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برلمان البحر الأبيض المتوسط

**Threat to global food security:  
Looting of cereals in Ukraine by Russian Federation**

**I. Russian systemic looting of Ukrainian cereals and farming vehicles**

Ukrainian Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Taras Vysotsky, recently denounced that the Russian Federation is currently stealing most of the 1.5 million tons of stored grain from the territories occupied by the Russian forces<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, in the occupied city of Melitopol – one of the most important Ukrainian cities for cereals production – 27 extremely expensive and high-tech agricultural vehicles have been plundered by the Russian military, part of which are now in neighbouring villages and Chechnya - for a total value of over \$5 million<sup>2</sup>. According to Ukrainian media, in Melitopol, cereals are extorted from locals for symbolic prices or confiscated from them<sup>3</sup>. Ukraine's president Volodymyr Zelensky claims the Russian acts are not merely opportunistic looting but, instead, part of a wider strategy to destroy the Ukrainian Economy<sup>4</sup>.

Evidence is also mounting about bombardment of grain elevators and warehouses. Around Kyiv, Russian forces destroyed distribution centres and warehouses seeking to disrupt the provision of food to the capital. Russian forces bombed a farm business in Luhansk in eastern Ukraine in April, destroying machinery, buildings and 17,000 tonnes of wheat — a year's supply for 300,000 people<sup>5</sup>. Additionally, the block of strategic ports by the Russian poses a significant challenge not only to the Ukrainian economy, but also a fatal threat to global food security, as 95% of wheat exports are traded by sea. The Russian strategy of both confiscating Ukrainian cereals, while blocking its ports, has been widely denounced by the international community, including by the EU Commission President<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Ouest France, En Ukraine, une moisson de grains et d'engins agricoles pour les Russes, April 2022. <https://www.ouest-france.fr/monde/en-ukraine-une-moisson-de-grains-et-d-engins-agricoles-pour-les-russes-8f624240-c9f6-11ec-8113-3d2243031bc2>

<sup>2</sup> CNN, Russians plunder \$5M farm vehicles from Ukraine -- to find they've been remotely disabled, May 2022. <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/05/01/europe/russia-farm-vehicles-ukraine-disabled-melitopol-intl/index.html>

<sup>3</sup> Ouest-France, *op. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>5</sup> Financial Times, Russia accused of industrial-scale farm plunder in Ukraine, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022. <https://www.ft.com/content/d28cc77d-9de3-4988-bdba-cfab77268ea3>

<sup>6</sup> Reuters, EU's von der Leyen says Russia is using food supplies as a weapon, May 25, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/eus-von-der-leyen-says-russia-is-using-food-supplies-weapon-2022-05-24/>

Furthermore, according to Ukrainian defence intelligence and specialised international shipping tracking bodies, a significant part of the grain stolen from Ukraine is already on dry cargo ships under the Russian flag in the Mediterranean. The most likely destination for these types of ships is Syria, from where grain can be smuggled to other countries in the Middle East<sup>7</sup>.

In any case, it will be difficult for Russia to smuggle abroad the cereals looted in Ukraine, as their specific genetic footprint is easily traceable by relevant agencies, and therefore offenders, including ship owners and crews shall be persecuted in accordance with the provisions of international law, and ships confiscated.

On April 27, three merchant ships – belonging to the Russian Crane Marine Contractor, which is notably not under international sanctions – left the Sebastopol port in Crimea loaded with 30,000 tons of Ukrainian wheat. On 5 May, one of the ships tried to dock first in Alexandria, Egypt, and then in the port of Beirut, but it was turned away as Egyptian and Lebanese authorities had been warned by Ukraine it was carrying looted grain. Despite having turned off its transponder, independent tracking bodies, such as TankerTrackers, were able to identify a ship in the port of Latakia, Syria, via satellite imagery<sup>8</sup> (see *Picture 1a*)<sup>9</sup>, in an attempt to unload the stolen grain.

Two of those ships – the *Matros Pozynich* and the *Matros Koshka* - have recently reappeared in the port of Sebastopol, in what appears to be another grain smuggling mission<sup>10</sup> (see *Picture 1b and 1c*). The new images from Maxar Technologies, dated May 19 and 21, show the two ships docked next to grain silos. As of May 24, the *Matros Pozynich* is sailing through the Aegean Sea claiming to be on its way to Beirut and the *Matros Koshka* still in the Black Sea<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Financial Times, *op. cit.*

<sup>8</sup> DRG News, Russian ship with Ukraine grain reaches Syria, May 2022.  
<https://drgnews.com/2022/05/11/russia-accused-of-stealing-tons-of-grain-from-ukraine/>  
from Tanker Trackers: <https://tankertrackers.com/>

<sup>9</sup> CNN, Russian ships carrying stolen Ukrainian grain turned away from Mediterranean ports, May 2022.  
[https://edition.cnn.com/2022/05/12/europe/russia-ship-stolen-ukraine-grain-intl-cmd/index.html?iid=ob\\_mobile\\_article\\_footer\\_expansion](https://edition.cnn.com/2022/05/12/europe/russia-ship-stolen-ukraine-grain-intl-cmd/index.html?iid=ob_mobile_article_footer_expansion)

<sup>10</sup> CNN, Satellite images appear to show Russian ships loading up with Ukrainian grain in Crimea, May 23  
<https://edition.cnn.com/2022/05/23/politics/satellite-images-grain-crimea/index.html>

<sup>11</sup> Vessels Finder portal, data collected on May 23, 2022, 6 p.m. CET:  
<https://www.vesselfinder.com/it/vessels/MATROS-POZYNICH-IMO-9573816-MMSI-273292990>



Picture 1. Satellite image of the Matros Poznyich at the Syrian port of Latakia on May 5 (a) and then docked in Sebastopol on May 19 (b). Satellite image of the Matros Koshka docked in Sebastopol on May 21 (c).

While the Russian aggression against Ukraine is already threatening global food security by aggravating the surge in agricultural prices and jeopardizing the ability of the most vulnerable countries to import their food<sup>12</sup>, reports about the looting of grain and farming engines are reviving the notion that the Russian government might induce hunger as a method of warfare.

## II. Global market disruptions and the threat to international food security

Globally, Ukraine alone accounts for close to 9% of wheat exports, 16.7% of barley's exports, nearly half of sunflower oil exports, and nearly 13% of the corn exports. Ukraine is also one of the countries able to adapt its production quickly and cheaply to evolutions in the demand for wheat. Together, Russia and Ukraine account for a third of wheat and barley exports, nearly 80% of sunflower oil exports and close to 14% of corn exports worldwide<sup>13</sup>. The two countries make up more than one-third of global cereal exports<sup>14</sup> and are also important exporters of fertilizers, essential to cereal production in other countries<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> PAM, "The Russian invasion of Ukraine and its impacts on PAM Regions' food security", March 2022.

<sup>13</sup> Observatory of Economic Complexity, 2022. <https://oec.world/en>

<sup>14</sup> FAO, New Scenarios on Global Food Security based on Russia-Ukraine Conflict, March 2022. <https://www.fao.org/director-general/news/news-article/en/c/1476480/>

<sup>15</sup> Le Monde Diplomatique, Le Spectre de la Famine, May 2022.



Figure 1<sup>16</sup>

Despite the unprecedented number of economic sanctions imposed by the western block (see *Figure 1*) the Russian economy and the rouble have proved to be more resilient than expected<sup>17</sup>. The Russian economy is undoubtedly shrinking but beating initial predictions of a GDP decline of up to 15%<sup>18</sup>, especially as the country has been able to export at least \$65bn-worth of fossil fuels since the start of the invasion. In order to further strengthen its financial position, Russia also issued a decree requesting countries deemed unfriendly to pay for gas in roubles, threatening to halt gas supplies otherwise. After Poland and Bulgaria experienced such a halt, the Italian energy group Eni stated it would comply with Russian demands for gas sales, and other companies are expected to follow suit<sup>19</sup>. In this context, it appears clear that, with a stronger economy, it is unlikely that Russia can be pressured to alleviate its threat to global food security.

Therefore, Russia has so far been able to keep up the pressure on the West by blocking more than 6 million tons of Ukrainian wheat - about 3% of world exports<sup>20</sup>. With regards to this, it is also worth noting that, even if a truce or agreement allowed shipments to export these stocks of wheat, prices would still experience a significant surge as the insurance premiums have

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>17</sup> The Economist, How new sanctions could cripple Russia's economy, 2022.

<https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2022/02/27/how-new-sanctions-could-cripple-russias-economy>

<sup>18</sup> The Economist, Russia's economy is back on its feet, 2022.

<https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2022/05/07/russias-economy-is-back-on-its-feet>

<sup>19</sup> Financial Times, Eni defies Brussels by opening rouble account for Russian gas payments, May 17th 2022, .  
<https://www.ft.com/content/7b416e89-1bc2-4890-b643-429ec8adfbec>

<sup>20</sup> Le Monde Diplomatique, *op. cit.*

increased by 20%-30%<sup>21</sup>. Moreover, while some regions of Ukraine, such as the south-west, are still able to carry out agricultural activities, the limited supply of the necessary resources (i.e., fuel, machinery, etc) will inevitably limit its future production. Analysts see output at 41.4 million tonnes this year compared with 86 million tonnes in 2021<sup>22</sup>. Due to the aggression of Russia, Ukrainian wheat production this year could drop by 30%<sup>23</sup>. Ukrainian government expects 70-80 per cent of farmland to be sown this year despite the problems the war has caused for farmers<sup>24</sup>. Additionally, Russia's recent conquest of Mariupol raised further concerns of a global wheat supply disruption as the Kremlin blockaded Ukraine's southern ports, a crucial link for exports<sup>25</sup> and, as the bombing continues, Ukraine is set to run out of storage facilities for agricultural products to store next seasons' crop<sup>26</sup>.

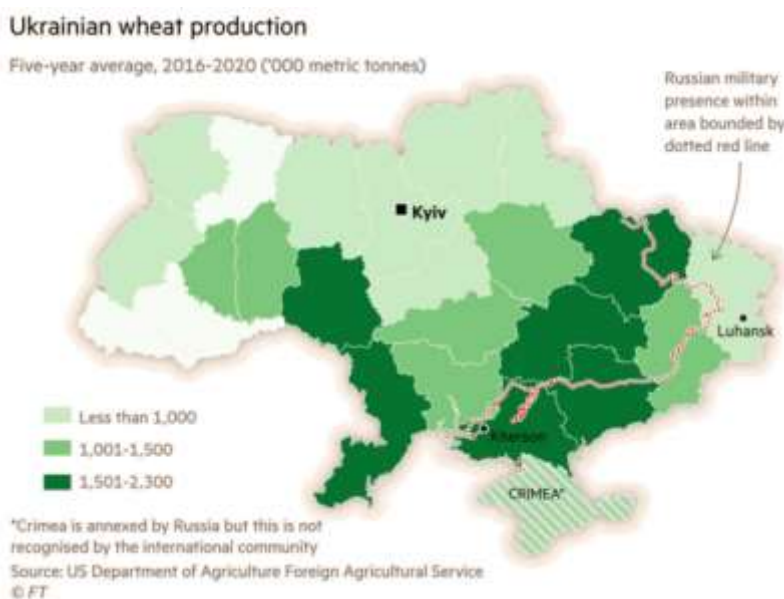


Figure 2

At the present conditions, the spectre of a food crisis looms on global markets as the price for wheat, whose global trade is greater than all other crops combined, has increased by 45% since January<sup>27</sup>. The FAO's food price index has reached its highest since its creation in 1990<sup>28</sup>. It is also worth bearing in mind that the effects could be further exacerbated by bad harvests, as

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>22</sup> Reuters, Ukraine says Russia stole 'several hundred thousand tonnes' of grain, April 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/ukraine-says-russia-stole-several-hundred-thousand-tonnes-grain-2022-04-30/>

<sup>23</sup> France 24, 'Europe's breadbasket' at risk: Ukraine braces for 30% drop in wheat production, April 2022. <https://www.france24.com/en/tv-shows/business-daily/20220407-europe-s-breadbasket-at-risk-ukraine-braces-for-30-drop-in-wheat-production>

<sup>24</sup> Financial Times, *op. cit.*

<sup>25</sup> Financial Times, Russian Blockade Heightens Fears of Global Grain Shortage, May 19<sup>th</sup> 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/05/19/world/russia-ukraine-war>

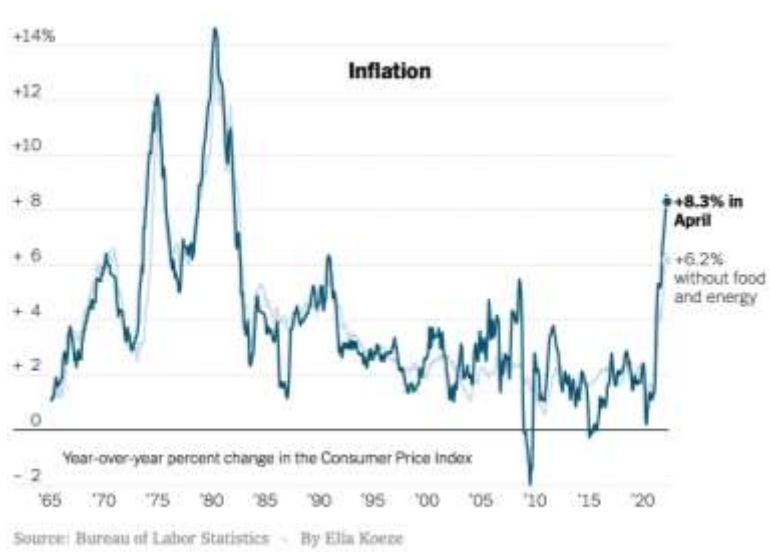
<sup>26</sup> CNN, US and allies struggle to come up with plans to get vital grain supplies out of Ukraine, May 2022. <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/05/17/politics/us-ukraine-grain/index.html>

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*,

<sup>28</sup> FAO, World Food Situation, 2022. <https://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/>



countries in the Horn of Africa, as well as Morocco, Canada and to a certain extent, the US, experienced prolonged periods of droughts, further aggravating global inflation<sup>29</sup> (see *Figure 3*).



*Figure 3*

In general terms, global growth will surely be hindered by the exacerbation of the conflict. The latest UN World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) report significantly lowered its forecast for global economic growth this year from 4% to 3.1%, saying the war in Ukraine has triggered increasing global food and commodity prices and exacerbated inflationary pressures, upending the fragile recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic<sup>30</sup>. US Treasury Secretary Yellen said that elevated food and energy prices were depressing both spending and economic output, creating stagflationary effects all around the world<sup>31</sup>.

Nonetheless, these trends are likely to have different effects depending on each region's positioning in the international markets. As reported in the PAM's background note on the topic, the Russian invasion of Ukraine could have disastrous effects for food security in the MENA region, where countries like Lebanon, Egypt and Tunisia are heavily reliant on staple food products coming from Ukraine<sup>32</sup> (see *Figure 4*). Egypt, as the world's largest importer of wheat - 12 million tonnes imported -, has drawn particular attention. Already dealing with a severe economic crisis<sup>33</sup>, the Egyptian government buys half of the country's total imported wheat as it heavily subsidizes staple goods, like bread whose low price is strictly regulated.

<sup>29</sup> The New York Times, Prices Continued to Rise in April, But Gains Slowed a Little: Live Updates, May 11<sup>th</sup> 2022.

<https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/05/11/business/inflation-cpi-report-april>

<sup>30</sup> UN News, Global economic growth downgraded due to spillover from Ukraine war, May 2022. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/05/1118532>

<sup>31</sup> The New York Times, Economic Headwinds Mount as Leaders Weigh Costs of Confronting Russia, May 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/18/us/politics/russia-finance-ministers-economy.html>

<sup>32</sup> PAM, *op. cit.*

<sup>33</sup> Africanews, IMF to rescue Egypt from Ukraine shock, 2022.

<https://www.africanews.com/2022/03/24/imf-to-rescue-egypt-from-ukraine-shock/>

Another country particularly reliant on Ukrainian wheat is Lebanon, which imported over 60% of its wheat from Ukraine and is still grappling with a severe socio-economic crisis.

Additionally, some countries are expected to take this opportunity to install themselves as key players of the global cereal market, such as India, the world's second largest wheat producing country. India is currently increasing its share of wheat global exports from 1% to 5%<sup>34</sup>. However, fearing for the country's food security and due to the limited world supply and heatwaves, India has recently banned exports of wheat with immediate effects<sup>35</sup>.

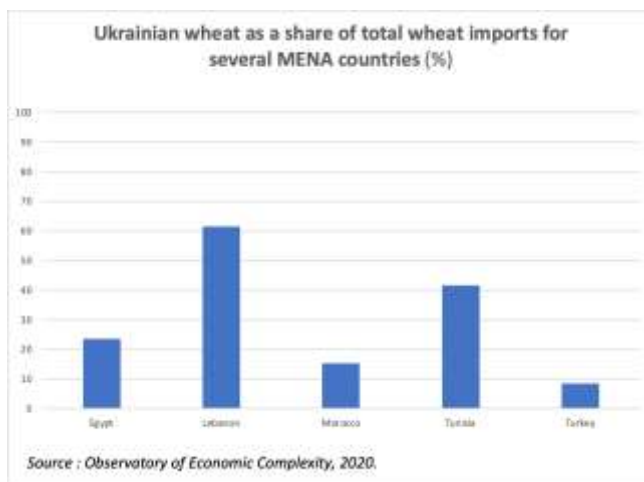


Figure 4

Finally, the ongoing global crisis will have a dramatic impact on global inequalities. Indeed, a long-term disruption of the wheat supply will surely exacerbate North-South inequalities with richer countries able to stockpile and hoard cereals whilst the poorest ones will be expected to rely on global solidarity<sup>36</sup>. According to FAO estimates, 720 million to 811 million people faced hunger in 2020, figures that have dramatically increased with the pandemic<sup>37</sup>. UN General Secretary Guterres reported that this conflict could put 1.7 billion people worldwide at risk of poverty, hunger and destitution<sup>38</sup>. Earlier this month, David Beasley, director of the World Food Program (WFP), called for ports in south Ukraine to be re-opened urgently to prevent the global hunger crisis from spinning out of control, as 44 million people worldwide are facing starvation<sup>39</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Le Monde Diplomatique, *op. cit.*

<sup>35</sup> Al-Monitor, What do rising wheat prices, India's export ban mean for Egypt?, May 16<sup>th</sup> 2022.  
<https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/05/what-do-rising-wheat-prices-indias-export-ban-mean-egypt#ixzz7Tib0ZY3Y>

<sup>36</sup> Le Monde Diplomatique, *op. cit.*

<sup>37</sup> FAO, The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021, 2022.  
<https://www.fao.org/state-of-food-security-nutrition/en/>

<sup>38</sup> UN News, Guterres requests meetings with Russian and Ukrainian Presidents, April 2022.  
<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/04/1116562>

<sup>39</sup> UN News, WFP appeals for re-opening of Ukraine ports to avert looming famine threat, May 6<sup>th</sup> 2022.  
<https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/05/1117722>

### III. The legal dimension: starvation as a weapon and International Law

In a recent dedicated report by OSCE<sup>40</sup>, evidence emerged about a massive destruction of objects necessary for the survival of the civilian population carried out by the Russian forces, which can be tantamount to a war crime and a crime against humanity. The report also claimed to have found evidence of clear patterns of humanitarian law violations by Russian forces, especially with regard to the death of civilian population.

From a legal perspective, the reported stealing and destruction of grain and farming material in Ukraine by the Russian army could be tantamount to two practices<sup>41</sup> forbidden by International Humanitarian Law (IHL): pillage and starvation<sup>42</sup>.

According to the ICC Statute, “Pillaging a town or place, even when taken by assault”, and “Intentionally using starvation of civilians as a method of warfare by depriving them of objects indispensable to their survival, including wilfully impeding relief supplies” constitute war crimes as they are “serious violation of the laws and customs applicable in international armed conflict” (Art. 8 par. 2, b, xvi)<sup>43</sup>. In addition, Article 33 of the Geneva Conventions, which have been ratified by virtually all States<sup>44</sup>: “Pillage is prohibited”<sup>45</sup>, while art. 54 of the Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts states: “Starvation of civilians as a method of warfare is prohibited”<sup>46</sup>. As far as territorial jurisdiction is concerned, it is worth noting that, although Ukraine and Russian are not members of the ICC, the Court might have jurisdiction as per Article 12 par. 3, which grants non-Member States the right to a referral to the Court to exert its jurisdiction over the State’s national territory<sup>47</sup> - which Ukraine did in 2015<sup>48</sup>. Finally, it is worth reminding that forty-one

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<sup>40</sup> OSCE, Report On Violations Of International Humanitarian And Human Rights Law, War Crimes And Crimes Against Humanity Committed In Ukraine Since 24 February 2022, April 13<sup>th</sup> 2022. <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/f/a/515868.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> Note that Russia had already been suspended from the UN Human Rights Council following its aggression against Ukraine: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/04/1115782>. President Putin may also be accountable for the international crime of aggression: <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2022/mar/30/vladimir-putin-ukraine-crime-aggression-philippe-sands>

<sup>42</sup> ICRC, How does IHL regulate the means and methods of warfare?, 2017. <https://blogs.icrc.org/ilot/2017/08/13/ihl-regulate-means-methods-warfare/>

<sup>43</sup> Rome Statute of the ICC, Art. 8 (2) (b), 1998. <https://www.icc-cpi.int/sites/default/files/RS-Eng.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> ICRC, The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, 2020. <https://www.icrc.org/en/publication/0173-geneva-conventions-august-12-1949>

<sup>45</sup> The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of civilian Persons in time of War, III – 1, Art. 33, 1949.

<sup>46</sup> Protocols Additional to The Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, Protocol 1 (IV.1) Art. 54, 1977.

<sup>47</sup> ICC Statute, Art. 12 (3).

<sup>48</sup> ICC, ICC Prosecutor extends preliminary examination of the situation in Ukraine following second article 12(3) declaration, 2015. <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/icc-prosecutor-extends-preliminary-examination-situation-ukraine-following-second-article-123>



Member States referred the Ukraine situation to the ICC Prosecutor, Karim Khan, allowing the Court to launch an investigation<sup>49</sup>.

Nonetheless, national courts may be the most efficient legal tool to bring war criminals to justice<sup>50</sup>, as witnessed by the first war-crimes trial since the invasion began, which was recently held in Ukraine<sup>51</sup>. Both Russia and Ukraine criminal codes forbid starvation and looting (Article 438 of Criminal Code of Ukraine<sup>52</sup>, and Article 356 of the Criminal code of the Federation of Russia<sup>53</sup>) and Ukrainian President Zelensky has announced that a special mechanism would be created to investigate and prosecute all crimes committed by Russia in Ukraine<sup>54</sup>.

#### **IV. Diplomacy at work: the UN and international efforts to restore food security**

On 18 May, the World Bank announced a comprehensive response to the ongoing food security crisis<sup>55</sup>, with up to 30 billion USD in existing and new projects for the next 15 months, while the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the International Fund for Agriculture and Development (IFAD) have launched similar initiatives<sup>56</sup>. Additionally, UN Secretary-General Guterres said he was in contact with Russia, Ukraine, Turkey, the United States and the EU to restore Ukrainian grain shipments and revive Russian fertilizer exports<sup>57</sup>. The EU is also actively trying to develop routes to get Ukrainian wheat and corn out of the country and called on EU

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<sup>49</sup> Coalition for the ICC, With State Party referrals, ICC Prosecutor opens an investigation into the Ukraine situation, March 2022.

<https://www.coalitionfortheicc.org/news/20220308/state-party-referrals-icc-prosecutor-opens-investigation-ukraine-situation>

<sup>50</sup> Franceinfo, *op. cit.*

<sup>51</sup> The NYT, A Russian soldier pleads guilty to killing a civilian and violating ‘the laws and customs of war’, 18 May <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/18/world/europe/russian-soldier-war-crime-ukraine-law.html>

<sup>52</sup> Criminal Code of the Republic of Ukraine, (XX) Art. 438, 2001.

[https://sherloc.unodc.org/cld/uploads/res/document/ukr/2001/criminal-code-of-the-republic-of-ukraine-en.html/Ukraine\\_Criminal\\_Code\\_as\\_of\\_2010\\_EN.pdf](https://sherloc.unodc.org/cld/uploads/res/document/ukr/2001/criminal-code-of-the-republic-of-ukraine-en.html/Ukraine_Criminal_Code_as_of_2010_EN.pdf)

<sup>53</sup> Criminal code of the Federation of Russia, (VI) (24) Art. 356, 1996.

[https://www.imolin.org/doc/amlid/Russian\\_Federation\\_Criminal\\_Code.pdf](https://www.imolin.org/doc/amlid/Russian_Federation_Criminal_Code.pdf)

<sup>54</sup> Franceinfo, Invasion de l'Ukraine par la Russie : comment les enquêtes pour crimes de guerre sont-elles menées et peuvent-elles aboutir à des procès ?, April 2022.

[https://www.francetvinfo.fr/monde/europe/manifestations-en-ukraine/ukraine-comment-les-enquetes-pour-crimes-de-guerre-sont-elles-menees-et-peuvent-elles-aboutir-a-des-proces\\_5065192.html](https://www.francetvinfo.fr/monde/europe/manifestations-en-ukraine/ukraine-comment-les-enquetes-pour-crimes-de-guerre-sont-elles-menees-et-peuvent-elles-aboutir-a-des-proces_5065192.html)

<sup>55</sup> World Bank, World Bank announces Planned Actions for Global Food Crisis Response, May 18<sup>th</sup> 2022.

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2022/05/18/world-bank-announces-planned-actions-for-global-food-crisis-response>

<sup>56</sup> Al Jazeera, US, banks unveil plan to address global food crisis, May 18<sup>th</sup> 2022.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2022/5/18/us-banks-unveil-plan-to-address-global-food-crisis>

<sup>57</sup> US News, U.N. Chief Hopeful About Talks on Ukraine, Russia Grain and Fertilizer Exports, May 18<sup>th</sup> 2022.

<https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2022-05-18/u-n-chief-hopeful-about-talks-on-ukraine-russia-grain-and-fertilizer-exports>

governments to apply maximum flexibility at border crossings. In total, 20 million tonnes of grain will have to leave Ukraine in less than three months using the EU infrastructure, according to EU Transport Commissioner Vălean, which will prove particularly difficult as Ukrainian rail system has a different width of tracks from Europe<sup>58</sup>.

On 19 May, the UN Security Council held an emergency meeting on conflict and food security, where the UNSG pointed out four actions countries will need take to mitigate the effects of the ongoing food security crisis. First, investment in political solutions to end conflicts and build long-term peace. Second, countries in the UNSC will have to restore the application of international humanitarian law - especially the resolution 2417 of the Council, specifying that goods and supplies essential to civilians' survival, including food, crops and livestock, must be protected. Third, that all food export restrictions should be lifted; strategic reserves should be released; and surpluses allocated to countries in need. Finally, international donors must fund humanitarian appeals in full. During the debate, World Food Program (WFP) Executive Director, David Beasley, warned against a food availability issue in 2023, while FAO Director-General, Qu Dongyu, added that due to the Russian aggression and the resulting disruptions on the global markets as well as increase in energy and fertilizer prices putting the next global harvest at risk, chronic undernourishment could be increased by an additional 18.8 million people by 2023<sup>59</sup>. Finally, During the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, World leaders have also called for international action, including a proposed naval flotilla to evade a Russian blockade, to deliver 20 million tons of grain trapped in Ukraine<sup>60</sup>.

MM/25 May 2022

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<sup>58</sup> Reuters, EU moves to help Ukraine export grain as Russia blocks sea routes, May 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/eu-moves-help-ukraine-export-grain-russia-blocks-sea-routes-2022-05-12/>

<sup>59</sup> UN Security Council, Open debate on conflict and food security, May 19<sup>th</sup> 2022, <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k10/k10mjpv1u3>

<sup>60</sup> The New York Times, World Leaders Accuse Russia of Using Ukraine's Food Supply as a Weapon, May 24<sup>th</sup> 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/05/24/world/russia-ukraine-war>