

Russian Court Rejects Appeal of Jailed Former Economy Minister Ulyukayev

By [Reuters](#)

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Alexei Ulyukayev **Moskva News Agency**

A Moscow court on Thursday rejected an appeal by former Russian economy minister Alexei Ulyukayev against his conviction for bribery and left his eight-year jail sentence unchanged.

Ulyukayev was found guilty in December of soliciting a \$2 million bribe from Rosneft CEO Igor Sechin in return for approving the sale of state-controlled oil company Bashneft to Rosneft, something he initially opposed.

Ulyukayev, who denied wrongdoing, said he had been deliberately framed.

"I am not guilty and I did not commit the crime I am accused of," Ulyukayev said in his final words to the court. "There has been no lack of evidence of my innocence."

The appeal was rejected after Sechin, who had declined to attend the December trial despite being summoned four times, testified as a witness at a closed session of the hearing on

Thursday.

Related article: [Rosneft's Sechin Graces Ex-Minister's Bribery Appeal After Skipping Earlier Summons](#)

At the request of prosecutors, reporters were asked to leave the courtroom for Sechin, a close ally of President Vladimir Putin, to give evidence.

Sechin later told Rossia 24 state television that he had testified that Ulyukayev had asked him for a bribe.

"I am the main witness and this was a matter of honour for me," Sechin said. "I felt my responsibility for the fight against corruption receiving an additional result."

Prosecutors said they sought a closed session to hear Sechin because he would be asked commercially sensitive matters in which confidential information could be divulged.

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