# American Soldier Sentenced to Three Years and Nine Months in Russian Penal Colony



A Russian court in Vladivostok has sentenced American soldier Gordon Black, 34, to three years and nine months in a penal colony for charges of stealing and threatening murder. Black was arrested on May 2, 2024, following accusations from his girlfriend, Alexandra Vashchuk, who claimed he assaulted her and took 10,000 rubles (£90). The court also ordered Black to pay 10,000 rubles in damages.

Black, stationed at Camp Humphreys in South Korea, traveled to Russia without military authorization and intends to appeal the ruling. His case occurs amid strained US-Russian relations and adds to the list of Americans currently detained in Russia, including Paul Whelan and Evan Gershkovich.

The verdict was delivered in the Pervomaisky District Court, where prosecutors had sought a longer sentence of four years and eight months. Black's sentence further complicates diplomatic relations given the ongoing tensions linked to the conflict in Ukraine.