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EU Targets Chinese Firms, North Korea in New Sanctions Against Russia

By AFP

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North Korea's Defense Minister Kang Sun-nam welcomes his Russian counterpart in Pyongyang.
Russian Defense Ministry

The EU on Wednesday agreed to ban exports to three Chinese firms and blacklist North Korea's Defense Minister in new sanctions set to coincide with the second anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The fresh round of sanctions — the 13th since Russian President Vladimir Putin's February 2022 invasion — targets some two hundred officials and entities mainly from Russia involved in the conflict.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen welcomed the agreement by the EU's 27 member countries and said it would further cut "Russia's access to drones."

"We must keep degrading Putin's war machine," von der Leyen wrote on X (formerly

Twitter).

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Multiple diplomats said the new sanctions included adding three mainland Chinese firms to a list of companies with which EU businesses were banned from doing business.

The firms — the first in mainland China to be targeted by the measures — were accused of supplying sensitive military technology to Russia.

Firms in Turkey and India were also included, as the EU increasingly targets third countries for helping Moscow circumvent sanctions.

As part of the new package, diplomats said the EU also imposed an asset freeze and visa ban on North Korea's Defense Minister Kang Sun-Nam over the isolated country's supply of ballistic missiles to Moscow.

The EU has sanctioned some 2,000 officials and entities in the two years since Moscow invaded Ukraine.

However, Russia's economy has largely managed to weather the economic storm and the Kremlin has ramped up its military production.

The second anniversary of the invasion on Saturday comes as Ukrainian forces are losing ground and the future of military support from the United States remains in doubt.

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