

# Lawyer of Ex-U.S. Marine Jailed in Russia Says Cannot Confirm His Whereabouts

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Paul Whelan. **Sofia Sandurskaya / AP / TASS**

The lawyer of former U.S. Marine Paul Whelan said she was unable to confirm the whereabouts of her client after receiving multiple requests from journalists amid growing speculation that Russia is preparing a prisoner exchange with the West.

“I had asked the prison’s administration, but they’re not responding,” lawyer Olga Karlova was [quoted](#) as saying by the state-run Interfax news agency.

Whelan, 54, was working in security for a U.S. vehicle parts company when he was arrested in Moscow in 2018. He is serving a 16-year sentence for spying, a charge the U.S. government says is without merit.

Whelan, who also holds British, Irish and Canadian passports, [said](#) last year that he feels “abandoned” by Washington after being left out of recent prisoner swaps.

**Related article:** [More Russian Political Prisoners Moved, Fueling Speculation of Imminent Swap](#)

Several other political prisoners jailed in Russia have been reportedly moved to unknown locations in recent days, fueling speculation that Moscow is preparing a large-scale exchange with Western governments.

Those transfers also come less than two weeks after Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich and Russian-American journalist Alsu Kurmasheva were sentenced to jail in Russia.

Observers believe Washington and Moscow may soon reach a deal on exchanging both journalists with Russian nationals jailed in the West.

*AFP contributed reporting.*

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