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# North Korean Builders to Help With Donbas Reconstruction – Russian Ambassador

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Pyongyang, North Korea. **Cha Song Ho / AP / TASS**

North Korea could send builders to eastern Ukraine's separatist regions to aid in their "reconstruction" after they have been devastated by months of war, Russia's Ambassador to Pyongyang said Tuesday.

"Highly qualified, hardworking, and ready to work in the most difficult conditions, Korean builders will be an asset in the serious task of restoring social, infrastructural and industrial facilities [in the Donbas] destroyed by the retreating Ukronazis," Ambassador Alexander Matsegora told the pro-Kremlin daily Izvestia, deploying a Kremlin talking point based on the false assertion that Kyiv's government is run by Nazis.

North Korea last week became the third state after Russia and Syria to officially recognize the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics, two Kremlin-backed breakaway regions of Ukraine collectively referred to as the Donbas.

Donetsk People's Republic leader Denis Pushilin hailed North Korea's recognition as a "triumph of diplomacy" for the breakaway region and expressed hope for "active and fruitful cooperation" with its newly acquired Asian partner.

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According to Matsegora, North Korea and the two separatist republics have "wide prospects for bilateral cooperation" and are expected to establish mutually beneficial trade relations.

Pyongyang is particularly interested in upgrading its Soviet-era manufacturing equipment, which was initially made at factories in eastern Ukraine, the ambassador said.

"Our Korean partners are very interested in spare parts and units manufactured there, in updating their production base," Matsegora said.

North Korea is also expected to supply its new partners with magnesite clinker in exchange for shipments of coking coal and wheat, according to Matsegora.

Russia has already been reported to be sending teachers, construction workers and more to eastern Ukraine to "rebuild" the regions following the Kremlin's Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine.

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