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Russian Arms Dealer Viktor Bout Gets Biopic By His Own Lawyer

By Allison Quinn

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Viktor Bout is currently serving out a 25-year sentence in a U.S. prison for a 2011 conviction of conspiracy to kill U.S. citizens and officials.

Convicted arms dealer Viktor Bout's lawyer has announced plans to create a film based on all the crimes his client "did not commit" to rival an earlier Hollywood blockbuster based on the arms dealer's life.

"Together with a creative group of co-authors, I am looking into the possibility of producing and filming an alternative dramatic or documentary film about Viktor Bout, and about all those crimes that he did not commit," Alexei Binetsky said in comments to Interfax on Tuesday.

The film would be similar to the sensational 2005 action film "Lord of War" starring Hollywood actor Nicholas Cage, he explained. Although the main character in the film, Yury Orlov, was reportedly based on several different well-known criminals, Bout is believed

to have been a major inspiration.

Bout is currently serving out a 25-year sentence in a U.S. prison for a 2011 conviction of conspiracy to kill U.S. citizens and officials. The charge stems from his 2008 arrest in Thailand by a team of U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agents following an elaborate sting operation where they posed as buyers for the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia, or FARC. Prosecutors later argued that Bout had intended to supply the group, which the U.S. government considers a terrorist organization, with anti-aircraft weapons and other arms that he understood would be used to kill Americans.

Both Bout and Russia's Foreign Ministry denounced the arrest and subsequent extradition in 2010 to the U.S., with the former accusing U.S. authorities of entrapping him with a "vindictive" prosecution and Moscow claiming the case was politically motivated.

Bout has maintained his innocence, and Binetsky has backed up his client's claims.

"People, and not only those in Russia, have the right to know the truth about Viktor Bout," Binetsky told Interfax, adding that "most of the accusations that are brought against Viktor Bout as Western propaganda do not have any basis and do not correspond to reality."

Bout has already been the subject of at least one other film, "The Notorious Mr. Bout," which debuted at the Sundance Film Festival in January.

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