

Russian crops, fertilizer must reach world markets: UN chief

21st August 2022

It is key to avert a food crisis that may hit the world in 2023

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
ISTANBUL

Russian fertilizers and agricultural produce must be able to reach world markets “unimpeded” or a global food crisis could strike as early as next year, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said on Saturday.

“It is important that all governments and the private sector cooperate to bring them to market,” he said from the Joint Coordination Center (JCC).

The JCC oversees the implementation of the Ukrainian grain export agreement signed in July by Kyiv and Moscow with the UN and Turkey as guarantors.

The agreement also guarantees Russia the right to export its agricultural products and fertilizers despite Western sanctions.

“What we see here in Istanbul and in Odesa is only the more visible part of the solution. The other part of this package deal is the unimpeded access to the global markets of Russian food and fertilizer, which are not subject to sanctions,” Mr. Gu-



Antonio Guterres

terres said, adding that despite this, Russian fertilizer and agricultural exports still faced “obstacles.”

“Without fertilizer in 2022, there may not be enough food in 2023. Getting more food and fertilizer out of Ukraine and Russia is crucial to further calm commodity markets and lower prices for consumers,” he said.

Mr. Guterres travelled this week to Ukraine, where he met with the Presidents of Ukraine and Turkey, Volodymyr Zelensky and Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in the western city of Lviv Thursday.

He headed to the south-

ern city of Odesa on Friday.

Earlier Saturday, he visited the first aid ship chartered by the United Nations to transport Ukrainian grain on the southern shores of Istanbul in the Sea of Marmara.

The *Brave Commander* left the Ukrainian port of Pivdenny on Tuesday with 23,000 tonnes of wheat before crossing the Bosphorus on Wednesday evening.

The UN chief vowed Thursday that his organisation would try to “step up” grain exports from Ukraine before the onset of winter, which are crucial for food supplies in many African countries.

Under the agreement signed in July, 6,50,000 tons of Ukrainian grain and agricultural products have left the Ukrainian ports of Odesa, Chornomorsk and Pivdenny since August 1.

Cereal exports from Ukraine, one of the world’s leading producers and exporters, were blocked for several months due to the Russian invasion, raising fears of a global food crisis.