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Putin Says Ukraine Opened ‘Pandora's Box’ With Strikes on Economic Targets

By Reuters

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President Vladimir Putin said Kyiv had opened “Pandora's box” with strikes on Russian economic targets and threatened to hit back at Ukraine's “most sensitive economic sectors.” **Kremlin.ru**

Russian President Vladimir Putin said in comments published on Saturday that Kyiv had opened “Pandora's box” with its strikes on Russian economic targets, saying that Russia would hit back at Ukraine's “most sensitive economic sectors.”

Ukraine has this summer escalated a campaign of drone strikes targeting Russian economic infrastructure, including oil refineries and online retailers' warehouses, seeking to destroy infrastructure it says is central to Russia's war effort.

Russia has responded with strikes against Ukrainian economic infrastructure, including Ukrainian grain exports via the Black Sea.

“The Kyiv regime set out to damage our economy. What did it do? It opened this Pandora’s

box itself. Well then, expect a response targeting your most sensitive economic sectors," Putin said in comments to a Russian state television journalist.

He said that the strikes, which have jeopardized Ukraine's agricultural exports, would not cause global food shortages, because Russia would be able to replace Ukrainian exports, even as Kyiv has targeted Russian grain export infrastructure.

"We do face challenges regarding the shipment of our goods, but we will resolve these issues. Consequently, there will be no shortage on the global market," Putin said.

Russia and Ukraine had previously adhered to a Turkish-brokered deal to protect grain exports on the Black Sea. But Russia exited the deal in 2023.

The Russian leader also restated his position that Moscow is open to peace talks, but only on the basis of "realities on the ground," rather than what he called "exotic" proposals that he said had been made by Ukraine via intermediaries.

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