The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Assad Chose to Resign From Syrian Presidency, Kremlin Says

December 10, 2024



kremlin.ru

Bashar al-Assad personally opted to step down as president of Syria, the Kremlin said Tuesday, days after he fled an Islamist-led offensive and was said to arrive in Russia.

"The process of ceasing to serve as head of state was Assad's personal decision," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

"We'll leave the rest without comment," Peskov added.

On Monday, he said similarly that the decision to grant asylum to Assad in Russia was Vladimir Putin's.

Putin ordered the Russian military to intervene in Syria's civil war in 2015, helping Assad crush the moderate opposition and the radical Islamic State group. Putin declared victory in December 2017 and ordered the partial withdrawal of Russian troops from Syria.

Peskov on Monday declined to confirm reports that Assad and his family were in Moscow as

the rebels entered Damascus the previous day.

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