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U.S. Embassy Protests Lack of Access to Jailed Ex-Marine

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U.S. Ambassador to Moscow John Sullivan outside an appeal hearing for ex-U.S. Marine Trevor Reed in Moscow, February 2021. **Sergei Fadeichev / TASS**

The U.S. Embassy in Moscow has issued a note of protest to the Russian Foreign Ministry over its lack of access to jailed ex-Marine Trevor Reed and "grave concern" for his health, it said in a statement Friday.

The Embassy said Reed, who was diagnosed with coronavirus on May 25 and hospitalized after his condition worsened, has been repeatedly denied phone calls to his family and Embassy personnel. It also said the hospital treating Reed has withheld updates on his health since he was admitted.

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"We are gravely concerned about his health," the Embassy's statement said.

“We insist that this brazen attempt to isolate Mr. Reed from both his family and his government immediately cease,” it added.

Russia's Federal Prison Service said last month that Reed was undergoing treatment at a prison hospital but that his Covid-19 case was asymptomatic and his health was "satisfactory."

Reed, a 29-year-old from Texas, was sentenced to nine years in prison last year for allegedly assaulting police while drunk in Moscow in August 2019. The U.S. government and Reed deny the charges and have questioned the trial’s fairness.

Another former U.S. Marine, Paul Whelan, was sentenced to 16 years in prison last year on espionage charges he denies.

Analysts have raised the release of U.S. citizens jailed in Russia, including Whelan and Reed, as a possible topic of discussion at the upcoming summit between U.S. President Joe Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin in Geneva on June 16.

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