

Ukrainian Pilot Refuses to Undergo Psychiatric Exam for Trial

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Ukrainian pilot Nadezhda Savchenko, in Russian custody on charges of being an accessory to the killing of two Russian journalists in eastern Ukraine, has refused to undergo a psychiatric evaluation.

"Savchenko has refused in writing to speak with doctors during the examination. She does not intend to help, since she considers her detention unlawful," Mark Feigin, Savchenko's lawyer, was cited by the Russia-24 news channel as saying Thursday.

On Wednesday, Savchenko was ordered by a court in Voronezh, where she will stand trial, to spend a month at a psychiatric facility in Moscow to undergo testing for her case.

She is charged with aiding in the killing of two Russian reporters covering the conflict in eastern Ukraine by serving as the forward air controller in the artillery shelling that killed them.

Savchenko denies involvement and says her training does not permit her to have done what

she is accused of.

Savchenko's refusal to cooperate with doctors for the next phase of the case will not hinder the court-ordered examination, Feigin said in comments carried by *Rossia-24*.

"The examination will happen either way, since it has been ordered by investigators. During the examination, doctors are supposed to talk to her, conduct some tests. Formally, she has the right not to talk to them," Feigin was cited as saying.

The circumstances of Savchenko's detention remain unclear.

Savchenko has said she was ambushed by rebels in eastern Ukraine, then abducted and illegally taken to Russia, handcuffed and with a sack over her head. Russian authorities said she was detained after crossing the border into Russia on her own, posing as a refugee.

She has been in custody since mid-June.

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