

China Sentences Russian to Death

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The  **Moscow Times**

A Russian drug smuggler sentenced to death in China would not appeal her verdict, believing it a "waste of time" because such appeals are rarely granted, Itar-Tass [said](#) Tuesday, citing the Russian consulate in Guangzhou.

But 38-year-old Marina Lopatina still has a chance to escape the shooting squad or a lethal injection after her two-year probation, the countdown for which starts in January, the unnamed spokesman said.

Though more than 1,000 people are executed in China every year, the death sentence is often replaced with a jail term for well-behaved convicts.

Lopatina's sentence may be reduced to between 15 years and life in prison after her probation ends in 2014. Russia could then request her to be handed over to serve the sentence in a domestic prison, the consulate official said.

The 38-year-old Khabarovsk resident was caught in May on arrival from Thailand to China with 2 kilograms of heroin. She is one of seven Russians convicted of drug smuggling in China. None were executed.

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