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Alleged Coup Attempt in Armenia an 'Internal Affair,' Kremlin Says

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The Kremlin said Wednesday that it considers the reported coup attempt in Armenia an "internal matter" but expressed hope that the South Caucasus nation would maintain friendly relations with Moscow.

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan earlier in the day said security forces had foiled a coup plot involving what he called a "criminal-oligarchic clergy," amid his escalating standoff with the influential Apostolic Church.

"This is an internal matter for Armenia," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters when asked about the alleged plot.

"We're interested in ensuring the rule of law and peace are preserved in Armenia, and that Armenia is a prosperous and stable country that's friendly to Russia," he said.

Russian-Armenian relations have steadily deteriorated since Azerbaijan recaptured the

disputed Nagorno-Karabakh region in a lightning offensive in 2023. Moscow had tried to play a mediating role in the conflict, but with its attention focused on the war in Ukraine, it was unable to prevent the Azerbaijani capture of Nagorno-Karabakh, and thousands of its peacekeepers were forced to withdraw from the region.

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Senior clerics of the Apostolic Church, which holds significant influence in Armenian society, have called for Pashinyan's resignation since the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War in 2020.

Last week, Armenian authorities arrested Russian-Armenian billionaire Samvel Karapetyan and charged him with attempting to incite the overthrow of the government.

In video comments ahead of his arrest, the 59-year-old businessman vowed to "intervene" in Pashinyan's conflict with the church. Pashinyan had earlier this month called for the resignation of the church leader Catholicos Garegin II.

Peskov confirmed that Moscow is in contact with Yerevan regarding Karapetyan, citing his Russian citizenship.

"Of course, since Karapetyan is also a Russian citizen, the relevant contacts are being carried out," Peskov said, without elaborating.

"But we remain in contact with our partners in Armenia. This is an important ally for us. We have a very developed and multifaceted relationship," he added.

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