

Ex-Marine Whelan Unreachable in Russian Prison for Over a Month – Lawyer

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Paul Whelan at the Moscow City Court in Moscow, Russia, 15 June 2020 **Sofiya Sandurskaya / Moskva News Agency**

Former U.S. Marine Paul Whelan, who is convicted of espionage in Russia, has not been in touch with his family for more than a month, one of his lawyers [said](#) Tuesday.

A Moscow court last year found Whelan guilty of receiving classified information at an upscale hotel in 2018 and sentenced him to 16 years in prison. Whelan, 51, who also holds Canadian, British and Irish passports, denies the charges and says the case against him was politically motivated.

Related article: [Pressure Putin to Release Jailed Americans, Ex-Marine Whelan Urges Biden Ahead of Summit](#)

One of Whelan's lawyers Vladimir Zhrebenkov [said](#) last week that he had been placed in solitary confinement in a central Russian penal colony for an unknown infraction. The ex-Marine's brother David Whelan said that was his second consecutive placement in solitary confinement.

"I filed a negligence complaint through the Federal Penitentiary Service's electronic reception today," Whelan's other lawyer Olga Karlova told Interfax on Tuesday.

"I sent an email asking how I can talk to [Whelan] on the phone and why he hasn't been in touch with his family and the [U.S.] embassy for more than four weeks," Karlova said.

She said the penal colony's administration has not responded to the requests that she had sent on July 26.

Karlova also noted that Whelan's defense team could still file a motion at the end of every month to send him to the U.S. to serve his sentence there.

"Paul gave us the general authority" to file for his transfer on his behalf, she said.

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