

Ukraine Vows to Protect Chinese Assets After Russians Bomb Consulate

Ukrainian officials scrambled to assure the Chinese communist government on Thursday that Kyiv would protect Chinese assets in the country following a Russian missile attack on the city of Odessa that damaged its Chinese consulate.

The assurances of safety for Chinese activities in the country were made in a seemingly unrelated meeting between Ukrainian and Chinese trade officials intended to discuss the expansion of Chinese economic activity in the war-torn country. While China is one of Russia's top allies on the geopolitical stage and has studiously avoided condemning Moscow's decision to invade Ukraine formally in February 2022, Beijing actively pursues business dealings with Ukraine. Ukraine is a longtime member of China's predatory Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), in which China offers predatory loans to poor countries meant to build infrastructure projects, and President Volodymyr Zelensky has invited Chinese businesses to invest in the rebuilding of post-war Ukraine.

Zelensky has also made moves to protect his country's economy from Chinese hegemony, most prominently nationalizing a critical jet engine manufacturer to prevent a Chinese takeover and cutting deals with South Korean corporate giants Samsung and Hyundai for post-war reconstruction. On Thursday, however, Ukrainian trade representatives expressed eagerness to see more Chinese economic activity in the country.

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