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Ukraine Opens First War Crimes Trial Against Russian Soldier

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Vadym Shyshimarin. **@MelissaBellCNN**

Ukraine opened its first war crimes trial in connection with Russia's invasion Friday, accusing a young Russian soldier of shooting an elderly Ukrainian civilian in the early days of the offensive.

Sgt. Vadim Shishimarin, 21, stands accused of killing an unarmed 62-year-old man riding a bicycle and talking on the phone in the Sumy region village of Chupakhivka on Feb. 28.

The Ukrainian prosecutor general's office said Shishimarin, a commander of the Kantemirovskaya tank division's unit 32010, had been ordered to kill the civilian so the man would not report on his retreating group's presence.

Shishimarin, who has admitted to have shot the civilian with an AK-74 rifle through the window of a stolen car, faces up to life in prison on charges of violating the rules and conduct of war.

The Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), which carried out the investigation into the watershed case, said Shishimarin's video statement was "one of the first confessions of the enemy invaders."

CNN correspondent Melissa Bell shared video from a packed Kyiv courtroom showing court bailiffs placing Shishimarin inside the glass holding cage for defendants.

Embed:

> The first war crimes trial opens in #kyiv. A Russian soldier, 21 year old Vadym Shyshimarin, is accused of killing an unarmed 62-year-old civilian on February 28, firing an automatic rifle from a car window in #sumy region of #ukraine pic.twitter.com/DQO7Vn2K0o
>
> — Melissa Bell (@MelissaBellCNN) May 13, 2022

Kyiv's Solomyanskiy District Court scheduled the first hearing that will be open to the public on May 18, Ukraine's Graty news outlet reported.

Answering the judge's questions on Friday, Shishimarin said he is a native of Siberia's Irkutsk region and served with his tank division outside Moscow.

The Kremlin, which refers to the invasion as a "special military operation" instead of a war, denies killing civilians in Ukraine and says it knows nothing about Shishimarin's case.

Ukraine's general prosecutor has registered more than 11,000 crimes committed by Russian forces during the nearly three-month invasion.

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