

South Africa Admits Putin's ICC Arrest Warrant 'Spanner in the Works'

By [AFP](#)

April 12, 2023



kremlin.ru

South Africa has admitted that the international arrest warrant issued for Russian President Vladimir Putin represents a "spanner in the works" ahead of a BRICS summit due to take place in the country in August.

Pretoria, which has close ties to Moscow, has been faced with a diplomatic dilemma since the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant against Putin in March.

The Russian president is due to attend a summit of the BRICS nations in South Africa in August, alongside the leaders of Brazil, India, and China.

However, as a member of the ICC, South Africa will be expected to arrest the Russian president should he set foot in the country.

"All heads of state would be expected to attend the summit. But now we have a spanner in the

works in the form of this ICC warrant," Vincent Magwenya, President Cyril Ramaphosa's spokesperson, told a press briefing on Wednesday, adding that the situation was under review.

Related article: [ICC Issues Arrest Warrant For Putin Over Alleged Ukraine War Crimes](#)

The ICC issued the arrest warrant for Putin for the unlawful, alleged deportation of Ukrainian children to Russia.

A continental powerhouse, South Africa has refused to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine, saying it wants to stay neutral and prefers dialogue to end the war.

Earlier this year, Pretoria held a controversial joint military exercise with Russia and China, which critics cite as evidence of a tilt towards the Kremlin.

South Africa's ties with Russia date back decades when the Kremlin backed the ruling African National Congress in its fight against apartheid.

The ICC warrant has been the cause of political tumult in the country.

The leading opposition party, the Democratic Alliance has called for Putin to be arrested and for the ICC to force the government's hand.

But leftist parties, including the South African Communist Party — a close ally of the ruling African National Congress — have urged the government to welcome the Russian leader and to pull out of the ICC instead.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/04/12/south-africa-admits-putins-icc-arrest-warrant-spanner-in-the-works-a80808>