The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

U.S.-Russian Woman Pleads Guilty to Treason, Lawyer Says

August 07, 2024



Ksenia Karelina. **AP / TASS**

A dual U.S.-Russian citizen standing trial for having donated money to a Ukrainian charity pleaded guilty to treason charges, her lawyer told state media on Wednesday.

Ksenia Karelina was arrested in January while visiting her family in the Ural Mountains city of Yekaterinburg. She faces up to 20 years in prison if found guilty of treason.

"She admits her guilt, yes," her lawyer Mikhail Mushailov was quoted as saying by the RIA Novosti news agency following a closed hearing.

Mushailov said he expects the Sverdlovsk Regional Court to deliver a verdict at its next hearing on Thursday. However, local media outlets, citing the court, reported that the verdict would be announced at a later date.

Related article: This Prisoner Swap Should Only Be the Beginning of Russia's Future

Treason cases are heard behind closed doors in Russia as the authorities say they deal with sensitive information. U.S. Consul General Stuart Wilson was turned away from Wednesday's hearing, according to RIA Novosti.

Independent broadcaster Sotavision reported that Karelina's case is being handled by the same judge who sentenced U.S. journalist Evan Gershkovich to prison for espionage last month before his release in a prisoner swap.

Karelina, a 33-year-old ballerina and spa employee in Los Angeles, is accused of donating around $50 to the New York-based charity Razom shortly after Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022.

Razom, which provides humanitarian aid and disaster relief to Ukrainians affected by the war, has called on U.S. authorities to demand Karelina's release from Russia.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/08/07/us-russian-woman-pleads-guilty-to-treason-lawyer-says-a85958