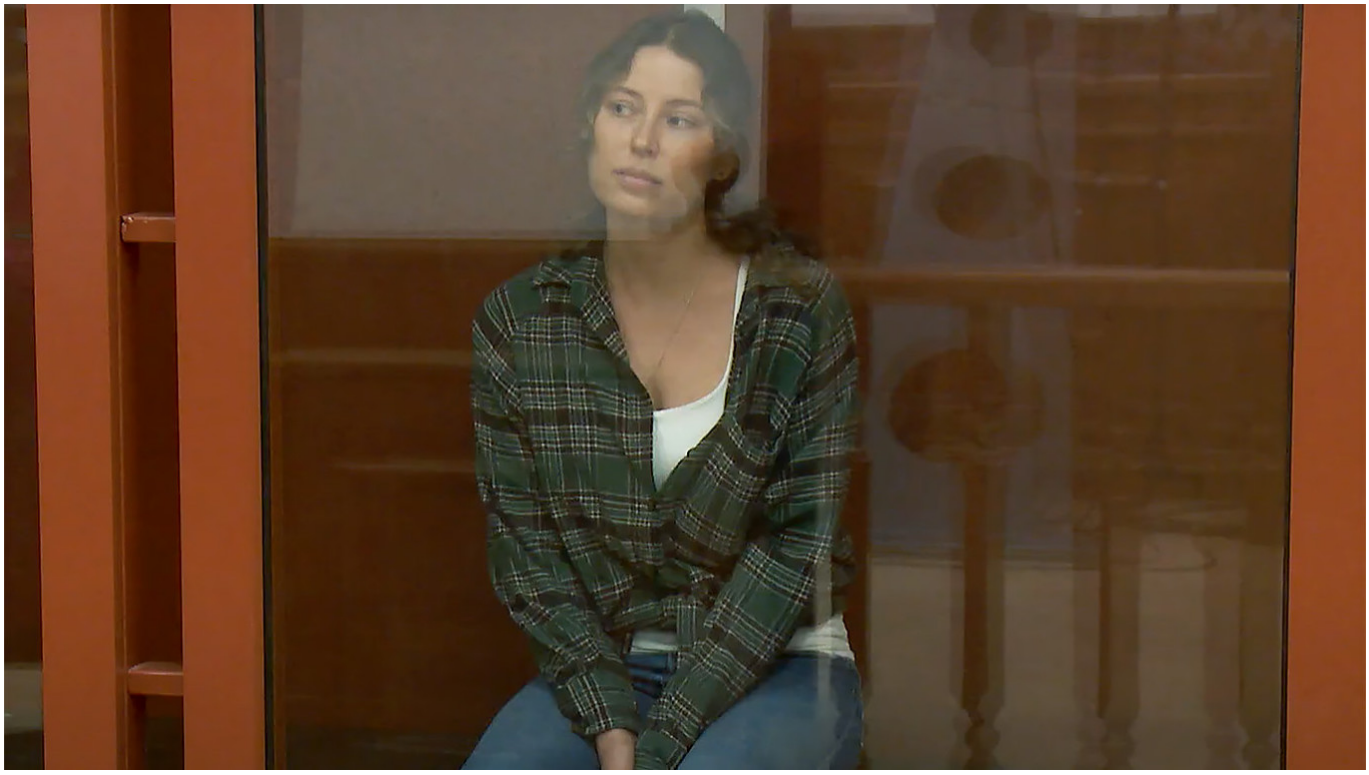
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Urals Court Opens Treason Trial Against Dual U.S.-Russian Citizen

By AFP

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Ksenia Karelina. **ekboblsud.ru**

A dual U.S.-Russian citizen accused of donating around $50 to a Ukrainian charity went on trial for treason in the Ural city of Yekaterinburg on Thursday.

Ksenia Karelina, a 32-year-old ballerina living and working in Los Angeles, was detained by police in Yekaterinburg in late January while on a trip to visit her family in Russia.

Prosecutors accuse her of "proactively transferring funds to a Ukrainian organization, which the Ukrainian armed forces subsequently used to purchase tactical medicine, equipment, weapons and ammunition."

U.S. media reported that Karelina donated around $50 to a New York-based Ukrainian charity in February 2022, shortly after Russia launched the full-scale invasion of its neighbor.

She faces up to 20 years in prison if found guilty.

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Karelina gave a wistful smile to reporters in court as she sat in the defendant's cage, as seen in a video published by the regional court.

Washington has accused Moscow of arresting its citizens on baseless charges to use them as bargaining chips to secure the release of Russians convicted abroad.

Among other U.S. nationals detained in Russia are reporters Evan Gershkovich and Alsu Kurmasheva, as well as former U.S. marine Paul Whelan.

On Wednesday, a court in Russia's Far East sentenced a U.S. army soldier to three years and nine months in prison for threatening to kill his girlfriend and theft.

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