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China Tightens Export Controls on Drone Parts Used by Russia

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Reuters

China has imposed new export controls on drone components used by Russia to build and operate Iranian-designed Shahed attack drones, a move welcomed by Ukraine.

The restrictions took effect on Wednesday, the day President Vladimir Putin arrived in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen for talks with Chinese leader Xi Jinping and U.S. President Donald Trump.

Under a notice from China's Commerce Ministry, exporters must obtain licenses to ship certain drone engines, radio modules, speed controllers and electric motors abroad.

Some of the engines covered by the rules are used in Shahed drones that Russia assembles at its Alabuga facility in the republic of Tatarstan.

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Vladyslav Vlasiuk, Ukraine's presidential sanctions commissioner, thanked China for the new controls and said Kyiv hoped Beijing would enforce them strictly.

"We have shared detailed information on these components and their Chinese manufacturers, and we count on rigorous control of these exports," he wrote on X.

Vlasiuk said some critical components used in Russian drones were still outside the scope of the new controls.

The measures come as Russia has grown more reliant on China for technology restricted by Western sanctions.

Bloomberg previously reported that Russia obtained nearly 90% of those critical components and technologies from China, up from 80% a year earlier, citing people familiar with unpublished data.

Bloomberg's sources said European Union officials were aware that China was supplying Russia with dual-use technology and satellite intelligence for its war in Ukraine but were reluctant to impose sanctions on Beijing for fear of retaliation.

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