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Answer given by Mr. Kubilius
on behalf of the European Commission
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Critical raw materials (CRMs) dependencies undermine the EU's long-term competitiveness and transition objectives. They also risk hampering its defence readiness targets and support to Ukraine, thereby posing a direct security risk and undermining European security. EU institutions and Member States, in coordination with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, should mobilise every possible lever at their disposal to expediently decrease CRMs dependencies from defence industrial value chains.

The risks stemming from China's export licensing requirements on the rare earth elements (REE) export rules (those implemented on 4 April 2025, as well as those announced on 9 October 2025) to the European defence industry are serious. While the latter measures have been suspended for one year, they are not subject to an outright repeal. In addition, measures introduced in April 2025 and before on REE and permanent magnets continue to be in force. The EU and Member States should remain vigilant to further Chinese actions.

The Commission adopted the RESourceEU Action Plan[1] on 3 December 2025. The aim of RESourceEU is to secure access to alternative sources of CRMs in the short, medium and long term for the European industry. The Action plan provides for measures to accelerate the deployment of CRMs projects, with EUR 3 billion of EU funds for next year. It also announces measures to support circularity of CRMs, notably by increasing access to rare earth scrap. From 2026, the EU CRM Centre will be set up and will be responsible for financing, joint purchasing, stockpiling and monitoring activities. Work on CRMs partnerships with resource-rich countries will continue, as well as coordination with like-minded countries in relevant multilateral fora.

[1] https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/document/download/01c448d6-dc93-40d7-9afe-4c2af448d00c_en.