The Moscow Times
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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

U.S. Journalist Gershkovich Appeals Extended Detention

By AFP

August 26, 2023



EPA/YURI KOCHETKOV/TASS

U.S. reporter Evan Gershkovich has appealed against a Russian court's decision to extend his pre-trial detention by three months, according to documents published by a Moscow court.

Gershkovich was detained in March during a reporting trip to the Urals and accused of spying — charges that he, the U.S. government and his employer the Wall Street Journal vehemently deny.

His pre-trial custody was due to expire on Aug. 30, but a judge ruled Thursday it would be extended to Nov. 30, a decision criticised by the WSJ and U.S. State Department.

The Moscow City Court website showed this additional three-month extension had been "appealed" by his defense.

Gershkovich, unlike many Western reporters, had continued to report from Russia during

Moscow's offensive in Ukraine.

His case marks the first time a Western journalist has been arrested on espionage charges in Russia since the Soviet era.

Since launching full-scale hostilities against Ukraine last year, Russia has made it more difficult for journalists from the West to obtain accreditation and work in the country.

Several U.S. citizens have been handed heavy sentences in Russia in recent years. Washington accuses Moscow of using them as bargaining chips to obtain the release of Russians held in the U.S.

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