



## Russian court rejects US journalist Evan Gershkovich's detention appeal

### Description

**RUSSIA/US : A Moscow court has rejected the latest appeal by American journalist Evan Gershkovich against his pre-trial detention in an espionage case that he and United States authorities have rejected as false.**

Gershkovich, 32, a reporter for The Wall Street Journal, has been in Moscow's Lefortovo Prison for more than a year after he was arrested while on a reporting trip.

He, his newspaper and the US government all deny he is a spy. No date has been set for his trial. His detention was extended last month by three months to June 30.

In the courtroom on Tuesday, Gershkovich stood in a glass dock wearing dark trousers, a white T-shirt and a dark shirt. He smiled and gave a thumbs-up when a reporter asked him how he was doing.

He is the first Western journalist since the Soviet era to be arrested by Moscow on spying charges.

Moscow has not provided any public details of its case against Gershkovich, saying only that he was "caught red-handed" in the Urals city of Yekaterinburg in March last year.

Russia has said there are discussions behind the scenes on a possible prisoner exchange involving Gershkovich.

### Hint from Russian officials

Russian President Vladimir Putin has publicly implied that as part of a deal to free Gershkovich, Moscow would like to see the release of a man who Germany says was working for the Russian state when he killed a Chechen rebel commander in Berlin.

Beyond that hint, Russian officials have kept mum about the talks. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov repeatedly said that while "certain contacts" on swaps continue, "they must be carried out in absolute silence."

Washington has repeatedly accused Moscow of arresting US citizens to use them as pawns to secure the release of Russians jailed abroad for serious crimes.

Gershkovich is the first US reporter to be arrested on espionage charges in Russia since September 1986 when Nicholas Daniloff, a Moscow correspondent for US News and World Report, was arrested by the KGB.

Daniloff was released without charge 20 days later in a swap for an employee of the Soviet Union's United Nations mission who was arrested by the FBI, also on spying charges.

**BY aljazeera.com**

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