



## [A Trilateral Meeting Between Russia, Turkey, and Iran is Slated to Take Place Next Week in Tehran](#)

Recently, it has been announced that Vladimir Putin of Russia will be meeting with his counterparts, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi, in Tehran next week. Putin will also hold a separate bilateral meeting with Erdogan as well. The talks will address issues such as disputes regarding Black Sea trade routes and the dispersion of critical wheat to the international community in the face of the ongoing Russian invasion of Ukraine. The latter is one of the world's largest exporters of the grain, and a major wheat crisis has taken shape as nations – many of whom already struggle with high levels of food insecurity – have seen circumstances worsen considerably without access to the relied upon product. Some experts forecast that the three nations may form an agreement, putting Ukraine in a difficult global position, as Turkey is a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally and this could cast doubt on a unified NATO front against Russian aggression.

Ukraine has been dubbed “The breadbasket of Europe” for its large quantities of wheat exports to the international community. Upon the destructive Russian invasion of Ukraine, western allies blocked Russian exports. The Black Sea has been a focal point of these blockades, as the sea acts as a crucial trading gateway for Russia. Turkey, which also lies on the Black Sea, has been the main actor blockading Russian exports among the trade routes. With Russia's invasion of Ukraine, access to wheat has diminished, particularly with many of the fields being in the eastern part of the country – a significant portion of which has fallen into Russian hands.

The United States and others have warned the international community that the wheat on the market from Europe is more likely than not stolen by Russia and being sold on the black market. Additionally, the U.S. and NATO allies have urged nations to take part in the blockade coalition internationally in order to help diminish Russia's military capabilities. Many countries however, which rely heavily on this wheat, have been unable to join and are in desperate need of the grain, thus giving Russia leverage in international talks regarding trade. The planned meeting next week in Tehran also comes after the U.S. has accused Iran of selling weapons to Russia to aid in the invasion. Regarding MENA regional security, this could see the conflict form on an increased number of fronts and further complicate the geopolitical tensions in the Middle East.

Rights advocates have expressed that these talks next week could have far-reaching effects and leave food insecure nations becoming reliant on governments like Russia and Iran – who both have poor human rights records. Meanwhile, some security experts see Turkey becoming increasingly unreliable as a NATO member, as the alliance requires unanimous consent and thus the ability for NATO to act if needed becomes less likely. Ultimately, it is the citizens of Ukraine and the struggling food insecure nations that will face the brunt of the consequences following these talks.

If NATO, especially the leading nations in the defense of Ukraine, are to help curb this shifting geopolitical dynamic, they must ensure that food insecure nations are met with the required aid. This points to a growing trend of the Ukraine invasion becoming far more global than even expected, with notable consequences across multiple continents.