

Russian Drug Trafficker Counting on 'Pardon from Obama'

October 13, 2016



Konstantin Yaroshenko **TASS**

Lawyers defending Russian pilot Konstantin Yaroshenko, who was convicted in the United States for conspiracy to transport narcotics, are counting on a pardon from President Obama to set him free, the TASS news agency reported Thursday.

Yaroshenko's legal team hopes that Obama's recent moves to reduce punishment for drug-related crimes may signal a reprieve for the Russian national, the Rossia 24 television channel reported.

Alexei Tarasov, one of Yaroshenko's lawyers, told the channel that pardoning the pilot would be "a good signal from the U.S. government to improve bilateral relations with Russia."

Konstantin Yaroshenko was arrested in Liberia in May 2010 and later extradited to the United States, where he was convicted and sentenced to 20 years in prison.

He is currently serving out his sentence in Fort Dix, New Jersey.

Original url:

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