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Russia's FM Lavrov Arrives in North Korea

By AFP

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Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov arrived in North Korea on Friday for a working visit, Russian state media reported, the latest in a series of high-profile trips by top Moscow officials.

"The minister's plane landed at the airport in Wonsan," news agency TASS reported, adding that Lavrov was due to meet his North Korean counterpart Choe Son Hui there.

Russia and North Korean state media announced the visit earlier this week, saying Lavrov would stay in the country until Sunday.

Pyongyang has emerged as one of the Kremlin's main allies during its offensive in Ukraine.

It sent thousands of troops to Russia's Kursk region to oust Kyiv's forces and provided the Russian army with artillery shells and missiles.

North Korea only confirmed it had deployed troops to support Russia in April.

Since then, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has been shown in state media images honouring the flag-draped coffins of North Korean soldiers killed helping Russia fight Ukraine.

Russia's Security Council chief Sergei Shoigu has visited Pyongyang multiple times this year, including last month.

The two heavily sanctioned nations signed a military deal last year, including a mutual defense clause, during a rare visit by Russian President Vladimir Putin to North Korea.

Shoigu announced that North Korea would send builders and deminers to the Kursk region.

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