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Russian Lawmaker Wants Monument to Total CEO Killed in Plane Crash

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Christophe de Margerie, CEO of the French oil and gas company Total SA, delivers a speech during the company's 2012 annual result presentation in Paris, Feb. 13, 2013.

A Russian lawmaker has written to Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov asking Moscow's Vnukovo Airport to erect a memorial to Christophe de Margerie, the CEO of French oil major Total who was killed earlier this week in a plane accident.

"It is no exaggeration to say that Christophe de Margerie, being a major investor, a man of words and deeds, had a reverence for Russia," United Russia's State Duma deputy Alexander Sidyakin was quoted as saying by the Izvestia newspaper in the proposal, which he also sent to the chairman of Vnukovo Airport's board of directors.

"He openly opposed [the West's] anti-Russia sanctions, remained for many years a reliable business partner, consistently stood up for the principles of fair cooperation with our country in European circles," added Sidyakin, who wants an obelisk erected in De Margerie's name

at Vnukovo Airport, where the deadly crash took place.

An unidentified source at the airport told Izvestia that the proposal would receive some consideration but that their primary concern was to establish the causes of the accident.

De Margerie was killed Monday along with three crew members after his private jet collided with a snowplow upon takeoff from Vnukovo Airport.

In the aftermath of the accident, President Vladimir Putin issued a statement saying Russia had lost "a true friend of our country, whom we will remember with the greatest warmth."

Five people have so far been detained on suspicion of breaching safety regulations ahead of the crash, while Vnukovo's CEO Andrei Dyakov and his deputy Sergei Solntsev resigned from their positions on Thursday in light of the accident.

The French businessman is not the only high profile figure to have been killed in a Russian plane accident in recent years.

Four years ago Polish President Lech Kaczynski was killed when his plane crashed upon landing at Smolensk Airport, where he had been due to attend an event commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Katyn massacre. A plaque was erected at the site of the crash in memory of all 96 people aboard the plane who lost their lives.

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