

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 677

Condemning the Government of the Russian Federation for exacerbating global food insecurity through its illegal, unprovoked full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

Mr. PETERS (for himself, Mr. KEAN of New Jersey, Mr. KEATING, and Mr. FITZPATRICK) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Condemning the Government of the Russian Federation for exacerbating global food insecurity through its illegal, unprovoked full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Whereas Ukraine has historically been a significant supplier of agricultural products for global markets, providing food for nearly 400 million people around the world, is the world's fifth largest exporter of wheat, and provides over 11 percent of cereals to the world;

Whereas, on February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation launched an unprovoked, full-scale invasion of the sovereign country of Ukraine;

Whereas throughout the invasion, the Russian Federation has consistently mined Ukrainian farmland and bombed grain silos;

Whereas, beginning on that date, the Russian Federation implemented an illegal naval blockade of Ukrainian ports in the Black Sea, disrupting Ukraine's food exports, driving up global food prices and exacerbating global food insecurity;

Whereas given many developing countries' pre-war reliance on Ukrainian foodstuffs, the Russian Federation's illegal blockade of Ukrainian ports disproportionately harmed millions of people who were already struggling with food insecurity before the war;

Whereas, in May 2022, the European Union established and provided significant investment for Solidarity Lanes as road, rail, and inland waterway alternatives to facilitate the export of Ukrainian agricultural and nonagricultural products to global markets despite the Russian Federation's illegal naval blockade of Ukraine;

Whereas Ukrainian ports along the Danube River serve as an important alternative route for the export of Ukrainian goods, and are now a critical Black Sea shipping outlet for millions of tons of Ukrainian grain, but cannot accommodate all the grain previously transported from Black Sea ports;

Whereas the Ukrainian Danube River ports have repeatedly been struck by Russian attacks following the Russian Federation's withdrawal from the Black Sea Grain Initiative, destroying thousands of tons of grain and damaging necessary port infrastructure;

Whereas, on July 27, 2022, Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Turkey, and the United Nations launched the Black Sea Grain Initiative “to ensure the safe passage of commercial vessels carrying grain, foodstuffs, and fertilizers, including ammonia, in and out of three Ukrainian ports; Odesa, Chornomorsk, and Yuzhny (Pivdennyi)”;

Whereas under this initiative, teams of Ukrainian, Russian, Turkish, and United Nations officials inspected cargo ships inbound to or outbound from Ukrainian ports and traveling along a specified humanitarian corridor;

Whereas until the Russian Federation suspended its participation, the Black Sea Grain Initiative facilitated the export of nearly 33 million metric tons of grain;

Whereas, during the period in which the Black Sea Grain Initiative was active, the Russian Federation reportedly delayed inspections of eligible vessels, reducing the amount of agricultural products that were exported from Ukraine to millions of people who relied on them;

Whereas, on July 17, 2023, the Russian Federation suspended its participation in the Black Sea Grain Initiative and soon thereafter announced that it would consider civilian vessels traveling in the Black Sea to be valid military targets;

Whereas despite the Kremlin’s claims to the contrary in justifying its decision to suspend the Black Sea Grain Initiative, Russia is making significant profits from its grain exports;

Whereas the Russian Federation defended its suspension of participation in the initiative by falsely claiming that Western sanctions enacted against it in response to its invasion of Ukraine prohibited exports of Russian agri-

cultural products to the world, despite longstanding humanitarian carve-outs in European Union and United States sanctions regimes;

Whereas, since suspending its participation in the Black Sea Grain Initiative, the Russian Federation has launched missile and drone strikes against ports previously involved in the Initiative such as Odesa and Mykolaiv, in addition to inland ports on the Danube River, damaging port and grain processing infrastructure, at least 5 civilian vessels, and destroying more than 180,000 tons of grain; and

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 2417 (2018), to which the Russian Federation agreed, calls “on all parties to armed conflict to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law regarding . . . taking constant care to spare civilian objects, including objects necessary for food production and distribution”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) condemns the Russian Federation for sus-
3 pending its participation in the Black Sea Grain Ini-
4 tiative;

5 (2) calls on the Russian Federation to imme-
6 diately resume participation in the Black Sea Grain
7 Initiative or pledge noninterference for commercial
8 grain shipping in the Black Sea without any pre-
9 conditions to avoid a global food crisis, and demands
10 the Russian Federation ceases the targeting of
11 Ukrainian grain storage and port facilities;

1 (3) affirms that the Russian Federation’s
2 unprovoked full-scale invasion and illegal naval
3 blockade of Ukraine are to blame for rising global
4 food insecurity, and affirms that civilian vessels are
5 not targets of war;

6 (4) considers the Russian Federation’s
7 weaponization of hunger to be a deliberate element
8 of its strategy to coerce Ukraine into agreeing to an
9 unfavorable negotiated settlement to the war;

10 (5) believes rising global food insecurity wors-
11 ened by the Russian Federation’s unprovoked full-
12 scale invasion and illegal naval blockade of Ukraine
13 threatens United States national security;

14 (6) commends the European Union’s Solidarity
15 Lanes for being excellent examples of the benefits of
16 burden sharing in tackling shared challenges;

17 (7) supports any other efforts to work with like-
18 minded allies and partners to meet the food needs
19 of countries most impacted by food insecurity arising
20 from the Russian Federation’s invasion of Ukraine;
21 and

22 (8) expresses solidarity with all people affected
23 by food insecurity resulting from the Russian Fed-
24 eration’s war against Ukraine.

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