
KAZAKHSTAN PROPOSES CHANGING VENUE OF EES SUMMIT IN ARMENIA

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Kazakhstans prime minister will not attend a summit of the Eurasian Economic Union (EES) member states scheduled in Armenia's capital, Yerevan, on April 8.

The summit comes just days after a cease-fire was agreed between Azerbaijan and Armenia-backed separatists in the breakaway region of Nagorno-Karabakh to end fighting in the mountainous South Caucasus enclave.

A spokesman said Kazakh Prime Minister Karim Masimov would not attend the summit and has named Moscow as an alternative venue.

The Russian cabinet, in a statement in April 6, said Moscow agreed with Masimovs proposal.

Observers have said Kazakhstan has proposed to move the summit to avoid the impression that Astana, which has strong linguistic and cultural ties with Azerbaijan, supports Armenia in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Kazakhstan currently holds the rotating chairmanship of the EES, which also includes Armenia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia.

Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin and his Kazakh counterpart, Nursultan Nazarbaev, on April 6 discussed by telephone the recent violence, the worst in decades, between Azerbaijan and Armenian-backed separatists.

Putin's press service said the two leaders also discussed bilateral ties.

Kaynak/Source: