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S Africa's Ramaphosa: russia sanctions hurting 'bystander' states

Рамафоса в Південній Африці: санкції проти росії завдають шкоди «стороннім» державам

Президент ПАР Матамела Сиріл Рамафоса під час візиту канцлера Німеччини О. Шольца до Південної Африки заявив, що «країни-спостерігачі» постраждали через санкції проти росії. Південна Африка має тісні історичні зв'язки з москвою через підтримку Радянського Союзу боротьби проти апартеїду. Європейський союз агресивно застосовує санкції та розриває економічні зв'язки, намагаючись покарати москву за її військові операції в Україні, і ця стратегія, за словами С. Рамафоса, завдає побічних збитків. С. Рамафоса сказав, що єдиний спосіб врегулювати війну — це діалог, і Африка «справді відіграє свою роль», бо має доступ до лідерів України та росії.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2022/5/24/update-2-s-africas-ramaphosa-russia-sanctions-hurt-bystander-countries>

Africa, still facing lingering economic effects from the coronavirus pandemic, has been hit hard by rising food costs linked to the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa has said that "bystander countries" were suffering due to sanctions against Russia and called for talks as the African Union (AU) prepared a mission to foster dialogue between Moscow and Kyiv.

Ramaphosa spoke as German Chancellor Olaf Scholz visited South Africa on the final leg of a trip to the continent that aimed in part to rally diplomatic support for Ukraine.

South Africa has close historical ties to Moscow due to the Soviet Union's support for the anti-apartheid struggle. It abstained from a United Nations vote denouncing the invasion of Ukraine and has resisted calls to condemn Russia.

The European Union has aggressively pursued sanctions and a severing of economic ties in a bid to punish Moscow for its military operations in Ukraine, a strategy that Ramaphosa said was causing collateral damage.

"Even those countries that are either bystanders or not part of the conflict are also going to suffer from the sanctions that have been imposed against Russia," he said during a news conference in Pretoria.

Africa, which has already seen millions pushed into extreme poverty by the COVID-19 pandemic, has been hit hard by rising food costs caused in part by disruptions linked to the war.

Russia and Ukraine account for nearly a third of global wheat and barley, and two-thirds of the world's exports of sunflower oil used for cooking. The conflict has damaged Ukraine's ports and agricultural infrastructure, and that is likely to limit its agricultural production for years.

In an interview with German broadcaster Deutsche Welle earlier on Tuesday, Scholz called on countries to increase oil and gas supply to curb global energy price increases.

Standing beside Ramaphosa, Scholz – who is also visiting Niger and Senegal – said he was pleased to have the opportunity to discuss South Africa's position on the war.

But he underlined that what he called an attempt by Russia to alter international borders by force is unacceptable.

“Mr President, I think it is important that we continue these discussions intensively,” he said. “We are very concerned about the outcome of the war for Africa.”

Senegal’s President Macky Sall – the current chairman of Africa’s top political bloc, the African Union – said on Sunday while hosting Scholz that he was preparing to visit Kyiv and Moscow to foster peace.

Last month, Sall had a call with Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who has requested an audience with the AU.

Ramaphosa, who has been invited to attend the Group of Seven (G7) summit being hosted by Germany next month, said the only way to resolve the war is through dialogue, and Africa “does have a role to play” because it has access to the leaders of both Ukraine and Russia.