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Russia Denies Russian-American Journalist's Appeal Against Detention

By AFP

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Journalist Alsu Kurmasheva seen during a court hearing in Kazan. **Vladislav Mikhnevskii / AP / TASS**

A Russian court on Tuesday denied an appeal by Russian-American journalist Alsu Kurmasheva against her pre-trial detention on charges of failing to register as a "foreign agent."

Kurmasheva is the second U.S. journalist to be arrested in Russia this year after Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich was detained in March for "spying" — a charge that both he and his employer deny.

"[Kurmasheva] and her lawyer asked to change the measure of restraint from detention to house arrest. The court disallowed the appeal," a representative from the Supreme Court of Tatarstan, where the journalist is being held, told the Interfax news agency.

Kurmasheva, who works for the U.S.-funded Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) media

outlet, was detained by Russian law enforcement in the central city of Kazan earlier in October.

A court last week ruled to keep her in pre-trial detention until at least Dec. 5 on charges of failing to register as a "foreign agent," which carries a potential five-year prison sentence.

Her employer has called for her immediate release.

Rights groups have warned that Kurmasheva's detention marks a new threshold in Russia's crackdown on independent media, which has intensified dramatically since Moscow's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

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