

Russian Court Jails U.S. Citizen for Kicking Police Officer

By [AFP](#)

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Robert Gilman during a court session. **Oleg Kharseev / Kommersant**

A Russian court on Tuesday sentenced a U.S. citizen to four years and six months behind bars for allegedly kicking a law enforcement officer, the latest American detained in the country.

Russian media identified the American as 28-year-old Robert Gilman and said he was sentenced in the western city of Voronezh over an incident dating from Jan. 17.

"This man, who disagreed with lawful actions taken by the authorities, used violence against a police officer who was on duty, kicking him several times," Russia's Investigative Committee which probes major crimes said in a statement.

Gilman intends to appeal against the decision and seek a reduced sentence because he apologized to the victim, his lawyer, Valery Ivannikov, told the RIA Novosti news agency.

Gilman was quoted as admitting responsibility but alleging that he was politically targeted.

The Investigative Committee said Gilman was detained by police after disrupting public order while intoxicated on a train. It said he had initially pleaded not guilty but subsequently reversed the decision.

The U.S. State Department said it was "aware" of the case but could not comment further due to privacy laws.

"We urge the Russian government to ensure fair treatment to all U.S. citizens detained in Russia," State Department spokesman Vedant Patel told reporters in Washington.

He also called on Russia to allow "consistent, timely consular access to all U.S. citizens."

Ivannikov, the lawyer, said Gilman would seek to be swapped in a prisoner exchange.

In April, Russia and the United States swapped prisoners despite tensions over the conflict in Ukraine. Moscow handed over a jailed ex-Marine, Trevor Reed, in exchange for a Russian pilot convicted of drug smuggling.

Reed was sentenced to nine years in prison by a Russian court in July 2020 after allegedly attacking police officers while drunk.

Another U.S. citizen, Paul Whelan, a former security official at a vehicle parts company, remains in a Russian prison serving 16 years on espionage charges.

The highest-profile case is U.S. basketball star Brittney Griner, who was arrested for possessing vape cartridges with a small quantity of cannabis oil. She is due to go back to court on Oct. 25.

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