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Moscow Slams Lithuania for Extraditing Russian to U.S.

By The Moscow Times

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VILNIUS — Moscow criticized Lithuania on Tuesday for extraditing a Russian man to the United States to stand trial on charges of smuggling military equipment, and said it would strive to get him returned to Russia.

Konstantin Dolgov, the Foreign Ministry's point man on human rights, described Lithuania's actions as "smuggling a Russian citizen from the territory of a third country to the United States," and said the move was "unacceptable."

Lithuania officially notified Moscow on Tuesday that a Russian national had been extradited to the U.S. to stand trial on charges of smuggling military equipment, the Russian embassy in Vilnius said.

On August 14, a Lithuanian court fulfilled a U.S. request to extradite alleged arms dealer Dmitry Ustinov to the United States, where he faces a prison term of up to 20 years if

convicted.

The Foreign Ministry responded the same day, saying Moscow was "outraged by the fact that the American special services and law enforcement agencies are still trying to legitimize the practice of arresting and detaining Russian nationals in third countries on frivolous grounds," according to a statement on its website.

Ustinov, 46, was detained at Vilnius Airport in Lithuania on April 15 after he arrived from the U.S. purportedly to negotiate a deal to sell night-vision equipment used by the U.S. military. He denies all charges.

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