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Russia and North Korea Celebrate Joining of First Road Bridge

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A ceremony marking the joining of the two sides of the new Russia-North Korea road bridge over the Tumen River. **Russian Transport Ministry / AFP**

Russia and North Korea held a ceremony on Tuesday to celebrate the joining of the first road bridge connecting the two nations, a project Moscow hailed as a "landmark stage" in their deepening alliance.

The bridge spans the Tumen River, which forms the border between the two countries in Russia's Far East.

Scheduled to open for traffic this summer, the crossing will be capable of handling up to 300 vehicles and 2,850 people daily, according to Russia's Transportation Ministry

Russia's Foreign Ministry said the bridge's significance "goes far beyond a purely engineering task," noting it will serve as a vital artery for "trade, economic and humanitarian exchanges."

The project highlights the growing ties between the two heavily sanctioned countries. Since

the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Moscow and Pyongyang have rapidly expanded their political, cultural and military cooperation.

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Western intelligence has repeatedly accused North Korea of supplying Russia with munitions for its war effort in exchange for economic and technological support.

South Korea warned last week that support from Russia and China is helping to revive the North Korean economy, which has struggled for years under international isolation and sweeping sanctions.

Before the construction of the new road bridge, the only permanent link between the two countries was the Korea-Russia Friendship Bridge, a rail crossing located near the border junction with China.

AFP contributed reporting.

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