

BRICS Summit To Be 'Physical' Despite Putin Warrant – South Africa

By [AFP](#)

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South African President Cyril Ramaphosa [kremlin.ru](#)

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said Sunday that next month's BRICS summit, which Vladimir Putin has been invited to, will be held in-person despite an arrest warrant on the Russian leader.

"The BRICS summit is going ahead and we are finalizing our discussions on the format," Ramaphosa told journalists on the sidelines of a conference by the ruling ANC, adding it will be a "physical" meeting.

He did not say if Putin — who is wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) over accusations that Russia unlawfully deported Ukrainian children — would attend or not.

"We are going to have a physical BRICS summit, all of us are committed to having a summit where we will be able to eyeball each other," he said in response to a question.

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"We have not held a physical summit for...almost three years. It's not going to be virtual," he stressed.

As a member of the ICC, South Africa would be expected to arrest Putin if he sets foot in the country.

There had been rumours in the local media that Pretoria was considering moving the talks to China to avoid being put in the position of having to arrest Putin.

The arrest warrant is a problem for Pretoria, which has been close to the Kremlin since the anti-apartheid struggle years.

South Africa has not condemned Russia's invasion of Ukraine, saying it is impartial and prefers dialogue.

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