

## “Anti-Petrodollar” CEO of French Energy Giant Total Dies in Freak Plane Crash in Moscow

By [Zero Hedge](#)

Region: [Russia and FSU](#)

Global Research, October 21, 2014

[Zero Hedge](#) 20 October 2014

[Three months ago, the CEO of Total, Christophe de Margerie, dared utter the phrase heard around the petrodollar world, “There is no reason to pay for oil in dollars,” as we noted here.](#) Today, [RT reports](#) the dreadful news that he was killed in a business jet crash at Vnukovo Airport in Moscow after the aircraft hit a snow-plough on take-off. The airport issued a statement confirming “a criminal investigation has been opened into the violation of safety regulations,” adding that along with 3 crewmembers on the plane, the snow-plough driver was also killed.

CEO of France’s Total dies in jet crash at Moscow’s Vnukovo Airport - report  
<http://t.co/AWNpuaAuCq> [pic.twitter.com/oA8aWLRCOZ](http://pic.twitter.com/oA8aWLRCOZ)

— RT (@RT\_com) [October 20, 2014](#)

De Margerie, 63, joined Total in 1974 after graduating from the École Supérieure de Commerce in Paris. He served in several positions in the Finance Department and Exploration & Production division. In 1995, he became President of Total Middle East before joining the Total’s Executive Committee as the President of the Exploration & Production division in May 1999. In May 2006, he was appointed a member of the Board of Directors. He was appointed Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Total on May 21, 2010.

[As RT reports,](#)

According to preliminary data, the light aircraft collided with a snow-cleaning machine on takeoff, a source at the capital’s airport told RIA.

The aircraft was sending distress signals while still in the air and reporting an engine fire and fuselage damage, LifeNews reports. Upon crashing on the runway, the aircraft was engulfed in flames, reportedly killing everyone on board.

While initial reports suggested four people died in the tragedy, officials report that five bodies were found at the crash site, one allegedly being the driver of the snow-cleaning vehicle.

Vnukovo Airport has temporarily suspended all flights following the incident.

“A criminal investigation has been opened into the violation of safety regulations after a light aircraft crash in the capital’s Vnukovo airport,” transport official Tatyana Morozova told RIA.

An investigative group is working at the crash site, Morozova added. In addition to people who were on board the plane, she said, the driver snowplow was killed.

Debris from the aircraft was scattered up to 200 meters from the crash site, according to the rescue services. The engine was found some 50 meters from the crash site, while one of the landing gears was ripped off and discovered nearly 200 meters from the main mass of debris.

\* \* \*

The plane he was aboard...

DEVELOPING: Passenger of crashed plane was head of French oil company - reports <http://t.co/AWNpuaAuCq> [pic.twitter.com/pq5Y4SDXEW](http://pic.twitter.com/pq5Y4SDXEW)

— RT (@RT\_com) [October 20, 2014](#)

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Of course this could merely be a desparately sad accident... aside from the coincidence of this so recently...

Christophe de Margerie, the CEO of Total ([the world's 13th biggest oil producer](#) and Europe's 2nd largest), believes "There is no reason to pay for oil in dollars." Clearly, based on his comments, that [we have passed peak Petrodollar](#).

[As Reuters reports](#),

Oil major Total's chief executive said on Saturday the euro should have a bigger role in international trade although it was not possible to do without the U.S. dollar.

Christophe de Margerie was responding to questions about calls by French policymakers to find ways at EU level to bolster the use of the euro in international business following a record U.S. fine for BNP.

...

"There is no reason to pay for oil in dollars," he said. He said the fact that oil prices are quoted in dollars per barrel did not mean that payments actually had to be made in that currency.

So even a major beneficiary of the status quo appears to see the end in sight for the Petrodollar.

\* \* \*

Furthermore, despite Western-imposed sanctions on Russia that prohibit western financing and technology transfer to some Russian energy projects, Total is continuing to pursue a natural gas project in Yamal, a joint venture with Russia's Novatek and China's CNPC.

"Can we live without Russian gas in Europe? The answer is no. Are there any reasons to live without it? I think - and I'm not defending the interests of Total

in Russia – it is a no,” the Total boss told Reuters back in summer.

\* \* \*

And of course, it had to happen in Russia!

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*GR Editor’s note: According to an [update from RT](#) the plane did not take off:*

During the taxiing before take-off, at around 0:10 am Moscow time on Tuesday, the light aircraft hit a snow-clearing machine, the head of Vnukovo’s press service, Elena Krylova, told the media.

“A Falcon airplane that was en route from Moscow to Paris collided with a snowplow while the jet was preparing to take off. The plane caught fire after the collision and all the people onboard – including a passenger and three crew members – died,” Krylova said.

The aircraft did not leave the ground after hitting the vehicle, she added, refuting earlier reports that the plane did eventually take off but then the pilot made a decision to turn back and land. The investigators have already found the aircraft’s black boxes while the airport staff were writing explanatory reports, she added.

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