

U.S. Prods Russia Over Magnitsky's Death

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The U.S. government marked the second anniversary of the prison death of Hermitage Capital lawyer Sergei Magnitsky on Wednesday by urging the Russian government to hold accountable those officials involved in his death.

"Despite widely publicized credible evidence of criminal conduct in Magnitsky's case, Russian authorities have failed to bring to justice those responsible," U.S. State Department spokesman Mark Toner said in an e-mailed statement.

"While we welcome charges against two prison officials, we will continue to call for full accountability for those responsible for Magnitsky's unjust imprisonment and wrongful death," he said.

Straining otherwise good ties, the State Department this summer put dozens of officials implicated in Magnitsky's death on a blacklist. The Foreign Ministry responded by announcing that it had compiled an even larger blacklist of U.S. officials who had allegedly violated the rights of Russian citizens. Neither side has revealed any names on the blacklists.

Magnitsky was arrested by officials whom he had accused of stealing \$230 million from the Russian government in 2008, and an independent Kremlin-ordered investigation found this summer that prison guards had brutally beaten Magnitsky, who suffered ill health, shortly before he died in pretrial detention 11 months later. Two prison doctors have been charged in the case, but no one else has faced any punishment. In fact, some of the implicated officials have been promoted and decorated with state awards.

"Today we honor the memory of Russian lawyer Sergei Magnitsky, who died of abuse and neglect two years ago in a Moscow prison after bringing corruption allegations against senior officials," Toner said.

"We will continue to fully support the efforts of those in Russia who seek to bring these individuals to justice," he said.

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