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THE CURRENT STATUS OF GRAIN DEAL AND ITS FUTURE

As Russia refuses to extend the Black Sea Grain Corridor Agreement, the future of the Black Sea Initiative becomes uncertain.

The Black Sea Grain Corridor Agreement, which was mediated by the UN and Türkiye in July 2022, has been reached to ensure the safe export of Ukrainian grain in order to prevent a global food crisis following the Russia-Ukraine war. One year on, a statement from the Kremlin announced that Russia refused to extend the agreement on the grounds that conditions for its extension had not been fulfilled. Russia complained that none of Russia's requirements agreed to in the agreement had been met. With respect to the grain deal, the immediate implication of the agreement ceasing to function is the withdrawal of the safety guarantees for shipping. In this context where global food prices are increasing, the cessation of grain shipment makes future problems inevitable.

Russian President Vladimir Putin stated that Ukraine profited from the Grain Corridor Agreement whereas the terms of the agreement harmed Russia. Putin wanted both the sanctions on banks, individuals and agricultural companies in Russia and the obstacles to the transportation of Russia's grain to the middle and high-level regions to be lifted. In his video message at the BRICS Summit, Putin expressed that Russia is ready to return if the obligations related to the Grain Corridor Agreement are fulfilled in real terms.

Stating that the sanctions imposed on Russia by European countries are damaging the global economy, Putin emphasised that these damages will inevitably increase the food crisis. After facing these major sanctions, Russia refused to extend the agreement on 18 July 2023. However Russia left open a door for returning to the deal on the condition that the obligations to Russia are fulfilled in concrete terms.



What Will Happen If Russia Does Not Return to the Grain Deal?

Following the agreement that entered into force on 22 July 2022, a total of 32.9 million tons of grain reached the international markets. The biggest handicap of the grain shipments was that mostly high-income countries such as EU Member States were the primary beneficiaries of the agreement. Only 2.5% of the shipments went to low-income countries, which include most African countries. Although Russian grain and fertiliser exports were allowed under the Grain Agreement, the removal of the Russian Agricultural Bank (*Rosselkhozbank*) from the Belgium-based SWIFT system created a problem for Russia in grain exports.

If Russia does not return to the Grain Agreement, grain shipments will have to be carried out from Ukrainian ports. In this case, it seems unlikely that shipping companies will continue their shipments, as there is a possibility of loss of life and property. As an alternative, Ukraine will need to ship grain to Romanian ports by road and rail, as

was done before the Grain Corridor Agreement. This will result in less grain being transported in more difficult conditions. As mentioned before, a grain corridor without Russia does not offer significant advantages to countries other than EU Member States. In addition to the conveniences provided in terms of logistics, Russia is also a country rich in grains and fertilisers.

The Grain Corridor Agreement holds as significant importance for Türkiye, as it is the third largest beneficiary of the agreement. Türkiye, which both initiated the grain agreement initiative and benefited greatly from this agreement, is expected to act as a mediator today but, it is anticipated that Russia will not return to the table again until the difficulties experienced in grain and fertiliser shipments are resolved. On the other hand, Türkiye believes that establishing a new route without Russia may not be beneficial.

The UN, which led the formation of the Grain Corridor Agreement, asserts that if the agreement is not extended, price increase is

inevitable. On the other hand, the UN stated that the duration of rising prices will depend on market reactions. In addition, the UN warns that Russia's withdrawal from the agreement could exacerbate the existing problems in East Africa.

The agreement is important not only for the smooth delivery of grain and fertiliser shipments but also for ensuring safety of ships entering and leaving Ukrainian ports from potential attacks. This agreement, which is scheduled to be extended every four months, offers a solution to the end of the ongoing war. For this reason, the renewal of the agreement offers a diplomatic solution not only for the addressing the global food crisis but also for potentially ending the Russia-Ukraine war.

Joseph Schulte Departs from the Port of Odessa

On 18 August, the ship named *Joseph Schulte* arrived in İstanbul, utilising the unilateral corridor announced by Ukraine after Russia's withdrawal from the Grain Corridor Agreement. After passing through

İstanbul, *Joseph Schulte* continued its journey towards the Greek port of Piraeus. Carrying 30 thousand tons of cargo, the ship avoided being a target of Russian warships and reached Bosphorus without entering international waters. The fact that *Joseph Schulte* completed the Black Sea route without any problems is important in terms of establishing an alternative grain route without Russia.

Türkiye Continues Its Mediator Role

Since Russia refused to renew the Grain Corridor Agreement, Türkiye made attempts to revive the deal as progress in this area is of critical importance for the global food crisis to come to an end, especially for African countries who are reliant on grain imports.

The long awaited meeting between President Erdoğan and President Putin finally took place on 4 September 2023 in Sochi, Russia. President Putin reiterated his stance that Russia would agree to revive the grain deal if Russia's interests are met. The conditions he put forth include Western sanctions on Russia to be relaxed and restrictions on Russian agricultural exports be dropped. He also mentioned Russia would provide shipments of grain to selected African countries for free instead of renewing the deal. President Erdoğan emphasised that the deal was the only option and efforts should be made to prevent African countries from being affected by the food crisis. President Erdoğan said that he presented proposals to revive the deal and reiterated Türkiye's wish to help mediate between Russia and Ukraine.

While Russia may return to the agreement if the necessary conditions are met since the decision to suspend it, the final decision remains uncertain at this moment.



AYHAN ZEYTİNOĞLU RE-ELECTED AS IKV CHAIRPERSON

The 61st General Assembly of IKV was held in İstanbul on 10 August 2023 with the participation of the presidents of the Foundation's Founding and Trustee Institutions, representatives of Supporting Organisations and delegates. İstanbul Chamber of Industry President Erdal Bahçivan served as the Chairperson of the General Assembly, while Kocaeli Chamber of Industry (KCI) Assembly President Hasan Tahsin Tuğrul served as Vice President and IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas served as clerk. The opening speeches of the General Assembly were delivered by the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Türkiye (TOBB) Vice President and İstanbul Chamber of Commerce (ICOC) President Şekib Avdagiç, İstanbul Chamber of Industry (ICI) President Erdal Bahçivan, and IKV Chairperson Ayhan Zeytinoğlu.

In his speech, Chairperson Zeytinoğlu stated that President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's recent statements on Türkiye's EU membership raised hopes for the future of relations. Underlining that there are also important obstacles to the process, Zeytinoğlu stated that Türkiye is an important supplier for the EU and an important partner in areas such as security, migration and energy. In this direction, Zeytinoğlu emphasised that Türkiye's main priorities are to revitalise the accession process, update the Customs Union and make progress on issues such as visa liberalisation.

Zeytinoğlu stated that at the meeting of the European Council



held on 29-30 June 2023, it was decided to prepare a report on the future of Türkiye-EU relations and that the business world and civil society have written a letter addressed to Olivér Várhelyi, the European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Policy, and Josep Borrell, the High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy, who are responsible for preparing this report. Zeytinoğlu emphasised that it is very important to underline the commitment to this goal, especially in an environment where alternatives that could

replace the accession process are being put forward. President Zeytinoğlu also stated that IKV will continue its contacts in Brussels during the preparation of the relevant report.

TOBB Vice President and ICOC President Şekib Avdagiç said that the history of IKV follows a parallel process with the history of the EU and that IKV is a window to the EU business world. Stating that IKV has been and continues to be an EU school, library and teacher for the business world, Avdagiç emphasised that TOBB

has contributed and will continue to contribute to the activities of IKV. Stating that economic activities have also gained a certain momentum thanks to the Customs Union, Avdagiç underlined that the Customs Union continues to serve as a strong bond between Türkiye and the EU, but it should be updated and its scope should be expanded in accordance with today's conditions. Stating that green and digital transformation is also an important issue to strengthen Türkiye-EU relations, Avdagiç stated that there is a

favourable environment for the development of relations in this period.

ICI President Erdal Bahçivan stated that Türkiye exported \$103 billion worth of goods to the EU, with which we reached a trade volume of \$200 billion last year, and that this amount corresponds to 40% of our country's total exports. Underlining the need to update the Customs Union, Bahçivan emphasised that this would make a significant contribution to both the Turkish and EU economies. Bahçivan stated that Türkiye should be included in the EU FTA negotiations simultaneously in order to compete on equal terms.

Following the opening speeches, IKV's activity and financial reports for 2022 as well as the audit reports were released, while the 2023 work programme and budget instruction were unanimously approved. Finally, IKV Chairperson Ayhan Zeytinoğlu conveyed his thanks on behalf of the IKV Board of Directors and concluded the meeting.

The newly elected IKV Board of Directors include Ayhan Zeytinoğlu, Prof. Dr. Halûk Kabaalioğlu, Sedat Zincirkıran, Dr. Zeynel Abidin Erdem, Bedii Can Yücaoğlu, Hakan Sefa Çakır, Murat Hazıroğlu, Ömer Gülsoy, Fatih Çapraz, Hakkı İsmet Aral, Şadan Eren, Ali Sami Aydın, Yavuz Altun, Ersin Kenan Kayalar, Ercan Özboyacı, Mustafa Şenocak and Akansel Koç. Abdurrahman Aslantaş and Mustafa Zeytin were elected to serve in the Audit Committee.

IKV SECRETARY GENERAL NAS ATTENDED A WEBINAR ON TÜRKİYE-EU RELATIONS

IKV Secretary General Assoc. Prof. Çiğdem Nas attended a webinar on 17 August 2023 as a guest of the Country and Regional Studies Society. During the webinar, Assoc. Prof. Nas made a presentation titled "Transformation and Challenges in Türkiye-EU Relations" and explained the history,

phases and current problems of Türkiye-EU relations. Assoc. Prof. Nas noted that Türkiye-EU relations are affected by global developments and conflicts and that these relations bring along the need for a transformation along with special elements. Discussing different scenarios for

the future of Türkiye-EU relations, Assoc. Prof. Nas emphasised that the possibility of these scenarios depends on the EU's intention to revive relations and Türkiye's will to restart the EU reform process. Assoc. Prof. Nas answered the questions of the participants after the webinar.



CULTURE AND ART AGENDA

UNEARTHED AGORA IN AIZANOI TO SHED LIGHT ON ANCIENT TRADE LIFE



Recent excavations at the ancient city of Aizanoi in Western Türkiye have uncovered a well-preserved agora, the marketplace. The agora is expected to provide new and invaluable information on the city's trade life.

The ancient city of Aizanoi has made the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List in 2012. The site is located

in the province of Kütahya, about 57 kilometres from the city centre and became "the centre of the episcopacy in the Byzantine era," according to the website of the Turkish Culture and Tourism Ministry. Recent excavations around the Temple of Zeus indicate the existence of several levels of settlement in the city dating from as far back as 3000 BC. The ancient site was

rediscovered by European travellers in 1824. The excavations carried out by the German Archaeology Institute between 1970 and 2011 unearthed a theatre, a stadium, two public baths, a gymnasium, five bridges, a trading building, necropolises, and the sacred cave of Metre Steune, thought to be dating all the way back to the first century BC. Turkish archaeologists have been carrying out work at the ancient site since 2011. This year, the excavations were transferred to the Kütahya Museum Directorate.

Kütahya Governor Ali Çelik said that the excavations of five shops in the agora are expected to be completed this year and that once all of them are uncovered, the Temple of Zeus, the trade areas, and the monumental structures of the city from that period will be integrated, providing invaluable information on the commercial life of Aizanoi and a better understanding of the city's economic and social history.

35TH BOSPHOROUS SWIMMING RACE TOOK PLACE

35th Samsung Bosphorus Cross-Continental Swimming Race, which was organised by the Turkish National Olympic Committee, hosted 2,600 swimmers from more than 70 countries this year. The race course was 6.5 kilometre long.

Doğukan Ulaş ranked first in the men's general category with 41 minutes and 22 seconds. Burcunaz Narin finished first in the women's general category with 42 minutes and 54 seconds.



Dutch Ambassador to Türkiye Joep Wijnands was also among the swimmers. This year's race intended to raise awareness for earthquakes, which hit southern

part of Türkiye on 6 February and a relief campaign to help the victims. The Ambassador said that he had been in earthquake-affected cities and witnessing what happened had been heartbreaking for him. He also added that the Embassy in Türkiye wanted to do more than the 150 million euros raised during their national campaign and therefore, they attended this race.

SPECIAL CENTER FOR VAN CATS

Van Yüzüncü Yıl University has opened The Van Cat Research and Application Center both as a touristic attraction for visitors coming to the city and also to contribute to the future and well-being of the Van cats. The Van cat is a distinctive natural breed of a domestic cat species found around Lake Van in the Eastern Anatolia Region of Türkiye. Van cats have white coat and have blue or amber eyes or mostly famous for having heterochromia (one eye of each colour).



The center contains different spaces such as playrooms, pools

and resting areas for cats so that they spend time with their friends and live happily. The areas are also controlled in terms of temperature with ventilation systems in order to keep cats free of temperature-related health issues.

Each cat is registered to a system through an "international health certificate" including information

regarding the cats' names, breed, gender, eye colour, birthdate, tail characteristic, colours, hearing status, identity and microchip number. With the expertise of the Center, primary cat lineage is also protected as there were serious concerns on the future of the lineage, in other words, with respect to the extinction of the Van cats.

The Center is visited by 600 people on weekdays and this number goes up to 1,000 people at weekends. Every year, 100 Van cats born and raised in the Center are adopted under the project called "A Van Cat for Every Home."

TIMELINE AUGUST 2023

1	
2	The National Day of Switzerland was celebrated in Ankara.
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5	14 th Ambassadors Conference took place in Ankara.
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7	Trade Minister Bolat exchanged views with Executive Vice-President for an Economy that works for people Valdis Dombrovskis about Türkiye-EU relations and Black Sea Grain Initiative.
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10	Ayhan Zeytinoglu re-elected as IKV Chairperson.
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17	IKV Secretary General Nas attended a webinar on Türkiye - EU relations.
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20	President Erdoğan had high level meetings in Hungary.
21	Foreign Minister Fidan came together with Ambassador of Russia Aleksei Erkhov.
22	Foreign Minister Fidan came together with Deputy Minister and Foreign Minister of Bulgaria Mariya Gabriel.
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24	
25	Foreign Minister Fidan came together with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Foreign Minister Kuleba.
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29	Deputy Foreign Minister Ambassador Kemal Bozay attended Bled Strategic Forum in Slovenia.
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31	Foreign Minister Fidan met with his counterpart Sergey Lavrov in Moscow.

GÖYNÜK CANYON IS COOLING ITS VISITORS WITH ATTRACTIONS



Nestled within the Kemer district of Antalya, the Göynük Canyon is a peaceful oasis that beckons both local and international tourists looking to escape the scorching heat and high humidity. The canyon, which includes a significant portion of the historic Lycian Way, draws approximately 1,500 visitors daily.

Despite the sweltering temperatures, often reaching a scorching 44°C, visitors are captivated by the vibrant blue waters along the canyon's edge. Once inside, an array of exciting activities awaits, including thrilling rides on safari vehicles.

Göynük Canyon is renowned as one of the world's top trekking destinations and attracts a diverse mix of domestic and international tourists who explore its 800 meter long path either by boat or by gripping ropes. Amidst this natural immersion, tourists can swim among fish in the cool, 10°C to 20°C waters during the summer months.

After conquering challenging sections of the route, involving a dynamic combination of swimming, hiking, and rock climbing, those who reach the waterfall can cool off and capture photos amidst the flowing water. For many, the temptation of a boat tour is irresistible. Guided by professional guides, visitors also explore the canyon through nature walks, walking among pine trees at considerable heights and experiencing thrilling zip lines.

The site manager Doğukan Ak mentioned that since 2009 the number of canyon visitors has been steadily increasing, with an annual growth rate of approximately 25%. Covering around 3,000 acres of natural parkland, Ak emphasised that the canyon is a geological marvel, benefiting from its location, which offers cool breezes and low humidity in contrast to Antalya's climate. The canyon offers a variety of activities suitable for all ages and fitness levels.

Ak anticipates that this year's visitor count will exceed the impressive 160,000 from the previous year, with a goal of surpassing 200,000. He noted that tourists come not only from Türkiye but also from various other countries, particularly Europe, Russia, and Turkic states. Göynük Canyon hosts around 1,500 visitors daily, making it a popular and dynamic destination for nature enthusiasts.

NEW TOMBS FROM EARLY BRONZE AGE FOUND ON TÜRKİYE'S ÇAYÖNÜ HILL



The recent excavations carried out on Çayönü Hill in the Ergani district of the southeastern city of Diyarbakır have unearthed five tombs dating back to the early Bronze Age as well as remains of buildings in the pre-pottery Neolithic period. These new finds provide a vast source of information on the ancient history of the region, the Hilar Caves in the Sesverenpınar District and Çayönü Hill considered as pivotal points in the history of civilisation, according to Prof. Aslı Erim Özdoğan, the head of the excavation from Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University's Department of Archaeology.

Prof. Özdoğan mentioned that this recent discovery of the graves dating back to the early Bronze Age sheds new light into the focus of the excavation, which is to establish clearer links between the non-pottery Neolithic period and the pottery Neolithic period. She described the other dimensions of their archaeological work as to ascertain the extent of the cemetery area and its expansion over time and to get a deeper insight into the area's history such as "clarifying

the relationship between the sediment-filled stream that once flowed across the plain and the layer that now covers it."

Remains and artifacts dating back to 7500 B.C. to 5500 B.C. have been discovered since excavations began in this area in 1964, revealing that the region was a cradle for early agricultural activities, including cultivating crops such as wheat, chickpeas and lentils as well as the domestication of animals like sheep and goats indicating the transition from hunting based life to settled life. Recent excavations at Çayönü Hill considered to be 12,000 years old have provided significant evidence of the beginnings of agricultural practices and the Neolithic period, making it an archaeological site of great importance. Ergani District Governor and Deputy Mayor Ahmet Karaaslan expressed his enthusiasm for the area to become a popular destination for tourists as the ongoing excavations reveal structures like ancient houses and potential temples, indicating the transition from a hunter-gatherer society to a settled lifestyle.

TURKISH ROCK STAR ERKİN KORAY DIED AT THE AGE OF 82



Turkish Anatolian rock star Erkin Koray passed away on 7 August, at the age of 82 in Toronto, Canada. Started his professional music career in 1960's, Koray became an important figure in Turkish Rock. After his military service, he went to Germany and played with the band Hiccups. Releasing an EP consisting English songs, Koray became the beat music representative in Türkiye. His musical success earned him the title of "father" reasons of both shaping and raising the Turkish Anatolian Rock genre and having a temperament of a father.

His daughter, Damla Koray shared the sad news on 7 August from Instagram saying, "Your works will live in our tongue and your love in our hearts, always and forever." Suffering from lung disease, Koray was working on a new album. Artists, politicians and fans also expressed their sorrow and condolences on social media including political figures such as President Erdoğan, Culture and Tourism Minister Mehmet Nuri Ersoy and CHP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu. Koray is buried in Westminster cemetery in Toronto.

VIKING SAILBOAT PASSES THROUGH BOSPHORUS



The exact replica of the Viking sailboat "Klastad" found in archaeological excavations in Norway and thought to have been built in the 10th century, ship named "Saga Farmann" made its way through the Bosphorus. The "Klastad ship", which had been initially unearthed during excavation efforts in 1893, was fully exposed in 1970. This discovery marked the identification of the fourth Viking ship ever located in Norway, joining the esteemed ranks of well-known vessels such as "Oseberg", "Gokstad", and "Tune." These notable ships collectively stand as significant exemplars of the maritime prowess and culture prevalent during the Viking era.

Built in 2018, Saga Farmann's 2023 Asia journey started from Tønsberg, Norway on 29 April 2023. After 100 days of sailing, it arrived in İstanbul or Miklagard as Vikings called it which meant "The Great City", as the 7th leg of the trip. The ship, which has passed under the Haliç and Atatürk bridges in Golden Horn is currently moored at Rahmi M. Koç Museum and open for visitors until the end of October. The ship's next destination is Lemnos island in Greece and the 19 legged trip will end in Marseille, France. The trip and the blog can be found on the ship's website.

HIGH-LEVEL EXCHANGES

PRESIDENT ERDOĞAN HAD HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS IN HUNGARY



President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan visited Budapest at the invitation of the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán on 20 August 2023 to attend the events marking the foundation of the Hungarian state and also the World Athletics Championships, hosted in Hungary.

President Erdoğan met with Prime Minister Orbán at Carmelite Monastery. During the meeting, Türkiye-Hungary relations and Türkiye's full membership process to the EU as well as regional and global developments were discussed.

President Erdoğan also held meetings with President of Uzbekistan Shevket Mirziyoyev, President of Serbia Aleksandar Vucic, Member of Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina Željka Cvijanović.

During the meeting of President Erdoğan with President Mirziyoyev, regional and global developments as well as relations between Türkiye and Uzbekistan were discussed. President Erdoğan then met with his Serbian counterpart Vucic. During the meeting, Türkiye-Serbia relations and regional issues were on the agenda. President Erdoğan stated that he sees Serbia as a key country for the peace and stability of the Balkans and that Türkiye-Serbia relations have reached the highest point in their history. President Erdoğan also met with Željka Cvijanović and President Dodik. During the talks, bilateral relations between Türkiye and Bosnia and Herzegovina and the steps that can be taken to deepen the existing cooperation were discussed.

President Erdoğan answered journalists' questions and made evaluations on his return flight from Hungary. Stating that Hungary, a strategic partner, and NATO ally, has extensive relations with Türkiye based on deep-rooted and strong ties of friendship, Erdoğan said that Hungary showed its support and solidarity to Türkiye in every field after the earthquake disaster and added that Türkiye will never forget Hungary's friendship in hard times. President Erdoğan stressed that significant progress has been made in all areas of relations between Türkiye and Hungary and underlined that the bilateral trade volume reached an all-time high of 3.5 billion dollars in 2022. President Erdoğan also indicated that they were pleased that Hungary once again showed its strong support for Türkiye's EU membership.

TÜRKİYE AND THE UK TO START NEGOTIATIONS FOR A NEW FTA EARLY NEXT YEAR

Türkiye and the UK are set to start negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in the first half of 2024, as stated by Turkish Ambassador to the UK Osman Koray Ertaş in an interview. As a result of the UK decision to leave the EU, the two countries had signed an FTA to provide continuity for businesses in December 2020, one day after an agreement on the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement had been reached between the UK and the EU. The existing FTA between Türkiye and the UK predominantly covers industrial goods but lacks provisions related to services, data and the digital aspects. The new FTA is expected to broaden the scope of the agreement to include services



Among these tourists, 3.4 million visited Türkiye, 1.2 million tourists came for health tourism purposes. The role of the private sector in health and travel tourism was emphasised.

Regarding the migration issue, claims that the UK would send irregular migrants to Türkiye were stated to be untrue. Türkiye expressed that it has no intention of accepting third-country nationals from any country, including the UK. The fact that Türkiye has signed readmission agreements with numerous countries to combat irregular migration was highlighted. It was noted that Türkiye is returning irregular migrants who arrive in Türkiye from certain countries back to their home countries within the framework of these bilateral agreements.

and further enhance trade between the two countries and strengthen exporters in the region.

During the interview, the importance of tourism and defence industries for the relationship between the two countries was emphasised. Reference was made to the interest the Turkish defence companies have shown in collaborating with British defence companies and it was noted that the UK ranks third in terms of the number of tourists visiting Türkiye.

TÜRKİYE AND UKRAINE TO WORK TOGETHER TO REVIVE BLACK SEA GRAIN DEAL



Türkiye's Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan and his Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba spoke over the phone on 5 August to discuss ways to revive the Black Sea Grain Initiative, an agreement aimed at resuming grain exports from Ukrainian ports halted due to the Russia-Ukraine war. The call came after Russia suspended its participation in the deal on 17 July, saying the Russian part of the agreement was not implemented.

Foreign Minister Fidan and his counterpart discussed the

possibility of creating a "green corridor" for grain exports from Ukrainian ports, as well as the need to ensure the safety of ships and crews. They also agreed to continue working together to find a solution to the crisis.

Türkiye has stated that Western countries should try to address Russia's complaints and its hope for Russia to return to the deal. The agreement is viewed as essential for easing the global food crisis, as Ukraine is a major exporter of grain.

FOREIGN MINISTER FİDAN AND HIS ITALIAN COUNTERPART TAJANI DISCUSSED BILATERAL RELATIONS



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that Foreign Minister Fidan had a telephone conversation with his Italian counterpart, Antonio Tajani. During the meeting of the two ministers, bilateral and regional developments and the Grain Initiative were discussed.

According to Turkish diplomatic sources, bilateral relations between Türkiye and Italy were discussed during the phone call which took place on 22 August. The conversation also encompassed discussions on pressing regional issues that affect both nations. Fidan and Tajani exchanged views on the now-collapsed Black Sea

grain deal between Russia and Ukraine. The deal was brokered by Ankara and the U.N. last year to allow the safe passage of Ukrainian grain shipments with its Black Sea ports during the ongoing conflict.

The recent diplomatic meeting between Foreign Ministers Hakan Fidan and Antonio Tajani reflects the growing determination of Türkiye and Italy to overcome common challenges through cooperation and dialogue. Their cooperation is likely to shape the geopolitical landscape of the Mediterranean region in the years to come, as both countries are committed to promoting regional stability and prosperity.

14th AMBASSADORS CONFERENCE TOOK PLACE IN ANKARA

14th Ambassadors Conference brought together all ambassadors serving in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye to discuss the global trends and Türkiye's position.



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye organised the 14th annual Ambassadors Conference in Ankara. The Conference bringing together all ambassadors serving in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye together to discuss the global trends and Türkiye's position, started on 5 August and lasted on 9 August. As an annually organised event, taking place since 2008, this year's theme was determined as "Our Foreign Policy in the Century of Türkiye." The conference serves as a forum in which general trends in

international politics and diplomacy as well as challenges and opportunities are discussed by the ambassadors.

President Erdoğan made a speech in the Conference on 8 August. He touched upon a variety of subjects concerning the foreign policy of Türkiye and contemporary international agenda. He said that Türkiye with its central location cannot be a bystander; but rather, it should be strong both in the field and at the table, using all the tools of diplomacy, soft and hard power. President Erdoğan

expressed Türkiye's will to fight against terrorism.

On Russia-Ukraine war, President Erdoğan stressed that Türkiye follows a "balanced and fair" attitude and is key to the settlement of the dispute. He also emphasised Türkiye's continuing efforts for the resumption of the Black Sea Grain Deal by the parties.

When it comes to burning of copies of the Quran in Northern Europe, President Erdoğan pointed out that Türkiye will continue its fight against Islamophobia and make its best to mobilise all international organisations. The President ended his words by underlining that Türkiye does not have any unresolvable problems with anyone, especially with its neighbours.

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan outlined Türkiye's vision 'to be among the world's system-building actors' as the country is preparing to mark its 100th anniversary. In a more complex global system as a result of multiple crises and diverse challenges like irregular migration, armed conflict and climate change, Minister Fidan said Türkiye would still be a fully independent and influential actor on the world stage that sets the international agenda, setting and breaking the game when necessary." He reiterated Türkiye's commitment

to fight against terrorism by stepping up its military, intelligence, and technological capabilities at home, while ensuring effective cooperation with friends abroad.

With respect to Russia and Ukraine, he stressed that Türkiye's main priority will be to preserve calm in the Black Sea region and block attempts to jeopardise it while on the Cyprus issue, Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan underlined the Turkish stance once again, which is sovereign equality and equal international status of Turkish Cypriots and emphasised Türkiye's desire to advance relations with its neighbours through a positive agenda and find solutions to conflicts with Greece

As to Türkiye-EU relations, Foreign Minister Fidan stated that while all Balkan countries, Moldova and Ukraine's accessions both to the EU and NATO are on the table, aborting Türkiye's accession process can be identified as "strategic blindness" and emphasised that an EU without Türkiye would not be a "truly global actor."

Expressing Türkiye's goal of being in the top 10 economies of the world, he said that Türkiye aims to develop and diversify its commercial and economic relations with countries all over the world, giving more importance to defence industry, energy, and transportation.

TURKISH SCIENTIST INVENTED A WEARABLE SCANNER TO DETECT BREAST CANCER



Turkish scientist Canan Dağdeviren has developed a wearable ultrasound scanner that can detect breast cancer without the need for a visit to the doctor. The device, designed to be worn like a bra, uses ultrasonic waves to create images of the breast tissue. These images can then be analysed by a doctor for any signs of cancer.

According to the World Health Organisation, breast cancer is the most common cancer among women worldwide. Early detection is essential for successful treatment, but many women do not have

access to regular screening. Dağdeviren, who is a professor of electrical engineering and biomedical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), says that her invention could help save millions of lives.

Dağdeviren's device is still in the early stages of development, but she hopes that it will be available to women in the near future. She is also actively working on developing other wearable medical devices, such as a patch that can monitor heart health, further advancing the field of wearable healthcare technology.

SWISS EMBASSY IN TÜRKİYE MARKS ITS NATIONAL DAY



The National Day of Switzerland was celebrated with a reception held at the Embassy of Switzerland in Ankara on 2 August 2023. The reception, hosted by the Swiss Ambassador to Ankara Jean-Daniel Ruch, was attended by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Director for EU Affairs Ambassador Mehmet Kemal Bozay, diplomatic representatives in Ankara and many other guests.

Ambassador Bozay, who began his speech by congratulating the Swiss people on the occasion of Switzerland's National Day, stated that Türkiye-Switzerland relations hold special meaning as Switzerland hosted very important milestone events in Türkiye's history. Bozay underlined that the city of

Lausanne has a special significance for Türkiye as it hosted the Lausanne Treaty, considered as the founding document of the Republic of Türkiye. He emphasised that this year Türkiye proudly celebrates the 100th anniversary of the Lausanne Treaty and the Republic. Ambassador Ruch also highlighted the importance of the Lausanne Treaty and read the speech of Carl Scheurer, the President of the Swiss Confederation at the time the Treaty was signed.

Ambassador Bozay and Ambassador Ruch then planted a tree in the Embassy's garden to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Lausanne Treaty as well as the many earthquake victims who lost their lives earlier this year.

FOUR TURKISH DEFENCE INDUSTRY FIRMS INCLUDED IN WORLD'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS LIST



The "Defence News Top 100" list for 2023, published by a military broadcasting organisation headquartered in the USA, the Defence News magazine, has been announced. The list is based on defence sales. The number of Turkish companies in the "Defence News Top 100", which is considered the most prestigious defence industry list in the world, rose to four.

Aselsan, a company of the Turkish Armed Forces Foundation, went up two places in the list. The company which was in the 48th place in 2020 fell to the 49th place in 2021. But this year, it has jumped two places and moved up to the 47th place.

The next company was Turkish Aerospace Industries, namely TAI, which undertook the production of Anka UHA, Hürkuş, Hürjet and MMU

KAAN. TAI, which was in the 68th rank in 2020, rose to the 67th rank in 2021. This year, it jumped nine places at once and rose to 58th place.

ROKETSAN, which first entered the list from the 86th rank last year, managed to climb 6 steps this year and rose to the 80th rank.

Military Factory and Shipyard Management Inc., also known as ASFAT, entered the list for the first time at the 100th place this year.

This rise of the Turkish defence industry is an important reflection of the increasing power of Turkish companies in the sector and the growing prestige of Türkiye in the defence industry. In the following years, it is quite possible that we will see these companies move higher in the list and that more Turkish companies are included in the top 100.

PRODUCTION OF TOGG TO RISE



The production of Türkiye's domestically manufactured automobile TOGG, which commenced deliveries at the end of April, has accelerated. Having delivered 2,344 vehicles to date, the company has now reached the capacity to produce 100 TOGG T10X models per day by the end of August. According to the data announced by TOGG, 627 vehicles were delivered in July.

Stating that TOGG will be able to achieve the targeted production of 28 thousand units for 2023, the CEO Mehmet Gürcan Karakaş announced that the company had originally planned to transition to double shift system in 2024. However, due to the high demand for the car, it has been decided to start the double shift system as of mid-September.

Karakaş stated that their aim is to start exporting the vehicle in the first quarter of 2025. Pointing out that TOGG should enter export markets with 4-5 models, Karakaş expressed that more options and services should be offered to users. In this regard, Karakaş noted that the heat pump technology, known as one of the solutions that improve the driving range, will also be incorporated into TOGG, but this will be available in the future vehicles.

Karakaş also highlighted that they are working on a technology that would allow devices to receive over-the-air updates and incorporate various features such as shopping and payment from inside the vehicle within the scope of the Internet of Things.

TURKISH SCIENTIST DEVELOPS REVOLUTIONARY TRANSPARENT IMAGING TECHNOLOGY



A Turkish scientist has developed a new imaging technology that has the potential to revolutionise cancer treatment, according to experts in the field. The technology, developed by Professor Ali Ertürk, Head of the Institute of Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Medicine at the University of Munich in Germany, enables the detection of tiny cancer cells that were previously undetectable.

With the new development in the imaging technology enabling the scanning of

organs and tissues in unprecedented clarity and detail, tiny cancer cells can be seen and detected early on. This capability makes it possible to search for new solutions that can destroy them before they spread further.

Prof. Ertürk commented that with the integration of AI, this new development will enable research and studies that could take years, to be completed within hours. This represents a major breakthrough not only in cancer research but also in the study of other diseases like Alzheimer's in the near future.

METE GAZOZ BECOMES THE FIRST TURKISH ARCHER TO WIN A WORLD TITLE



Young Turkish archer Mete Gazoz made history by winning the 2023 World Archery Championships in Berlin. He became the first Turkish archer to win a world title. Gazoz, 24 years old, defeated Canadian archer Eric Peters by 6-4 in the recurve men's final. He had also won the

gold medal at the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo.

Gazoz's victory is a major achievement for Turkish archery. It is a sign that the sport is on the rise in Türkiye. Gazoz is a role model for young archers and he will be an inspiration to them for years to come.

GLOBAL BOILING: FIRES IN TÜRKİYE AND AROUND THE WORLD

In an era of escalating climate crises, the world grapples with the urgent need for collective action in the face of a new epoch: global boiling

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As humans devoured the nature, the Earth has begun to counterattack. It is possible to observe this especially in recent years. Forest fires have been on the agenda of the whole world, especially in the summer season of the last three years. Past months were devastating for humanity with forest fires around the world. However, the result of climate change is not just warming and fires, there is also unusual snowy weather and hail hazards in Europe in the middle of summer.

In the past months, forest fires were the main agenda of the Mediterranean countries. These fires have caused the whole world to be alarmed about global warming. Along with Türkiye, Greece, Spain, Sweden, France, Italy, Portugal, Australia, USA and Canada is also suffering with the fires. Even as they are suffering from these fires, countries are trying to help each other extinguish them. There is, however, another important problem arising from fires, the rise in carbon emission. The smoke and carbon dioxide released into the air as a result of the fires constitute a huge risk for nature and the animals inhabiting the areas affected by the fires.

We Have Entered the Age of Global Boiling

As the United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres said, "Global warming age is over, we have now entered the age of global boiling." This sentence created a splash as Guterres demanded countries and firms to take action before it is too late. Scientists point out that July was the hottest summer in the last 20 thousand years. Türkiye is also suffering from global boiling especially last three years with huge forest fires and above average temperatures. In some cities in Türkiye the temperatures exceeded



40°C and reached record levels.

According to the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's statement, more than 7,000 hectares of area in Türkiye burned due to fires just in 2023. More than 1022 forest fires occurred and just in eight days, there were 17 fires. Many planes, helicopters in both Türkiye and Europe fight to put out those fires. Even though the fire response time is fast, the wind is a major factor for spreading the fires as well as making it difficult to extinguish them.

At the time of writing, there are many fires both in Türkiye and around the world. Most recent one in Türkiye is in Çanakkale, located in the Aegean region and authorities are working day and night to take it under control.

Nine villages in the Çanakkale region were evacuated. Four helicopters with night vision technology, 2,960 firefighters, eight planes, 28 helicopters, 77 water tankers and 445 vehicles and construction machinery worked hard to put out the fire in 1500 hectares of area. Many of the houses were damaged and burned. Patients in hospitals and students from dormitories were evacuated to safe places.

Other recent fires are in Amasya, Bilecik and Bursa. In total, more than 10 villages were evacuated. There were also casualties due to the fire. Not just humans but also

animals that live in the forest and livestock animals of farmers. Another negative outcome of these fires is the devastating effect on farming and husbandry. The rise in food prices is also an unwelcome but expected result of the consequences of the global boiling, like the drought in Panama, that is taking place.

Fires Around the World

While trying to put out its own fires, Türkiye is also helping to put out fires in other countries such as Greece. Fires near Alexandroupoli, Dimoteka, Komotini, Athens and Avramilia started alongside with those in Rhodes, Crete, Corfu which are country's most touristic places causing tourists to be evacuated from those areas to maintain the safety.

Another recent fire is in Hawaii where it completely destroyed the Maui island. In the six fires, more than 60 people died. The fires started in the beginning of the August and more than thousand buildings are destroyed in Lahaina. According to the Deputy Director of Hawaii Department of Transportation Ed Sniffen, more than 11 thousand people have been evacuated from the area with planes. President of the USA Joe Biden declared the place as disaster area and stated that those affected by the fires would be compensated for their losses.

Italy has also been hit hard by

forest fires on the island of Sicily, especially in Palermo, Catania, Trapani, Syracuse and Messina. The airport in Palermo was closed for a while due to the fire. Evacuations have begun in these regions due to harmful levels of air quality, power and water cuts. Many roads in the mainland Calabria region were closed to traffic due to forest fires that spread to Crotone and Catanzaro regions. In Puglia, more than 2 thousand tourists were evacuated due to the intensification of the fires.

In Croatia, a fire broke out south of Dubrovnik. Strong winds and rising temperatures caused the fire to spread rapidly. Hundreds of people had to flee due to the fire on the island of Gran Canaria in Spain and three roads were closed to traffic. Work and preparations are underway to prevent the fire, which has not yet spread to the mainland and the island's beaches and seaside resorts. The fires in Portugal caused a major disaster. 6,700 hectares of land were damaged in the fire that 800 firefighters intervened. A red alert was issued in the northern region of the country due to the temperature rising to 41°C.

Redrawing the Future

The melting of glaciers due to global boiling, which UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres also mentioned, has led to the need to redefine and redraw borders.

The borders in the Alpine region of Europe were mostly drawn on the basis of mountains. However, due to climate change, changing these borders are on the agenda. With the melting of the glaciers on the Matterhorn mountain on the border of Italy and Switzerland due to climate change, redrawing of the borders has become an issue. Although the glaciers have mostly melted on the Italian side, Switzerland, which has made more commercial investments in the region, will carry out the consolidation works. It is not yet clear when the works, which are currently in the draft stage, will be finalised.

With this new agenda in the world, we must find new ways to prevent it sooner than ever as it is getting late each second. It is so hard to replace our losses in nature. Recovering these losses and creating solutions to many other problems related to environment and climate will be the issues at stake. The relentless march of forest fires, scorching heatwaves, and unprecedented natural calamities underscore the urgent need for unified action against climate change. As nations grapple with the devastating consequences of these fires and warming temperatures, solidarity and cooperation emerge as beacons of hope. The shared efforts to combat blazes across borders demonstrate that in the face of adversity, humanity can come together to safeguard our planet's fragile ecosystems and secure a sustainable future. The redefinition of borders due to melting glaciers is a poignant reminder that the consequences of inaction will reshape not just the physical world, but also our geopolitical landscape. The path ahead demands swift and resolute steps to curb emissions, promote renewable energy, and protect our irreplaceable natural heritage. The age of global boiling calls for collective responsibility and bold decisions to forge a safer and greener world for generations to come.