

Arms Dealer's Wife to Found Charity for Russians Facing Trial Abroad

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The wife of jailed arms dealer Viktor Bout said Tuesday that she would seek to register a charity aimed at providing help to Russians who are arrested, convicted or serving time abroad.

"Despite the difficulty of our financial position, I have decided to create a foundation to help Russians in a similar position to Viktor," Alla Bout told RIA-Novosti, adding that she hoped to submit the necessary documentation to the Justice Ministry this week.

"Being 'locked up' in another country, not understanding whom to turn to, people feel completely defenseless," she said.

Alla Bout's plans to found the charity come six months after a New York court sentenced her husband Viktor to 25 years' jail time for conspiring to sell up to \$20 million in weapons to the Colombian revolutionary guerrilla organization FARC.

Viktor Bout was arrested in 2008 in a sting operation in Thailand coordinated by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, which says Bout knew that the weapons would be used to kill American citizens.

Moscow has sought Bout's extradition so he can serve out the remainder of his prison term on home soil. The Foreign Ministry has argued that he was convicted on unreliable evidence due to political considerations.

In another high-profile case, U.S. authorities arrested eight Russian citizens in early October on accusations of scheming to illicitly sell military technology to the Russian military.

On Tuesday, Alla Bout stressed that "political goals" would not be included in her charity's objectives.

She added that she was working on a name for the charity and a list of members to be invited to chair its supervisory board.

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