# Kim Jong-un Hails North Korea-Russia Friendship as Putin's Visit Looms



North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has praised the strong relationship between North Korea and Russia, referring to the two nations as "invincible comrades-in-arms." This statement comes amid speculation that Russian President Vladimir Putin will visit Pyongyang soon. This visit follows Kim's trip to Russia in September 2023, during which discussions reportedly included Russian assistance for North Korea’s space program in exchange for North Korean armaments for Russia’s war in Ukraine.

Despite Moscow dismissing claims of using North Korean weapons, UN sanctions monitors reported that debris from a missile that landed in Kharkiv, Ukraine, in January was linked to North Korea.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell and South Korea’s Vice Foreign Minister Kim Hong-kyun have expressed concerns over closer military ties between Pyongyang and Moscow, warning it could destabilize the region. Preparations, including clearing civilian aircraft from Pyongyang’s airport and possible parade arrangements, indicate North Korea is readying for Putin’s potential visit.

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov defended the deepening ties, stating Russia's right to develop relationships with its neighbors should not be questioned. It is expected that during Putin’s visit, North Korea and Russia could further enhance their military cooperation, possibly violating UN Security Council resolutions.

This development emerges as global scrutiny continues, especially from the U.S. and South Korea, over the growing military connections between the two nations.