

Russia Extends Evan Gershkovich's Pre-Trial Detention Ahead of Arrest Anniversary

By [AFP](#)

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Evan Gershkovich seen in court. t.me/moscowcourts

A Moscow court on Tuesday extended the pre-trial detention of U.S. journalist Evan Gershkovich until June 30, ensuring that he will have spent more than one year behind bars following his arrest last year on espionage charges.

Russian prosecutors have accused the Wall Street Journal reporter of espionage, the first such charge against a Western journalist in Russia since the fall of the Soviet Union.

The 32-year-old is being held in Moscow's notorious Lefortovo prison and faces a maximum of 20 years in jail if found guilty.

The Moscow court's press service said it had "extended the term of detention of Evan Gershkovich until June 30, 2024" following a hearing in the Russian capital.

Gershkovich, his employers and U.S. officials have all vehemently denied the accusations.

Related article: [Russia's Arrest of Evan Gershkovich Echoes Soviet Spy Scandal](https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/03/26/russia-extends-evan-gershkovichs-pre-trial-detention-a-head-of-arrest-anniversary-a84630)

Friday marks one year since Gershkovich's arrest by Federal Security Service (FSB) agents in the city of Yekaterinburg, around 1,400 kilometers east of Moscow.

"This verdict to further prolong Evan's detention feels particularly painful, as this week marks one year since Evan was arrested and wrongfully detained," U.S. Ambassador to Russia Lynne Tracy said following the verdict.

"The accusations against Evan are categorically untrue. They are not a different interpretation of circumstances. They are fiction," she added outside the court.

President Vladimir Putin said last month that he would like to see Gershkovich released as part of a prisoner exchange.

In remarks to conservative American TV commentator Tucker Carlson, he said talks between Russia and the United States about a possible swap were ongoing.

The Russian leader made clear he wanted any deal to involve the release of a Russian man who was jailed in Germany for killing a Chechen dissident.

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