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UNESCO Approves Controversial Prince Vladimir Statue

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The UNESCO cultural and scientific organization has approved the installation of a monument to Prince Vladimir in the center of Moscow on the condition that its height does not exceed eight meters, the RIA Novosti news agency reported Friday, citing a Moscow official.

“As far as I'm concerned, UNESCO has coordinated the installation of the monument if it is not more than 8 meters high,” Lev Lavrenov, chairman on the Moscow Duma's committee on monuments, was quoted by RIA Novosti as saying.

The statue is now being cast, Lavrenov said, adding that it would not necessarily be mounted on the site where a founding stone was installed on Nov. 3.

The statue of Prince Vladimir is due to be installed next spring on Borovitskaya Ploshchad, near the Moscow Kremlin. The Kremlin and adjacent Red Square are included on the UNESCO World Heritage list, which is why Russia notified the organization about the plans for the installation of the monument.

Initially, the statue, which depicts Vladimir with a sword at his side and holding a large cross,

was supposed to be 25 meters high and was planned to be erected at Vorobyovy Gory, or Sparrow Hills, near Moscow State University. However, the initiative caused a public outcry, so the location was changed and the height of the monument was reduced.

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