
YEREVAN NOT SEEKING END TO RUSSIAN TROOP PRESENCE, SAYS PASHINIAN

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Artak Khulian

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian said on Friday that he is not seeking the withdrawal of Russian troops from Armenia despite aiming for the countrys eventual membership in the European Union.

Last year, we reduced the level of Russian troop presence, he told an international forum held in the Czech Republic. But on the other hand, we do not have the task at hand to end the presence of Russian troops in Armenia. We have another task: to be able to establish a lasting and stable peace with the countries of the region.

Pashinian announced more than a year ago the suspension of Armenias membership in the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), accusing the military alliance and Russia in particular of failing to honor security commitments to Yerevan. But so far he has been careful not to formally pull his country out of the CSTO. Nor has he demanded that Russia close its military base in Armenia or withdraw its border guards from the countrys borders with Turkey and Iran.

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