Tuesday, Russia told Turkey that it was disbanding a coordination center in Istanbul and lifting security guarantees for cargo ships.

"The implementation of grain agreements has been terminated," the Foreign Ministry said after Russia's top diplomat Sergei Lavrov spoke to his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan. Moscow's exit from the deal means "the dissolution of the Joint Coordination Center in Istanbul" and the lifting of "safe navigation guarantees," among other conditions, the ministry said in a statement.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/07/18/kremlin-warns-of-ukraine-export-risks-after-exiting-grain-deal-a81878>