Poland Accuses Russia of Ordering Major Fire in Warsaw Last Year

By [AFP](#)

May 12, 2025

Nearly 100% of Marywilska 44, one of the biggest shopping centers in Warsaw, was destroyed in the fire on May 12, 2024. **EPA / LESZEK SZYMANSKI / TASS**

Polish authorities accused Russian intelligence services on Sunday of orchestrating a fire that destroyed a large shopping center last year in the capital of Warsaw.

Since Russia's February 2022 offensive against Ukraine, Poland — a loyal ally of Kyiv — claims to be the target of sabotage attempts which they blame on Russia.

In May 2024, a fire completely destroyed a large shopping center in Warsaw and the 1,400 small businesses it housed, most of them owned by members of the Vietnamese community.

Authorities immediately launched an investigation but had until now refrained from blaming Moscow.

"We now know for sure that the great fire of the Marywilska shopping center in Warsaw was

caused by arson ordered by the Russian special services," said Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk on X.

The justice and interior ministries said in a separate, joint statement Sunday that some of the alleged perpetrators were already in custody, while others had been identified but still at large.

"Their actions were organized and directed by a specific person residing in the Russian Federation," the two ministries said, adding that they were cooperating with Lithuania, "where some of the perpetrators also carried out acts of diversion."

Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Poland has detained and convicted several individuals suspected of sabotage on behalf of Russian intelligence services, accused of assaults, arson or attempted arson.

In May 2024, Poland imposed restrictions on the movements of Russian diplomats on its soil, due to Moscow's "involvement" in a "hybrid war."

Five months later, Warsaw ordered the closure of the Russian consulate in Poznań, in western Poland, accusing Moscow of orchestrating "sabotage attempts."

In December, Polish diplomacy said it was willing to close all Russian consulates in Poland if acts of "terrorism" continued.

Russia closed in January the Polish consulate in St. Petersburg in retaliation.

Bordering Ukraine, Poland — a NATO and European Union member — is one of the main countries through which Western nations supply weapons and ammunition to Kyiv to help Ukraine fight Russian troops.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2025/05/12/poland-accuses-russia-of-ordering-major-fire-in-warsaw-last-year-a89045