

Name: Alert ID: TMML2024036080721 Finland's Supreme Court has denied convicted former drug cop Jari Aarnio leave to appeal a 10-year prison sentence after he was found guilty of a welter of offences relating to drug trafficking and official misconduct. In June, the Helsinki Appeal Court upheld a lower court verdict that found the once-celebrated drug buster guilty of smuggling hashish into Finland in barrels – resulting in the "barrel case" moniker. Aarnio was sentenced to 10 years in prison on five counts of aggravated drug offences, aggravated evidence tampering, witness intimidation and several counts of official misconduct. The Supreme Court's refusal to grant Aarnio leave to challenge the appellate court's ruling means that his prison sentence will remain in force. Altogether, he will serve a 13-year sentence: 10 years for the drug and official misconduct offences and three years in a separate case in which he used his position as a police squad chief to purchase equipment from a company in which he was involved -- the so-called Trevoc case. However the Supreme Court will continue to hear appeals regarding other aspects of the ex-cop's drug smuggling case. One of the appeals relates to a female defendant convicted on a series of drug offences, as well as an appeal related to the sentencing and dismissal of one of Aarnio's subordinates. The court will provide a limited hearing of these challenges. In the latter case, the district court had ordered the dismissal of Aarnio's subordinate. The appeal court reversed that order, but the prosecutor appealed the higher court's decision. The individual later resigned from the Helsinki police department. Apart from Aarnio, his subordinate and the female defendant, all of whom filed appeals, the Aarnio case features other central figures. One of them is the so-called "Malmi woman" who was sentenced to three years in prison for aggravated drug offences. The other was former gang leader Keijo Vilhunen. In both of those cases, the court's sentence remained in force. New suspicions: Senior police officer accused of helping Aarnio On Wednesday a new suspect emerged in the web of crime surrounding Jari Aarnio. The Helsinki prosecutor's office said that it had laid charges against a senior Helsinki police officer suspected of official misconduct. According to the charge sheet, the detective chief inspector in question had, at Aarnio's request, checked to see whether or not police were in the process of obtaining information about Aarnio. The suspected offences are believed to have occurred between November and December 2016. The suspect has denied the charges and the case will be heard later on in the Helsinki district court. Two other suspects were also under investigation for the same reason. Aarnio and another police officer are believed to have pressed the suspect to fulfill Aarnio's requests. However no charges were laid against Aarnio over these suspicions, as they would not have affected his other sentences. He had already been convicted and had lost his position as head of the Helsinki drug squad. In the case of the other suspect believed to have acted in concert with Aarnio, investigators did not find sufficient evidence of wrongdoing. During the preliminary investigation he admitted to asking his colleague "to back Aarnio up mainly to calm him down", but he received a negative response.