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Kremlin Denies Interview Request From Freed WSJ Reporter Gershkovich

By AFP

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The Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich. **U.S. Air Force**

The Kremlin said Monday that it would not grant an interview with President Vladimir Putin to Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich, who was released by Russia this summer in a prisoner swap.

Gershkovich made a handwritten request to interview Putin while filling out a form requesting a presidential pardon ahead of the prisoner exchange, the Journal reported.

"So far we are not interested in such an interview. For there to be an interview with foreign media and some specific one, we need to have an occasion," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

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> The @WSJ's piece about the secret negotiations to free Evan Gershkovich ends with an incredible anecdote: pic.twitter.com/wM7aWu44tu
>
> — David Gura (@davidgura) August 1, 2024

"So far we don't see such an occasion," he said.

Gershkovich was one of 16 people freed by Russia in August's landmark prisoner swap with the West.

The 32-year-old spent more than 16 months in Russian detention on espionage charges that he, his employer and the White House denounced as false.

The Kremlin has repeatedly rebuffed calls for a Western journalist to question Putin, granting only one such interview, to the controversial U.S. talk show host Tucker Carlson in February.

Gershkovich, a respected Moscow correspondent, was arrested on a reporting trip in the Urals city of Yekaterinburg in March 2023.

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