



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on September 22, 2023

Poland Says It Will End Military Aid to Ukraine Amid Spat Over Grain Deal

On September 20, Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki announced that [Poland would no longer supply Ukraine](#) with military aid but instead concentrate on its own security needs.

Morawiecki's move came after Warsaw and Kyiv had a diplomatic rift over Ukrainian grain imports, which were prohibited in Poland after inundating local markets and undermining the livelihood of Polish farmers.

The Kyiv regime has lambasted such bans as unlawful, with Economy Minister Yulia Sviridenko stating that "it is crucially important for us to prove that individual member states cannot ban imports of Ukrainian goods."

As major Black Sea shipping lanes were cordoned off owing to the Russo-Ukrainian conflict that erupted in February 2022, Ukrainian grain flooded European markets, depressing prices and affecting local producers.

The Polish leader made the declaration that Warsaw would cease weapons shipments, further showcasing worsening relations between Warsaw and Kyiv.

"We are no longer transferring weapons to Ukraine, because we are now arming Poland with more modern weapons," Morawiecki said. He later warned that additional trade bans could be imposed on Kiev.

Morawiecki told [Polsat news](#), "I am warning Ukraine's authorities. Because if they are to escalate the conflict like that, we will add additional products to the ban on imports into Poland. Ukrainian authorities do not understand the degree to which Poland's farming industry has been destabilized. We are protecting Polish farmers."

His statements came after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky seemed to indirectly slam Poland during a speech before the UN General Assembly on September 19.

During his [speech](#) at the General Debate of the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly in New York, [Zelensky blasted](#) Russia for invading Ukraine last year, and urged UN members to "act united to defeat the aggressor."

"Russia is weaponizing nuclear energy. Not only is it spreading its unreliable nuclear power plant construction technologies, but it is also turning other countries' power plants into real dirty bombs. Look what Russia did to our Zaporizhzhia power plant — shelled it, occupied it and now blackmails others with radiation leaks," Zelensky said.



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Hungary has explicitly stated that it would object to any EU move to impose sanctions on Russia's nuclear power industry, maintaining that such a decision would jeopardize the operations of Hungary's only nuclear power plant, which runs on Russian-produced nuclear fuel. Last year, together with the Czech Republic and Slovakia, Hungary obtained an [exemption](#) from an EU embargo on Russian oil imports.

Zelensky then focused on listing the things that Russia was weaponizing — like global food shortages, food prices, and energy exports. Without naming them, the Ukrainian leader also criticized some countries for aiding Russia with their actions.

"It is alarming to see how some in Europe play out solidarity in a political theater — making a thriller from the grain. They may seem to play their own role but in fact they are helping set the stage to a Moscow actor," Zelensky posited, alluding to Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia, which are banning sales of Ukrainian agricultural products in their countries.

Ukraine has since filed lawsuits with the World Trade Organization (WTO) to stop the trade sanctions, though Warsaw disregarded the move, asserting that a "complaint before the WTO doesn't impress us."

Poland had earlier explained its decision by reminding Kyiv and Brussels that it was still willing to permit Ukrainian products to pass through the country.

In turn, Poland summoned the Ukrainian ambassador to object to Zelensky's UN comments.

A Polish Foreign Ministry statement read, "Putting pressure on Poland in multilateral forums or sending complaints to international courts are not appropriate methods to resolve differences between our countries."

Poland had been one of Ukraine's most vocal advocates after the Russo-Ukrainian conflict broke out in February 2022, and had been one of Ukraine's key weapons providers. Furthermore, a considerable portion of arms that the United States and other countries deploy to Ukraine passes through Poland, which straddles Ukraine to the west. Besides, Poland has welcomed around one million Ukrainian refugees, and has offered various types of state aid to these displaced Ukrainians.

Also, Polish President Andrzej Duda recently called on Kyiv to "remember" his country's role as a logistical hub for weapons deliveries and likened Ukraine to a drowning man, who might drag his rescuers under the water with him.

Duda was scheduled to meet with Zelensky at the UN on September 19, a meeting that did not materialize. While voicing regret over Warsaw's spat with Ukraine, Duda said in an interview with Bloomberg Television, "We cannot allow Ukrainian grain to be sold on the Polish market without any control.... We also have our own citizens, we have to care for their interests."

On September 20, Polish Minister of European Affairs Szymon Szykowski [also told](#) the state-run news agency PAP, "We would like to continue supporting Ukraine, but for this to be possible, we must have the support of Polish citizens."

However, Szykowski cautioned that support to Kyiv may be toned down after Ukraine's lawsuit against Poland.

Poland's recent move to halt its provision of weapons to Ukraine comes as Kiev's summer counteroffensive continues to lag going into the Fall, with Ukrainian forces struggling to penetrate Russia's heavy front-line fortifications despite more than a year of Western arms transfers, training, and intelligence support.



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Kyiv urged Warsaw to “leave emotion aside” after it had summoned its ambassador, asking Warsaw to embrace a “constructive” approach in the bilateral dispute.



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