

'No Obstacles' to Extradition of Russian Pilot Jailed in U.S.

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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NEW YORK — A lawyer for Russian pilot Konstantin Yaroshenko, who was found guilty on drug smuggling charges and is serving a 20-year prison term in the United States, said there were "no obstacles" to his client's extradition to Russia.

Though lawyer Alexei Tarasov is positive about Yaroshenko's chances of being extradited, he was unable to say when the process could possibly begin.

"Usually the American side does not announce such things in advance," he said, adding that his client may be extradited under the Council of Europe's Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced People.

Yaroshenko and an acquaintance were arrested in Liberia in an undercover operation in May 2010, and were flown to the United States.

Yaroshenko pleaded innocent to drug smuggling charges but was convicted and sentenced in April 2011 for colluding to smuggle cocaine into the United States. He was caught after replying to an advertisement posted by agents with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency, who claimed they were selling a cargo plane for \$1.

Yaroshenko said he did want to buy a plane, but did not plan to use it to transport drugs. He said his poor English prevented him from understanding the nature of the deal.

In August, the New York Federal Court of Appeals rejected a motion for his retrial. The U.S. Supreme Court also rejected an appeal from his lawyers on Thursday.

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