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'Hunt for our people goes on': Moscow warns there's no 'safe place' after US nabs Russian national

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The Russian Foreign Ministry has issued a warning about what it describes as a “hunt on our citizens,” urging travelers to be cautious. The message follows the detention of a Russian citizen by the FBI in Saipan.

Russians should take every precaution when traveling abroad and ensure there's nothing in their records that might interest the US, the Foreign Ministry warned after the 39-year-old citizen was arrested.

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*"US law enforcement officials are continuing their hunt on Russian citizens,"* Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov told TASS on Saturday. The statement was issued just after Dmitry Makarenko was [detained](#) by FBI in the Pacific island of Saipan.

The diplomat said any Russian who has reason to believe that he or she could be of interest to the Americans *"should assess the consequences of traveling abroad"* because *"there is, in fact, no safe place, no guarantee [that they will not be arrested]."*

The indictment put forward against Makarenko alleges that he and his associate Vladimir Nevidomy, a resident of Florida, tried to transfer military-grade equipment, such as night-vision rifle scopes and ammunition primers, to Russia between April and November 2013.

Nevidomy pleaded guilty to the charges last June and is now serving a 26-month sentence. Makarenko first appeared before court on Monday and is facing 45 years behind bars if found guilty.

Meanwhile, a Foreign Ministry statement said it learned of Makarenko's arrest from his relatives. *"US authorities – breaching the bilateral Consular Convention – did not inform us in due time about our citizen being detained,"* it [said](#).

Makarenko's detention is the latest in a string of arrests by US authorities of Russian citizens. Last December, Mira Terada was detained by Finnish police on an Interpol warrant initiated by the United States, according to the Russian Embassy in Finland. She was accused of engaging in drug trafficking and money-laundering activities during her brief stay in the US between 2013 and 2016.

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In July of the same year, gun-rights advocate Maria Butina was arrested for failure to register as a foreign agent while living in the US, and now faces charges that could land her in prison for five years.

Makarenko's detention coincided with that of Paul Whelan, who was brought into custody in Moscow in late December. The FSB, Russia's security service, maintains that the American was collecting intelligence through social media platforms. His relatives have denied the allegation, saying the ex-marine (who was given a bad-conduct discharge in 2008 over accusations of theft) was in Russia for a wedding.

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Notably, as the story unfolded, it emerged that apart from holding US and UK citizenships, Whelan also had Canadian and Irish passports.

Russian diplomats say they are trying to get consular access to a detention site in Florida, where Makarenko is being kept. Meanwhile, Konstantin Kosachev, head of the Russian Senate's Foreign Affairs Committee, said Russia will defend its citizen whose arrest was in violation of international law.

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