

Top Court Upholds Verdict in U.S. Spy Scandal

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The Supreme Court upheld on Tuesday the verdict for a former intelligence colonel sentenced in absentia on charges of betraying U.S.-based Russian sleeper agents last year, [RIA-Novosti reported](#).

Alexander Poteyev was given 25 years in prison on treason and desertion charges by a Moscow district military court in June. He was also stripped of his rank and his state awards.

Poteyev is accused of identifying 10 agents of the Foreign Intelligence Service to the Americans. The agents pleaded guilty and were returned to Russia last summer in a spy swap. One of them, Anna Chapman, has become a minor celebrity and television show host.

Lawyers for Poteyev, who investigators say fled to the United States before the agents were exposed, leaving his wife in Russia, contested the June ruling, admitting that “proof of his guilt was undeniable” but asking for a reduced sentence and his medals, [RIA-Novosti reported](#).

Tuesday's ruling means that the verdict will now come into force, though Poteyev's representatives said they are considering another appeal.

Russian media reported last week that Vicky Pelaez, who with her husband was arrested in the spy case, will work in Moscow as a journalist. The Peruvian native worked as a journalist in the United States. Her husband, Mikhail Vlasenkov, also known as Juan Lazaro, is believed to have been one of the most experienced spies in the busted network.

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