

US Officials Visited American Arrested in Moscow for Espionage

Boris Djuric January 03, 2019



Paul Whelan was arrested by Russian FSB on charges that came three days later.

After being arrested on Friday, The Russian Federal Security Service has launched a criminal investigation against Paul Whelan.

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2019) -- US envoy to Russia Jon Huntsman met today with Paul Whelan, an American arrested in Moscow on charges of spying, a spokesman for the State Department said.

Ambassador Huntsman expressed his support to Whelan and offered him the help of the embassy, [Reuters reports](#).

Referring to a spokesman for the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Moscow's RIA News earlier today reported that Russia allowed consular access to American citizen Paul Whelan, who is suspected of espionage.

The Russian Federal Security Service has launched a criminal investigation against Whelan, a former marine now a security expert, after he was arrested on Friday, said Reuters.

Earlier, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the United States hope to soon have access to an American who is detained in Russia on charges of espionage and will seek his urgent release if authorities find he was unlawfully arrested.

"We've made clear to the Russians our expectation that we will learn more about the charges, come to understand what it is he's been accused of, and if the detention is not appropriate, we will demand his immediate return," said Pompeo while on a trip to Brazil, where he acted as an American representative for the inauguration of President Jair Bolsonaro.

Former U.S. Marine discharged due to bad conduct in 2008, Paul Whelan (48) had recent employment as a director of global security at BorgWarner, an international multi-billion auto parts manufacturer headquartered in Michigan. He was arrested in Moscow on Friday, but the arrest was officially issued a full three days later by the Russian Federal Security Service.

The issue says Whelan was arrested allegedly during "during a spy operation", but the agency didn't disclose any detail regarding the accusations.

Whelan's family denied the allegations of spying. His brother says that he traveled to Moscow to attend the wedding of a fellow marine who married a local.

Whelan's arrest came shortly after Maria Butina, a Russian gun rights activist, pleaded guilty to conspiring to infiltrate conservative U.S. circles, [The Washington Post reports](#), adding that the timing has sparked suspicions that Russia may have detained Whelan to negotiate swap.

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