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Russia Sentences Freed Ex-U.S. Marine to 14.5 Years in Absentia on Mercenary Charges

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Trevor Reed attends an appeal hearing at the Moscow City Court in 2021. **Moscow City Court / TASS**

A Russian court has sentenced ex-U.S. Marine Trevor Reed to 14 and a half years in absentia on charges of fighting against Russia in Ukraine as a mercenary, authorities said Wednesday.

Reed was previously in 2020 sentenced to nine years in Russian prison on charges of assaulting a police officer while drunk at a Moscow party.

In April 2022, two months after Russia invaded Ukraine, he was exchanged for Russian pilot Konstantin Yaroshenko, who was serving a 20-year prison sentence in the United States on drug smuggling charges.

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Russia's Investigative Committee, which probes major crimes, announced it collected

evidence that Reed had traveled to Ukraine and joined the Ukrainian armed forces on July 25, 2023, “for selfish reasons.”

The date coincides with the U.S. State Department’s statement saying Reed was injured while fighting in Ukraine and transported to Germany for medical care.

An unidentified Russian court found Reed guilty of mercenary activities and handed him a prison sentence of 14 years and six months in absentia, according to the Investigative Committee.

The court issued an international arrest warrant for Reed, the investigative body said.

Russia accuses the U.S. of direct involvement in its war with Ukraine, while Washington warns its citizens to avoid traveling to Ukraine and joining its military.

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