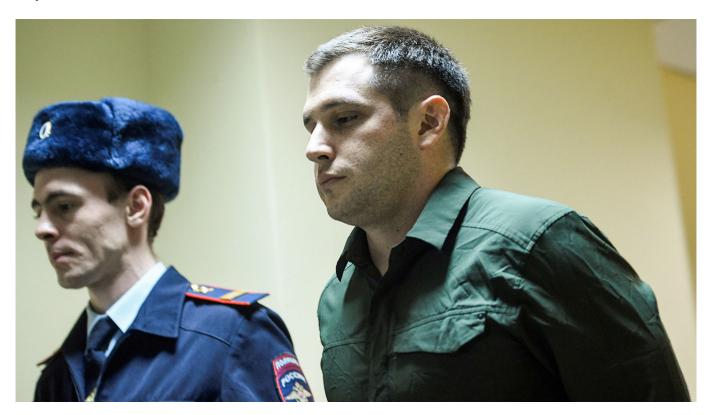# Ex-U.S. Marine, Once Imprisoned in Russia, Injured Fighting for Ukraine

By [AFP](#)

July 26, 2023

Trevor Reed seen escorted by Russian police in March 2020. **Alexander Nemenov / AFP**

A former U.S. Marine who spent more than two years in a Russian prison was injured fighting in Ukraine, the State Department said Tuesday.

Trevor Reed, who was released by Moscow in an April 2022 prisoner swap, has been sent to Germany for the treatment of unspecified injuries incurred while fighting for Ukraine, said Vedant Patel, a State Department spokesman.

Patel stressed that Reed "was not engaged in any activities on behalf of the U.S. government," but had traveled to Ukraine to serve as a volunteer fighter.

He said Reed was transported to Germany with the help of a private, non-governmental organization and is currently receiving medical care.

Related article: [U.S. Ambassador to Moscow Visits Imprisoned American Paul Whelan](#)

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said he had no further information on Reed's condition or status but he warned American citizens against heading to Ukraine.

"It underscores why we continue to call on Americans not to travel to Ukraine and not to fight there," he told a news conference during a visit to the Polynesian country of Tonga.

Blinken said he did not expect Reed's case to have an impact on U.S. efforts to bring home two Americans held in Russia — Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich and former U.S. Marine Paul Whelan.

"My expectation is that even as we are dealing with all sorts of other challenges in our relationship with Russia, we will and we are determined to continue to work to bring both Evan and Paul home," he said.

Reed was a Texas university student in 2019 when he traveled to Russia with his Russian girlfriend.

He was arrested for assaulting Russian police officers while intoxicated and was sentenced to nine years in prison.

In April last year, Russia released him after the White House negotiated an exchange for Konstantin Yaroshenko, a Russian pilot who was sentenced to 20 years in prison by a U.S. court on drug smuggling charges.

White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said the U.S. government has been "extraordinarily, extraordinarily explicit" in warning citizens "not to travel to Ukraine, let alone participate in fighting."

She said she could not provide an estimate of how many Americans might be volunteering on the side of Ukraine against Russian forces.

Asked if the Reed episode could complicate U.S. efforts to procure the release of other Americans imprisoned — unjustly, according to Washington — in Russia, Jean-Pierre said the cases were "separate. They're not the same."

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/07/26/ex-us-marine-once-imprisoned-in-russia-injured-fighting-for-ukraine-a81967