

Commission Approves Moscow's New 25-Foot Monument to the Creator of the AK-47

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A silhouette erected at the site of the proposed monument to Mikhail Kalashnikov. **Alexander Shcherbak / TASS**

An expert commission has approved the height of a new monument to weapons designer Mikhail Kalashnikov, which is planned to go up in Moscow in January 2017. The statue will stand 7.5 meters (almost 25 feet) tall.

On Tuesday, Oct. 4, officials erected a temporary cardboard silhouette, in order to simulate the monument once it's erected, so experts could determine its appearance at Oruzheinyi Pereulok, in central Moscow. The test went over well, and the commission signed off on the project.

The monument features a 5-meter-tall Mikhail Kalashnikov carrying one of his signature rifles, standing atop a concrete slab that bears his name.

The statue will be unveiled officially on January 21, on the 69th anniversary of the Soviet order to manufacture the first pilot series of Kalashnikov automatic weapons. The monument, designed by Salavat Shcherbakov, will reportedly cost 35 million rubles (more than half a million dollars).

Mikhail Kalashnikov, who died in December 2013, would have turned 100 in 2019. President Vladimir Putin previously ordered the government to arrange a state celebration of the 100th anniversary of Kalashnikov's birth.

Kalashnikov was a Russian general, military engineer, and small arms designer. He is most famous for developing the AK-47 assault rifle, which remains the most popular and widely used assault rifles in the world.

Monuments dedicated to Soviet themes are often at the center of major political issues in contemporary Russia. In August 2014, for instance, Russia formally [demanded](#) that Bulgaria try harder to prevent vandalism of Soviet monuments, after yet another monument to Soviet troops in Sofia was spray-painted.

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