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North Korea Says It Will Stand by Russia Until 'Victory' Over Ukraine

By AFP

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North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son-Hui and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. **Valery Sharifulin / TASS**

North Korea's foreign minister met with her Russian counterpart in Moscow on Friday, assuring him that Pyongyang would stand by Russia until it achieves "victory" in its war against Ukraine.

The meeting between the two foreign ministers comes amid Western reports that North Korea sent thousands of troops to Russia, possibly for further deployment on the battlefield in Ukraine.

"We repeat that we will always stand firmly by our Russian comrades until victory day," North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son-hui told Sergei Lavrov during the televised talks, according to a Russian translation.

“We have no doubt whatsoever that under the wise leadership of the honorable Russian President Vladimir Putin, the Russian army and people will surely achieve a great victory in their sacred struggle to defend the sovereign rights and security of their state,” she added.

Lavrov hailed the close ties between the two countries' armies and special services.

“This will also make it possible to solve significant security aims for our citizens and yours,” he said, adding that Moscow was “deeply grateful to our Korean friends for their principled position on the events that have unfolded in Ukraine.”

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During the meeting, neither of the two foreign ministers mentioned Western reports about North Korean troop deployments in Russia. Earlier, Lavrov and Choe unveiled a memorial plaque in honor of North Korea’s Kim Il-Sung’s visit to the USSR in 1949.

Washington said Thursday it received information indicating that there are around 8,000 North Korean troops stationed in the Kursk region, which Ukrainian forces attacked in a surprise ground incursion in early August.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, speaking to South Korean media this week, denounced what he called inaction by his Western allies on the issue of North Korean troop deployments.

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