

Russian Soldier Receives Life Sentence in Ukraine Invasion's First War Crimes Trial

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Russian sergeant Vadim Shishimarin in court. **Yasuyoshi Chiba / AFP**

The first Russian soldier to be tried for war crimes in Ukraine has been found guilty and sentenced to life in prison, the Mediazona news website [reported](#) Monday.

Vadim Shishimarin, 21, pleaded guilty to fatally shooting 62-year-old civilian Oleksandr Shelipov in northeastern Ukraine's Sumy region on Feb. 28. Prosecutors [requested](#) a life sentence for the army sergeant, a native of Siberia's Irkutsk region.

Kyiv's Solomyanskiy District Court handed down the life sentence to Shishimarin on charges of violating the rules and conduct of war following a 10-day trial.

Shishimarin's lawyer Viktor Ovsyannikov said the defense intends to appeal the verdict.

"This is the most severe sentence and any level-headed person would challenge it," Ovsyannikov said following the court session, adding: "I will ask for the cancellation of the

court's verdict."

Related article: [War Crimes Verdict Looms as Russian Offensive Intensifies](#)

The Kremlin said Monday it was unable to help Shishimarin, days after saying that it hadn't been informed of his case. Shishimarin's lawyer said he has had no contact with Russian officials.

"We have no way to protect his interests on the ground," President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov said at a daily press meeting Monday, vowing to pursue "other channels."

Kyiv says it has gathered evidence of over 12,000 alleged war crimes involving more than 600 suspects since Putin launched the invasion on Feb. 24.

International institutions are conducting their own investigations into alleged abuses in Ukraine.

Russia denies targeting civilians in its nearly three-month military campaign in Ukraine.

Separately on Monday, pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine announced plans to hold an "international" tribunal for the Ukrainian defenders of Mariupol's Azovstal steel plant who surrendered last week. Kyiv has said it intends to return its soldiers in a prisoner swap with Moscow.

AFP contributed reporting.

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