

Russia Extends Detention of U.S.-Russian Journalist Kurmasheva

By [AFP](#)

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Alsu Kurmasheva. [Vladislav Mikhnevskii / AP / TASS](#)

A Russian court on Monday extended the pre-trial detention of U.S.-Russian journalist Alsu Kurmasheva until June 5, according to her employer.

Kurmasheva, who works for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), was arrested last year for failing to register as a "foreign agent."

RFE/RL says she was subsequently charged with spreading "false information" under wartime censorship laws that were introduced following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

The U.S.-funded news outlet on Monday called her imprisonment "outrageous" and said she had been locked up "simply because she holds an American passport."

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"The charges against Alsu are baseless. It's not a legal process, it's a political ploy, and Alsu and her family are unjustifiably paying a terrible price," RFE/RL head Stephen Capus said, adding that "Russia must end this sham and immediately release Alsu without condition."

Kurmasheva, who lives in Prague with her husband and two children, had her U.S. and Russian passports confiscated last June after traveling to Russia for a family emergency.

She was then arrested for failing to register as a "foreign agent" in October while awaiting the return of her passports. That charge carries up to five years in prison while spreading "false information" has a maximum sentence of 15 years.

Kurmasheva is the second U.S. journalist to be arrested in Russia since Moscow's full-scale invasion.

Embed:

It is the first time since Alsu's arrest on October 18, 2023, that her children and I have heard her voice in nearly six months. It is also the first time that journalists have dared or been allowed to ask Alsu anything in the courtroom. Before Judge Shaikhutdinova of the... pic.twitter.com/ABdVQnigAN

— Pavel Butorin (@PashaButorin) [April 1, 2024](#)

Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich has spent more than a year in jail in Moscow on espionage charges that carry a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison.

The U.S. State Department said last year that Kurmasheva's arrest "appears to be another case of the Russian government harassing US citizens."

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