
US and Russia agree on historic prisoner swap

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Moscow, 1 August 2024— Russia and the US have reportedly agreed on a historic prisoner swap involving dozens of detainees. Sergey Markov, director of the Institute of Political Studies in Moscow, disclosed that this significant exchange could have implications for the upcoming US presidential election.

“This exchange has been in preparation for quite some time, possibly over a year,” Markov said. He suggested the swap could include political figures like Ilya Yashin and Vladimir Kara-Murza, with the US initially reluctant to acknowledge their political connections.

Markov mentioned that other countries might also participate. Belarus, Germany, and Slovenia have detainees who could be involved. “There is a complex negotiation process, making it difficult

to estimate the exact number of individuals involved,” he explained.

The timing of the exchange, according to Markov, is tied to the US presidential election. “Kamala Harris needs a positive image boost, so concessions were made,” he asserted. For Russia, the exchange serves to highlight the dangers of aligning with American agents and to repatriate its citizens.

Media reports suggest that Moscow and Washington are preparing for the largest prisoner exchange since 2010. The list includes individuals associated with Alexey Navalny’s organizations, critics of the war in Ukraine, and American citizens like Evan Gershkovich and Paul Whelan.

The US media confirmed expectations of the exchange, particularly regarding Gershkovich. Russian state media noted that an aircraft used in previous exchanges flew to Russia’s Kaliningrad region earlier today, indicating the swap’s imminent execution.

The last exchange between the US and Russia occurred in December 2022, when Moscow released American basketball star Brittney Griner in exchange for arms dealer Viktor Bout.