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Russia's Egypt Flight Ban Here to Stay — Medvedev

By The Moscow Times

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Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev told a government meeting Monday that flights to Egypt, one of the most popular international destinations for Russian tourists, are unlikely to be resumed in the near future, the RIA Novosti news agency reported.

“It's a complicated topic, we have to keep all the processes under control, which is why we created a headquarters. We shouldn't be under any illusions that it will be a short period,” Medevdev said about the flight ban.

Russia's tourism industry is facing huge financial losses after the government suspended air traffic between Russia and Egypt over safety concerns following the crash of an Airbus A321 over the Sinai Peninsula on Oct. 31. Egypt’s Red Sea resorts are hugely popular with Russian tourists and the country is the second most popular foreign destination for Russian

holidaymakers after Turkey.

As much as $200 million could be lost by the tourism industry if flights to Egypt are not resumed by February, the Association for Russian Tour Operators said Monday, gazeta.ru news website reported. As many as 4 million Russian tourists visited Egypt last year.

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Deputy Prime Minister Arkady Dvorkovich said Sunday that the government was looking at ways to calculate the losses to the tour industry because of the cancelled flights and had been ordered by Medvedev to draw up a program of financial support for the sector.

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