

Founding Stone for Prince Vladimir Statue Installed Near Moscow Kremlin

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The sculpture was initially planned to be mounted at Vorobyovy Gory, or Sparrow Hills, near Moscow State University, but the location was changed following a public outcry.

A founding stone for the controversial Prince Vladimir statue was installed on Borovitskaya Ploshchad near the Moscow Kremlin on Tuesday, Interfax news agency reported.

The installment ceremony was attended by Russian Orthodox Church Patriarch Kirill, Culture Minister Vladimir Medinsky and Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin, Russian news agencies reported.

The 12-meter monument to Prince Vladimir is to be unveiled in spring 2016, its designer Salavat Scherbakov told the TASS news agency.

The sculpture was initially planned to be mounted at Vorobyovy Gory, or Sparrow Hills, near Moscow State University, but the location was changed following a public outcry.

The new location has been criticized by Russia's Foreign Ministry, among others, Forbes

magazine reported Monday.

The ministry sent a letter to government agencies and the presidential administration, claiming that the monument's installation violates Russia's international obligations: The Kremlin and adjacent Red Square are included on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

UNESCO was not consulted regarding the statue's location and concerns have been raised over possible damage to the visual integrity of the Kremlin.

Russia's permanent representative to UNESCO Eleonora Mitrofanova said Tuesday that UNESCO “may have questions in the future” about the situation, the TASS news agency reported Tuesday.

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