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Moscow and Beijing Pledge to Strengthen Military Ties as Russian Defense Minister Visits China

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Russian Defense Ministry

Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov arrived in Beijing Monday for talks with his Chinese counterpart, who called for strengthening military cooperation between the two countries.

Moscow and Beijing have forged closer ties since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, an alliance that has sparked anxiety in the West as both countries seek to expand their global influence.

During his visit to China, Belousov was set to "hold a number of negotiations with the country's military and military-political leadership," according to a statement by the Russian Defense Ministry.

A video published by the ministry showed Belousov being saluted by Chinese servicemen in

Beijing as an army band played the Russian national anthem.

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When meeting with Belousov, Chinese Defense Minister Dong Jun called for the two sides to "deepen strategic collaboration" and "continuously advance military relations."

"Under the strong leadership of President Xi Jinping and President [Vladimir] Putin, China-Russia relations have reached an all-time high... serving as a model for major power relations," Dong was quoted as saying in a government statement.

Belousov, in his turn, said that "friendly relations" between their two leaders "play a key role in strengthening strategic ties," according to Russian news agencies.

Military cooperation between China and Russia, he said, played an important role in "maintaining global and regional stability."

China and Russia declared a "no limits" partnership shortly before Moscow invaded Ukraine, and the two countries have carried out a series of military drills together since then.

President Vladimir Putin said in August that Russia's economic and trade links with China were "yielding results," and that the two were working on joint "economic and humanitarian" projects.

Last month, Russian and Chinese warships carried out joint drills in the Sea of Japan, part of a major naval exercise that Putin said was the largest of its kind for three decades.

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