

What weapons could North Korea give to Russia?

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea is apparently moving to sell millions of rockets and artillery shells — many of them likely from its old stock — to its Cold War ally Russia.

Russia has called a U.S. intelligence report on the purchasing plan “fake.” But U.S. officials say it shows Russia’s desperation with the war in Ukraine and that Moscow could buy additional military hardware from North Korea.

The ammunitions North Korea reportedly intends to sell to Moscow are likely copies of Soviet-era weapons that can fit Russian launchers. But there are still questions over the quality of the supplies and how much they could actually help the Russian military.

What will North Korea supply?

Slapped by international sanctions and export controls, Russia in August bought Iranian-made drones that U.S. officials said had technical problems. For Russia, North Korea is likely another good option for its ammunitions supply, because the North keeps a significant stockpile of shells, many of them copies of Soviet-era ones.

North Korea “may represent the single biggest source of compatible legacy artillery ammunition outside of Russia, including domestic production facilities to further supplies,” said Joseph Dempsey, research associate for defense and military analysis at the International Institute for Strategic Studies.

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