

Israel Extradites Suspected Russian Hacker to U.S. in Snub to Moscow

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Andrei Shirokov / TASS

Israel has extradited suspected Russian hacker Alexei Burkov to the United States despite Moscow's proposal to swap him for an Israeli woman jailed in Russia over marijuana possession, The Times of Israel [reported](#) Monday.

Burkov, who was detained during a visit to Israel in 2015, is wanted in the U.S. on charges of credit card fraud. Russia last month had asked Israel to exchange Burkov for Naama Issachar, a U.S.-Israeli citizen sentenced to seven and a half years in Russian prison on drug-smuggling charges.

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The Russian Embassy in Israel [criticized](#) the court decision to extradite Burkov as a violation of his rights. In a Facebook post, the diplomatic mission questioned Israel's "ability to ensure the security and rights of Russian citizens visiting the country."

“We believe it [...] not conducive to the progressive development of Russian-Israeli relations,” the Russian Embassy said.

The U.S. Embassy in Israel has not commented on either case.

President Vladimir Putin has snubbed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s repeated requests to free Issachar because of the Israeli leader’s current political weakness, Bloomberg [reported](#) Tuesday.

Putin will personally decide Issachar’s fate, possibly after January, Bloomberg cited two people with knowledge of Kremlin deliberations as saying. One of the people reportedly said that Putin did not want to hand Netanyahu a political “gift” as the Israeli leader struggles to extend his rule and avoid a corruption trial.

Related article: [Israel Asks Putin to Pardon U.S.-Israeli Jailed for Moscow Airport Transit Drugs](#)

“Alexei and Naama are both victims of political games,” Bloomberg quoted Konstantin Bekenshtein, a Ukrainian-born Israeli who reportedly offered Issachar’s mother a swap with Burkov, as saying.

Russian authorities detained Issachar in April during a layover in a Moscow airport and accused her of having 9 grams of cannabis in her bag.

She pleaded not guilty to charges of drug smuggling but didn't deny that the cannabis in her bag was hers. Israel condemned Issachar’s sentencing last month as "heavy" and "disproportionate."

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