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Armenian Prime Minister Congratulates Putin on Russia Day as Ties Sour

June 12, 2026



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Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on Friday congratulated President Vladimir Putin on Russia Day amid escalating tensions between the two countries.

In a message published on the Prime Minister's website, Pashinyan focused on concepts such as "independence, sovereignty and state interests" amid Russia's economic pressure campaign on Armenia over its pursuit of closer ties with the European Union.

"This significant holiday embodies the responsibility of Russian citizens for the future of their country, as well as the aspiration of the friendly Russian people toward independently choosing their state's path of development," Pashinyan wrote.

So far, the leaders of Belarus, North Korea, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Oman have also congratulated Putin on Russia Day.

Russian-Armenian relations have been deteriorating since the South Caucasus nation adopted

a 2025 law initiating its EU accession process. On Sunday, Pashinyan's ruling party won the widely observed parliamentary elections seen as a barometer of his pivot toward the West.

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Russia accused the West of interference, while the EU welcomed the results.

Putin, who congratulated Pashinyan on his 51st birthday on June 1, did not congratulate the Armenian leader on his party's victory in the June 7 elections.

Russia has rolled out a series of import bans on a variety of Armenian goods in the run-up to the vote. A sweeping ban on the import of most Armenian food, seeds, flowers, wood and fertilizer takes effect on Friday. Moscow claims its import restrictions against Armenia are based on health and safety concerns.

In 2024, Armenia froze its participation in a Russian-led regional security bloc after accusing Moscow's peacekeeping forces of failing to deter Azerbaijan's military offensive in which Baku regained control of the breakaway Nagorno-Karabakh region in 2023.

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