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Armenia Asks Moscow to Remove Border Guards From Yerevan Airport

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Zvartnots Airport in Yerevan. **Beko (CC BY-SA 3.0)**

Armenia said Wednesday that it had officially asked Russia to withdraw its border guards from an airport in Yerevan.

“Armenia has a clear position on this issue and it informed Russia in an official letter,” Armenian Security Council Secretary Armen Grigoryan told reporters.

Under a 1992 agreement signed with Armenia, Russia maintains several border guard detachments at locations throughout the South Caucasus country, including at Yerevan's Zvartnots airport.

While Moscow has historically been a close ally of Armenia, relations between the two countries soured last year after Russian peacekeepers failed to intervene when Azerbaijan took control of the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh.

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Last week, the speaker of Armenia's parliament said it would be "correct" for Russian border guards to leave Zvartnots airport, adding that "we ourselves will protect the borders of our country."

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said earlier on Wednesday that "no one has communicated these decisions [about the potential withdrawal of border guards] to us through official channels."

Wednesday's announcement comes a week after Armenia said it suspended its participation in the Moscow-led Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO).

Yerevan boycotted a CSTO summit at the end of last year, and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyanin said his country "believes that the CSTO did not fulfill its objectives vis-a-vis Armenia in 2021 and 2022."

He also accused Moscow of leading a "coordinated propaganda campaign" against him and his government.

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