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Chinese Foreign Minister to Visit Russia for Security Talks

By AFP

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Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi meets with Vladimir Putin in 2018. **kremlin.ru**

China's top diplomat Wang Yi will begin a four-day trip to Russia for security talks on Monday, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said, the latest in a series of high-level visits and phone calls between the two sides.

Wang will hold security consultations at the invitation of Nikolai Patrushev, secretary of Russia's security council, with China's Foreign Ministry adding that the visit would be a "routine event."

It said further that the aim of the trip is to "promote the development of bilateral relations, and conduct in-depth communication on important issues involving the strategic security interests of the two countries."

China and Russia are strategic allies, with both countries frequently touting their "no limits"

partnership and economic and military cooperation.

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Russia's Foreign Ministry said in an earlier briefing that Wang would meet his counterpart Sergei Lavrov and the two planned to "focus on efforts to strengthen collaboration on the international scene."

"There will be a detailed exchange of views on issues related to a settlement in Ukraine, as well as ways of ensuring stability and security in the Asia-Pacific region," a spokesperson said.

China has sought to position itself as a neutral party in the Ukraine war, while offering Moscow a vital diplomatic and financial lifeline as its isolation from the West deepens.

But it has stopped short of getting involved in the conflict itself or sending lethal arms to Russia.

Chinese Defence Minister Li Shangfu visited Russia and Belarus last month and called for closer military cooperation.

Beijing and Moscow have carried out joint sea and air patrols in recent months, the latter causing South Korea to deploy fighter jets as a precaution.

Their high-level contacts look set to increase, with an aide to Vladimir Putin saying in July that the Russian president was planning to visit China in October.

President Xi Jinping made a state visit to Moscow in March and declared that relations between the two countries were entering a new era.

At a meeting at the annual Eastern Economic Forum in Vladivostok last week, Russian President Vladimir Putin told Chinese Vice Premier Zhang Guoqing that ties between Russia and China "have reached an absolutely unprecedented, historical level."

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