

Smolensk Denies Plans for Lavish Memorial at 2010 Plane Crash Site

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Smolensk regional administration has denied reports that Poland requested 100,000 square meters of land for the construction of a memorial on the site of the 2010 plane crash that killed then-Polish President Lech Kaczynski.

Ruslan Smashnev, a spokesman for the regional administration, said that no such request had been received, denying the report carried earlier by Izvestia that Polish authorities wanted to build a memorial that would be bigger than Red Square, RIA-Novosti reported late Thursday.

Smashnev said that according to the memorial's design, which was chosen in an international tender, the monument will occupy an area of approximately 400 square meters.

It does not provide for any chapels or museum expositions on the site, as Izvestia originally reported, Smashnev said.

Meanwhile, a spokesman for the Polish Culture Ministry, Maciej Babchinski, said the monument would require an area of 1,200 square meters, according to RIA-Novosti.

The monument's design was chosen on March 30, 2012 by an international jury that included two representatives from Russia and the plan has been approved by Smolensk regional authorities.

A Tu-154 carrying President Lech Kaczynski and other high-ranking Polish officials crashed outside Smolensk in dense fog on the morning of April 10, 2010.

All 96 people on board were killed in the crash.

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