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Putin Overturns 2015 Ban on Flights to Egyptian Resorts

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Russia had banned flights to Egypt in 2015 after a bomb brought down a Russian plane over the Sinai Peninsula. **Erik Romanenko / TASS**

Russian President Vladimir Putin has overturned a 2015 decree banning charter flights to Egyptian resorts, ending a six-year hiatus on travel to a popular destination for Russian tourists.

Putin also withdrew his previous recommendation against selling tours to Egyptian resorts on the Red Sea.

Russia had banned all air travel to Egypt in 2015 after a bomb by a terrorist group brought down a Russian passenger plane over the Sinai Peninsula, killing all 224 people on board.

Egyptian authorities have spent millions of dollars to upgrade security at its airports in the years since the plane's downing in efforts to get Moscow to reverse its decision.

In January 2018, Russia resumed direct flights to Cairo as well as official travel to Egypt but

direct flights to the country's resorts continued to be banned.

Putin and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi agreed in an April 23 call to resume charter flights between Russia and Egypt's resort towns.

Egypt has long been a popular vacation spot for Russian tourists due to its warm weather, short flights and affordability. The resumption of flights would be a boon for the Egyptian tourism industry, which has been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic.

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