

Bout Will Appeal Arms Dealing Conviction in U.S.

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Viktor Bout, jailed for 25 years in the United States, will appeal his arms trading conviction, his lawyer said.

Bout was sentenced in April for agreeing to sell arms to U.S. undercover agents posing as Colombian guerrillas planning to attack American soldiers.

"We have agreed our next steps now," Bout's lawyer Victor Burobin told reporters Friday in Moscow. "First we will seek to appeal at an appeal court and then the Supreme Court and then turn to the U.S. president's commission for pardoning and then seek to bring Viktor Bout home to serve his sentence here."

Amnesty International says before his arrest in 2008, Bout, 46, was involved in embargo-busting arms deals to human rights abusers in Angola, Liberia, Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The case has fueled tensions between the White House and the Kremlin, which said it was politically driven. Moscow said it would continue to seek to return its citizen to Russia.

Bout's wife, Alla, said she did not hold out much hope for her husband's appeal.

"Personally, I don't believe the appeal can get us anywhere as there is so much politics engaged in the case," she told the same news conference. "It was a political order from Washington to get Viktor, so such an appeal will get us nowhere."

"What we need is a strong political will to return him to Russia. Otherwise all our efforts are just formalities," she said, adding that her husband was allowed to make two 10-minute calls per week and get 100 printed pages of reading material a month.

She and Burobin both expressed concern that another diplomatic dispute between Russia and the United States, over the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act, a U.S. bill that would penalize Russian officials for human rights abuses, could hurt their case.

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