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Inside C2

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Make Today Different

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China launches third aircraft carrier, named after province opposite Taiwan

BEIJING, June 17 (Reuters) - China launched its third aircraft carrier on Friday, the Fujian, named after the province opposite self-ruled Taiwan, sending a statement of intent to rivals as it modernises its military.

President Xi Jinping has made overhauling the world's largest armed forces a central part of his agenda, seeking to project power well beyond China's shores, though the government says it has no hostile intent.

Champagne, colourful ribbons, water cannons and smoke were deployed to celebrate the carrier's launch and official naming at a ceremony at the Jiangnan shipyard in Shanghai, state media reported.

Dozens of navy personnel lined up in front of the ship and sang the national anthem at the ceremony, which was attended by senior officials including Xu Qiliang, vice chairman of the Central Military Commission.

The aircraft carrier features a full-length flight deck with a catapult launch system, according to state media.

The Fujian will join the Shandong, commissioned in late 2019, and the Liaoning, which China bought second-hand from Ukraine in 1998 and refitted domestically. Watch our latest webcast on-demand to find out the three traits every lawyer needs to practice law. Learn more

China is still honing its ability to operate the carriers, and integrate them into battle groups, something the United States has been doing for decades.

Only the United States, with 11 aircraft carriers, has more of the vessels.

The Fujian's launch demonstrates the military's increasing capability at a time of rising tension with the United States over Chinese-claimed Taiwan and Beijing's claims to the South China Sea.

The coastal province of Fujian is just across the Taiwan Strait from Taiwan and home to the Eastern Theatre Command of the People's Liberation Army.

Taiwan is a thriving democracy but China considers the island its own territory and has never renounced the use of force to bring it under its control.

A senior Taiwan official familiar with the island's security planning told Reuters that with the new carrier China was flagging to the region its intentions about projecting power well into the Pacific.

“In the future, they want to directly penetrate to the east of the first island chain, which includes Japan's Ryukyu Islands and the Pacific waters off Taiwan's east,” the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

“Any regional cooperation is seen by Beijing as an intervention in the Taiwan issue or a challenge to China. The launch of the new carrier is a defiant statement.”

Taiwan has been modernising its own armed forces, including putting into service a new class of highly agile stealth warships, which Taiwan refers to as an “aircraft carrier killer” due to its missile complement.

Taiwan's defence ministry said in a statement sent to Reuters about the new carrier that it “attaches great importance” to China's military developments and “incorporates this into enemy situation research in a forward-looking manner”.

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China to ban new heavy industrial projects in key zones

SHANGHAI, June 17 (Reuters) - China will ban new steel, coking, oil refining, cement and glass projects in key zones, the government said on Friday in a wide-ranging policy document aimed at tackling pollution and meeting the country's climate goals.

It said China would step up efforts to establish a zoning system to manage environmental risks and take action to reduce heavy industry in already polluted regions, river basins and urban areas.

As well as banning heavy industries in the zones, China will also ensure that new energy vehicles make up around 50% of total car sales by around 2030 and prioritise the development of biomass, geothermal or solar energy for heating.

The document said China needed to find new "synergies" that would allow it to cut air, water and soil pollution while also tackling carbon dioxide emissions, which the country aims to bring to a peak before 2030.

It said many of the pressures on the environment have still not been alleviated, adding that there was "still a long way to go to achieve the vision of building a beautiful China and reaching carbon neutrality".

The document also promised to speed up the switch to alternative fuels in cement production, expand the deployment of carbon capture and storage and boost recycling rates in the steel and aluminium sectors.

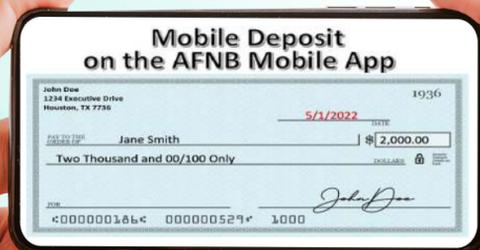
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EU backs Ukraine's membership bid to 'live the European dream'

BRUSSELS/KYIV, Ukraine, June 17 (Reuters) - The European Union gave its blessing on Friday for Ukraine and its neighbour Moldova to become candidates to join the bloc, reaching out deep into the former Soviet Union for what would be a major geopolitical shift resulting from Russia's invasion.

"Ukrainians are ready to die for the European perspective," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen told a news conference, wearing Ukrainian colours: a yellow blazer over a blue blouse. "We want them to live with us the European dream."

Though only the start of a process that may take many years, it puts Kyiv on course to realise an aspiration that would have been beyond its reach just months ago.

Ukraine applied to join the EU four days after Russian troops poured across its border in February. Another four days later, so did Moldova and Georgia - smaller ex-Soviet states also contending with separatist regions occupied by Russia.

"Precisely because of the bravery of the Ukrainians, Europe can create a new history of freedom, and finally remove the grey zone in Eastern Europe between the EU and Russia," tweeted President Volodymyr Zelenskiy.

One of President Vladimir Putin's main objectives in launching an invasion that has killed thousands of people, destroyed cities and driven millions to flight was to halt the West's eastward expansion via the NATO military alliance.

Friday's announcement underlined how the war has had the opposite effect: convincing Finland and Sweden to join NATO, and now the EU to embark on potentially its most ambitious expansion since welcoming Eastern European states after the Cold War.

Putin played down the EU issue, saying: "We have nothing against it. It is not a military bloc. It's the right of any country to join economic union."

Leaders of EU countries are expected to endorse the membership candidacy decision at a summit next week.

Moldovan President Maia Sandu hailed a "strong signal of support for Mol-



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen attends a news conference, with European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Oliver Varhelyi, after a meeting of the College of European Commissioners addressing its opinion on Ukraine's EU candidate status, in Brussels, Belgium June 17, 2022. REUTERS/Yves

dova and our citizens". In St Petersburg, Putin railed at the West in a grievance-filled speech to an annual economic conference once billed as the "Russian Davos" but now largely boycotted by Western dignitaries and corporate CEOs.

He denounced the United States for considering itself "God's emissary on Earth" and said Western intransigence had given Russia no choice but to launch its "special military operation" in Ukraine.

Adding further fuel to the global showdown, Russian media outlets broadcast images of what they said were two Americans captured while fighting for Ukraine. "I am against war," both men

said in separate video clips posted on social media. read more
Joining the EU requires years of administrative reform - there are 35 "chapters of the acquis" setting out standards to meet from judicial policy and financial services to food safety. Nor is membership guaranteed: talks have been stalled for years with Turkey, a candidate since 1999.

If admitted, Ukraine would be the EU's largest country by area and its fifth most populous. All three ex-Soviet hopefuls are far poorer than existing EU members, with per capita output around half that of the current poorest, Bulgaria.

Editor's Choice



Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry celebrates after the Warriors beat the Boston Celtics in game six. Kyle Terada-USA TODAY Sports



Golden State Warriors forward Draymond Green lifts his daughter Kyla Green after the Golden State Warriors beat the Boston Celtics in game six of the 2022 NBA Finals. Kyle Terada-USA TODAY Sports



Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry celebrates after the Warriors beat the Boston Celtics in game six. Kyle Terada-USA TODAY Sports



Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry holds up the Most Valuable Player Trophy after defeating the Boston Celtics in game six. Paul Rutherford-USA TODAY Sports



Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry reacts during the fourth quarter. Kyle Terada-USA TODAY Sports



Stephen Curry celebrates with the the Larry O'Brien Championship Trophy. Kyle Terada-USA TODAY Sports

Widespread Fertilizer Shortages, Supply-Chain Issues And Record Droughts Are The Major Reasons Behind The Crisis World Has Only 10 Weeks Of Wheat Supply Left, Expert Warns

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



Global food insecurity has reached levels not seen since the financial crisis of 2008, according to Sara Menker, CEO of Gro Intelligence, a global company that uses artificial intelligence and public and private data to predict food supply trends.

While addressing a special meeting of the Security Council on Saturday, she said that the Russia-Ukraine conflict was not the cause of the food security crisis but "simply added fuel to a fire that was long burning."

The expert pointed to widespread fertilizer shortages, supply-chain issues and record droughts as the major reasons behind the crisis.

"This isn't cyclical. This is seismic," Menker said, noting that, "even if the war were to end tomorrow, our food security problem isn't going away anytime soon without concerted action."

She stressed that, "without aggressive global actions, we stand the risk of an extraordinary amount of human suffering and economic damage."

The grain crisis is being felt across the globe as wheat prices have surged to record highs over the past two months. Major producers such as Russia, Kazakhstan and India have scrapped exports to protect their domestic markets, while Ukraine's supplies are in danger due to the ongoing conflict.

The executive director for the UN's World Food Programme, David Beasley, had earlier said that 49 million people in 43 countries are already "knocking on farmers' doors."



Wheat prices have surged to record highs over the past two months as major producers like Russia, Kazakhstan and India scrapped exports to protect their domestic markets. This has sparked fears of food insecurity and

hunger around the world. According to experts who spoke to Russia's Izvestia newspaper, since the beginning of the year the cost of wheat has risen in price by more than 60%. They say the surge was caused by the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which provide nearly a third of the globe's wheat exports.

In the 2021-2022 season that began in July last year, Russian suppliers accounted for 16% of global wheat exports, and Ukrainian producers accounted for 10%. But due to the conflict both countries banned wheat exports. In February Russia restricted the export of all grains (wheat, rye, barley and corn) outside the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) until June 30. Meanwhile, Ukraine has shut its only remaining port in Odessa.

A global "wheat war" is coming and the West could be forced to ask Russia for grain in exchange for lifting sanctions

Anti-Russia sanctions forced international companies to sever long-standing business ties and leave Russia, which caused supply disruptions. In one example, the EU recently banned cooperation with the Black Sea Novorossiysk Commercial Sea Port, through which more than half of the exported grain is shipped.

Moreover, following Moscow's decision to ban exports, Kazakhstan followed suit with its own restrictions, while, earlier this month, India also scrapped the export of wheat, stating that "food security of India, neighboring and other vulnerable countries is at risk."

Following the news from New Delhi, wheat futures in Chicago jumped by 6% to \$12.47 per bushel, its highest value in two months. And the price of wheat in Europe reached an historic high of about \$461 per ton.



The grain crisis is being felt across the globe, but most acutely in Africa, which relies on exports from the Black Sea region for 90% of its needs. Last month, UN Secretary-General António Guterres warned that a fifth of humanity was at risk of poverty and hunger due to the current situation in the wheat market.

Western states have accused Russia of unleashing a "wheat war," putting the blame for the current crisis on Moscow, but experts state that Russia is not the only one responsible for the worsening crisis, or if it is, it is not voluntary. Russia has not banned exports but introduced temporary duties and quotas to protect the domestic market. As for Ukraine, its grain is being actively removed from storage under the cover of EU help. The bloc's top

diplomat Josep Borrell recently stated that, "Ukraine should be helped to continue producing and exporting grain and wheat," and since Ukrainian storage facilities are now full, they "need to be emptied to make room for a new crop."

Citing experts, Izvestia notes that Russia and Ukraine are not the only key global exporters of wheat. Other producers could save the world market from the crisis, for instance the US and Canada, which export 26 and 25 million tons of wheat, respectively, or around 25% of global exports. Other major Western producers are France (19 million tons) and Germany (9.2 million tons). However, according to analysts, these countries are unlikely to share their grain with those in need, prioritizing their own food security.

"Producing countries will have their own difficulties, primarily related to energy prices, production costs and inflation, so it is likely that they simply will be too occupied to care for those countries that will be forced to starve," Nikolai Vavilov, strategic research specialist at Total Research, is cited as saying.



Another expert, the head of the analytics department at the research company NTEch Daria Akimova, says these countries would want to keep their raw materials to shield their economies from further inflation spikes.

"In order to protect themselves within the country from hunger and reduce their own inflation, producing countries are trying to keep raw materials. Since in the event of currency instability, and indeed any instability, it is always more profitable to have raw materials than cash: it does not depreciate as quickly as currency," the newspaper reported citing Akimova.

Experts largely fail to predict how the wheat market situation will develop further. On one hand, according to Viktor Tunes, Chief Analyst of Ingosstrakh Investments, the problems with the supply of such a widely produced commodity as wheat will most likely be solved by the new harvest, as well as the restoration of supplies from Ukraine and Russia once the conflict is resolved.

On the other hand, it is unclear how long it will take to resolve the conflict. Some experts claim that Western states would at some point be forced to ask Russia to share supplies in exchange for the removal of sanctions.

Zelensky warns of 'hunger catastrophe,' While accusing Russia of blocking Ukraine's grain exports Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky warned of famine and a hunger "catastrophe," as he accused Russia of blocking grain exports from his war-torn country — which the U.S. has described as an effort "to break the spirit of the Ukrainian people."

During remarks at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, this past week, Zelensky said that Russian forces were blocking Ukraine from exporting 22 million tons of food products that include "our grain, barley, sunflower and more."

"If we do not export in the coming months, if there are no political agreements with Russia through intermediaries — there will be famine, there will be a catastrophe, there will be a deficit, there will be a high price," Zelensky said.

Earlier in May, Ukraine closed its four ports — Mariupol, Berdiansk and Skadovsk in the Sea of Azov, and Kherson in the Black Sea — "until the restoration of control." Some of the ports were captured by Russian forces, while others were blockaded.



President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine warns of a "catastrophe" in global food supplies in a video conference broadcast at the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland, on May 23. (Dursun Aydemir/Anadolu Agency via Getty Images)

In Davos, Zelensky said: "You can unblock them in different ways. One of the ways is a military solution. That is why we turn to our partners with inquiries regarding the relevant weapons."

Russia's war on Ukraine has caused a ripple effect across the globe. It has disrupted supply chains and contributed to the surge in rising fuel prices and scarcity of grains and fertilizer. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations said in April that Russia's war on Ukraine was mostly responsible for the 17.1% rise in the price of wheat, barley, corn and other grains.

At a U.N. Security Council meeting on May 19, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken accused Russia of weaponizing food and holding grain hostage "to break the spirit of the Ukrainian people."

The meeting, which was called by the U.S., was happening "at a moment of unprecedented global hunger" fueled by climate change and COVID-19, "and made even worse by conflict," Blinken said.

Blinken said Russia has sought to control Ukraine's ports and access to the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov since launching its invasion in February, and he called it a "deliberate effort" to shut down shipping and block any safe passage.



Russian servicemen patrol a street near the port in Berdyansk on April 30. (Andrey Borodulin/AFP via Getty Images)

"As a result of the Russian government's actions, some 20 million tons of grain sit unused in Ukrainian silos as global food supplies dwindle, prices skyrocket, causing more around the world to experience food insecurity," he said.

The accusations were described as "absolutely false" by Vassily Nebenzya, Russia's ambassador to the United Nations.

"You assert that allegedly we are preventing agricultural

products from being taken out of Ukraine by sea," Nebenzya said. "However, the truth is that it is Ukraine and not Russia that has blocked 75 vessels from 17 states in the ports of Nikolaev [known as Mykolaiv in Ukraine], Kherson, Chermomorsk, Mariupol, Ochakov, Odesa and Yuzhny and has mined the waterways.

"Unless this issue is resolved, we cannot speak of any opportunities to export Ukrainian grain by sea," he warned.

The U.S. has few options for helping to end Russia's blockade. Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Gen. Mark Milley noted out at a press conference Monday with Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin that the U.S. has no vessels in the Black Sea.



A wheat field in Ukraine. (Rick Mave/SOPA Images/LightRocket via Getty Images)

"I think it's quite important to the economy of Ukraine, and many countries in the world depend on Ukrainian grain," he told reporters.

"Right now, it's a bit of a stalemate [in the Black Sea region] between the Ukrainians wanting to make sure that there's not any sort of amphibious landing against Odessa," its key port, he said.

Meanwhile, Russia itself stands to gain from blocking Ukraine's exports; since it is a major producer of grain, and according to Nebenzya, is expecting a record wheat crop. He said Russia can offer to export 25 million tons of grain from Aug. 1 until the end of 2022 through the port of Novorossiysk in the Black Sea.

The U.N. ambassador went on to accuse the more than 10,000 sanctions against Russia of disrupting transportation routes, banning Russian vessels from ports and causing other problems.

"If you do not want to lift your sanctions of choice, then why are you accusing us of causing this food crisis?" he asked. "Why is it that as a result of your irresponsible geopolitical games, the poorest countries and regions must suffer?"



In a recent statement, G-7 foreign ministers urged Russia to "cease immediately its attacks on key transport infrastructure in Ukraine, including ports."

President Vladimir Putin of Russia said Thursday that he was willing to facilitate grain and fertilizer exports, but only if sanctions against Russia are lifted. (Courtesy news.yahoo.com and rt.com)

"The Fight Is Here. We Need Ammunition, Not A Ride."

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor



Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine ~ Under Siege 2022 ~