

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

Trade and Development Board seventieth session

Item 3. General Debate

Statement by Permanent Representative of Ukraine, Ambassador,
H.E. Yevhenia Filipenko

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

It is an honour to join you today and have the opportunity to speak on behalf of Ukraine at this session.

Let me begin by congratulating Ambassador Hashmi with his successful election on the post of the President and at the same time to thank Ambassador Hasans of Latvia for his constructive presidency at the previous session of the Board.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Secretary General Rebeca Grynspan for her active involvement into establishment and expansion of the Black Sea Grain Initiative as well as to commend to UNCTAD Secretariat for preparing and updating the report “Trade hope” that demonstrates the real effectivity of the Initiative despite it functionates at less than 20% of its throughput capacity, due to Russia's destructive position.

I am addressing you today, on the 482nd day of the full-scale war launched by the Russian Federation against Ukraine. The war that has already resulted in devastating humanitarian, economic and environmental consequences both for Ukraine and for the entire world.

Russia's aggression has led to the disruption of traditional trade routes and supply chains, price growth, aggravation of humanitarian, financial and energy crises, artificial food shortage.

When we are discussing the issue of global food insecurity, it should be noted that before Russia's invasion, Ukraine was the guarantor of food security in many countries due to traditionally powerful food exports. Ukraine's contribution to the global food market in 2021 was equivalent to providing food for about 400 million people.

Despite the war we are making every effort to supply grain and other agricultural products to the global market. Since the establishment of the Black Sea Grain Initiative Ukraine has already exported more than 32 mln tons of grain and foodstuffs, including 625.000 tons of grain shipped by vessels chartered by the World Food Programme in support of its humanitarian operations in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, and Yemen. This volume could be significantly higher if it was not Russia's policy of delaying the inspection of vessels: in May, 33 vessels with 1.3 mln tons of grains and

other foodstuffs departed from Ukrainian ports, half of the number compared to April. As of today, in June dozens of vessels are still waiting for inspection.

It is worth mentioning that the grain corridor agreement also had a positive impact on the world food prices, as it contributed to a drop of 20% of the FAO food price index over 2022.

Yet of the three deep-sea ports agreed within the framework of the BSGI, since the end of April, the Pivdennyi port has been blocked by Russia, where more than 1,5 mln tons of agricultural products, which are expected by at least ten countries, including Egypt, Bangladesh and China, are stored.

More than thirty countries and international organizations, including the EU countries, the USA, Canada, UK, Japan, Korea and Qatar, joined the "Grain from Ukraine" humanitarian program launched by President Zelenskyy. The program has already raised >200 mln USD in donations and sent 170,000 tons of wheat to Ethiopia, Somalia, Yemen and Kenya. The Government of Ukraine plans to purchase and ship 125,000 tons of wheat to African and Asian countries. We call upon the countries around the world to join this humanitarian program.

The war continues and we already have precedents of Russia's shelling of agricultural enterprises, food distribution centres, agricultural equipment and fuel depots, occupation of our territories.

The damage caused by Russia's destruction of the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant to Ukraine's irrigation systems reached more than four billion US dollars. This man-made ecological disaster will have far-reaching and long-term consequences, not only for Ukraine but for many countries of the world as well. Vast agricultural areas in southern regions of Ukraine will not be able to produce food for a long time, leading to even greater shortage of food across the globe.

Recognizing the important role that UNCTAD plays in delivering solutions to current and long-term challenges facing multilateral trading system, we call upon its Members to combine forces in order to prevent further aggravation of already existing crises and give a fitting rebuff to all Russia's attempts to destabilize world economy, security and order.

We once again emphasize that this war goes far beyond Ukrainian borders, it's not just about shelling and killing innocent people with heavy weapons, it's also about killing with hunger or cold, about deliberate disruption of supplies and growing prices on much needed goods.

It is therefore of great importance that our work here contributes to the development of effective joint responses to the current global challenges.

Our responses must be firmly rooted in the respect for international law and for the UN Charter, which are the only safeguards of each country's peace, security and development.

Thank you for the attention and let me wish us all constructive discussions in the upcoming days!