

Russia Extends Arrest of U.S. Journalist Gershkovich By 3 Months

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U.S. reporter Evan Gershkovich at a court hearing in April. **Natalia Kolesnikova / AFP**

A Moscow court has extended the pre-trial detention of jailed Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich by three months, the state-run TASS news agency [reported](#) Tuesday.

The Lefortovo District Court granted the Federal Security Service's (FSB) request to extend Gershkovich's pre-trial detention until Aug. 30 in a closed-door hearing, TASS reported.

Gershkovich, a United States citizen and former Moscow Times reporter, was arrested in Yekaterinburg in late March and charged with espionage, becoming the [first](#) foreign journalist arrested in Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

He was initially ordered to two months of pre-trial detention.

The Wall Street Journal and U.S. officials have strongly denied the espionage allegations.

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[Evan Gershkovich](#)

Gershkovich's parents Ella Milman and Mikhail Gershkovich were seen entering the courtroom with his lawyer Tatyana Nozhkina on Tuesday, [according](#) to a CNN producer present.

The courtroom meeting would mark the first time Gershkovich has seen his family — who reside in the U.S. — during his nearly two-month detention at Moscow's Lefortovo prison, one of [the most isolated](#) facilities in modern Russia.

The United States renewed calls for Russia to free Gershkovich after Tuesday's hearing.

"We continue to call for his immediate release as well as for the immediate release of Paul Whelan," State Department spokesman Matthew Miller told reporters, referring to Gershkovich and detained former Marine Whelan.

Last week, Russian authorities again [denied](#) the U.S. Embassy's request for a consular visit to Gershkovich in retaliation for Washington denying visas to pro-Kremlin journalists looking to visit the United Nations headquarters in New York.

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov on Monday that Moscow has no specific conditions for restoring the imprisoned journalist's access to consular visits.

"I'm not ready to outline any conditions... Everything is being resolved in a working manner and...last week the situation was such that a different decision wasn't possible," Interfax [cited](#) Ryabkov as saying.

AFP contributed reporting.

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