

Daily Sabah.- 17.03.2023

Time 'running out' to extend Ukraine grain deal: Akar

Часу на продовження зернової угоди з Україною залишається мало

Міністр оборони Туреччини Х. Аккар заявив, що Анкара веде переговори як з росією, так і з Україною про продовження зернової угоди на умовах, аналогічних початковим. Він також підтвердив бажання Туреччини покласти край війні та кровопролиттю, додавши, що президент Р. Т. Ердоган та інші міністри докладають зусиль для якнайшвидшого досягнення рішення. ООН запевнила, що працює на всіх рівнях, щоб гарантувати, що угоду щодо експорту українського зерна, спрямовану на пом'якшення глобальної продовольчої кризи, буде продовжено після закінчення терміну дії.

<https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/diplomacy/time-running-out-to-extend-ukraine-grain-deal-akar>

Defense Minister Hulusi Akar warned Friday that the clock was ticking for the extension of the Black Sea grain deal, which was mediated by Türkiye and the U.N.

Ankara is engaged in talks with both Russia and Ukraine to continue the agreement with conditions similar to the initial ones, Akar said during a visit to the flood-hit southeastern province of Şanlıurfa.

He also reiterated Türkiye's wish for an end to the conflict and bloodshed, adding that President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and other ministers are making efforts to achieve a solution as soon as possible.

Ukraine insists on 120-day extension of Black Sea grain deal

Ukraine insists on a 120-day extension of an agreement allowing the safe export of grain from Black Sea ports, Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal said Friday.

"We insist that the grain agreement be open-ended and automatically extended for 120 days," Shmyhal told a government meeting. "Attempts by the aggressor to reduce the extension period are a manipulation to continue further blackmail and deepen a global food crisis. We have to prevent this."

Meanwhile, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said on Friday that Russia highly appreciates Erdoğan's efforts for peace, as he said they only agreed to a 60-day extension.

"We highly appreciate Mr. Erdogan's efforts, his peacekeeping activities, his attempts to provide mediation services, and his attitude to the development of bilateral Russian-Turkish relations," Peskov said at a press briefing in Moscow, commenting on an idea to nominate the Turkish leader for the Nobel Peace Prize.

UN working at 'all levels' for Ukraine grain deal extension

Discussions are ongoing at "all levels" to ensure the Ukrainian grain exports deal aimed at easing the global food crisis is extended beyond Saturday's expiry date, the United Nations said Friday.

Russia and Ukraine are in disagreement about the duration of an extension to the Black Sea Grain Initiative which allows for the safe transportation of grain and foodstuffs from Ukrainian ports.

"The agreement foresees the renewal for 120 days. There are discussions ongoing and we're not going to speculate on what is going to happen," U.N. spokesperson Alessandra Vellucci told a press conference.

"We are engaged at all levels," she said, pointing out that U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres was part of the discussions.

"This is the secretary-general's initiative but there are also other high-level officials in the U.N. that are involved. Everybody is mobilized on this important issue.

"We are all committed to these discussions and to ensure the integrity and continuity of this agreement."

The Black Sea Grain Initiative has eased the global food crisis triggered by the war in Ukraine, one of the world's top grain producers.

Türkiye, the U.N., Russia and Ukraine signed a deal mediated by Türkiye and the U.N. in Istanbul last July to resume grain exports from three Ukrainian Black Sea ports, which were halted after the Ukraine war began in February.

The deal, extended for 120 days in November, will expire on Saturday.