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Armenian PM to Skip Summit Putin Due to Attend – Kyrgyzstan

By AFP

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Armenian PM Nikol Pashinyan. **primeminister.am**

Armenian leader Nikol Pashinyan will skip a summit that Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to attend, host country Kyrgyzstan said Tuesday, amid a growing rift between Yerevan and Moscow.

Pashinyan's snubbing the meeting of a Moscow-led regional grouping is a further blow to ties between Yerevan and Moscow, which have soured in recent weeks.

Putin is due to travel to Bishkek on Thursday in his first trip out of Russia since the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for him in March.

Pashinyan called Kyrgyz President Sadyr Japarov to say he was not coming.

Jasparov's office said: "The prime minister of Armenia announced with regret that due to a number of circumstances, he would not be able to take part in the meeting of the Council of

CIS leaders."

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Pashinyan has criticized Moscow's role in the Karabakh crisis, with Russia unwilling to intervene when Azerbaijan launched a lightning operation to regain control of the breakaway Nagorno-Karabakh region, which had a majority Armenian population.

Azerbaijan took control of the mountainous region, considered by Armenia to be its people's ancestral home, in September after a one-day offensive that sparked a mass exodus of the ethnic Armenian population.

Pashinyan met with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky at a European summit last week after Armenian lawmakers moved to join the ICC, angering Moscow.

The Hague-based court issued the arrest warrant for Putin over the alleged deportation of Ukrainian children to Russia.

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