

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002847/25
to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Hermann Tertsch (P/E)
(11 July 2025)

Subject: EU funding going to Putin's military allies in his war against Ukraine

The same Ukrainian intelligence sources that warned that North Korean soldiers had been deployed to the Russian front ⁽¹⁾ are now warning that soldiers from the Lao People's Democratic Republic — a one-party communist regime allied with Moscow and Beijing — will soon join them ⁽²⁾.

The European Union has allocated EUR 550 million to the Lao People's Democratic Republic for 2021-2025, with an initial EUR 98 million contribution through the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument. In addition, since the country is a member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Lao Government benefits from other multi-million-euro EU programmes ⁽³⁾.

In view of this:

1. What does the VP/HR have to say about the fact that the EU would be indirectly funding Russia's invasion of Ukraine if Lao soldiers joined Kim Jong-un's on the Russian front? How is the EU's profession of unconditional support for Ukraine consistent with it funding its aggressors?
2. How does the VP/HR justify the EU providing millions of euros to a dictatorship that is friends with China and Russia?

Submitted: 11.7.2025

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(19 August 2025)

The Commission is aware of reports alleging potential support by the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine.

The Government of the Lao PDR has categorically denied any current or planned deployment of military personnel in support of Russia, reaffirming its declared policy of neutrality. This position was confirmed to the High Representative/Vice-President in person by the Lao PDR Minister of Foreign Affairs during a meeting in Kuala Lumpur on 11 July 2025.

The EU will continue its development cooperation with Lao PDR. Should the EU obtain evidence of support as described by the Honourable Member, appropriate measures will be envisaged.

EU development assistance to the Lao PDR relates to its least developed country (LDC) status and persistent challenges faced in education, food security, and sustainable agriculture. This assistance supports the most vulnerable communities and contributes to the broader goals of inclusive development.

At the same time, support by the EU, Member States and other like-minded states offers the Lao PDR a tangible alternative to reliance on less principled partners.

The Lao PDR successfully chaired the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 2024, and has consistently supported closer EU-ASEAN relations, in the context of the EU-ASEAN Strategic Partnership.

⁽¹⁾ <https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-war-north-korea-troops-9d83c419ef741259d09860b576b8a27d>

⁽²⁾ <https://kyivindependent.com/russia-seeks-to-involve-laos-in-war-against-ukraine-military-intelligence-claims-06-2025/>

⁽³⁾ https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/countries/lao-peoples-democratic-republic_en