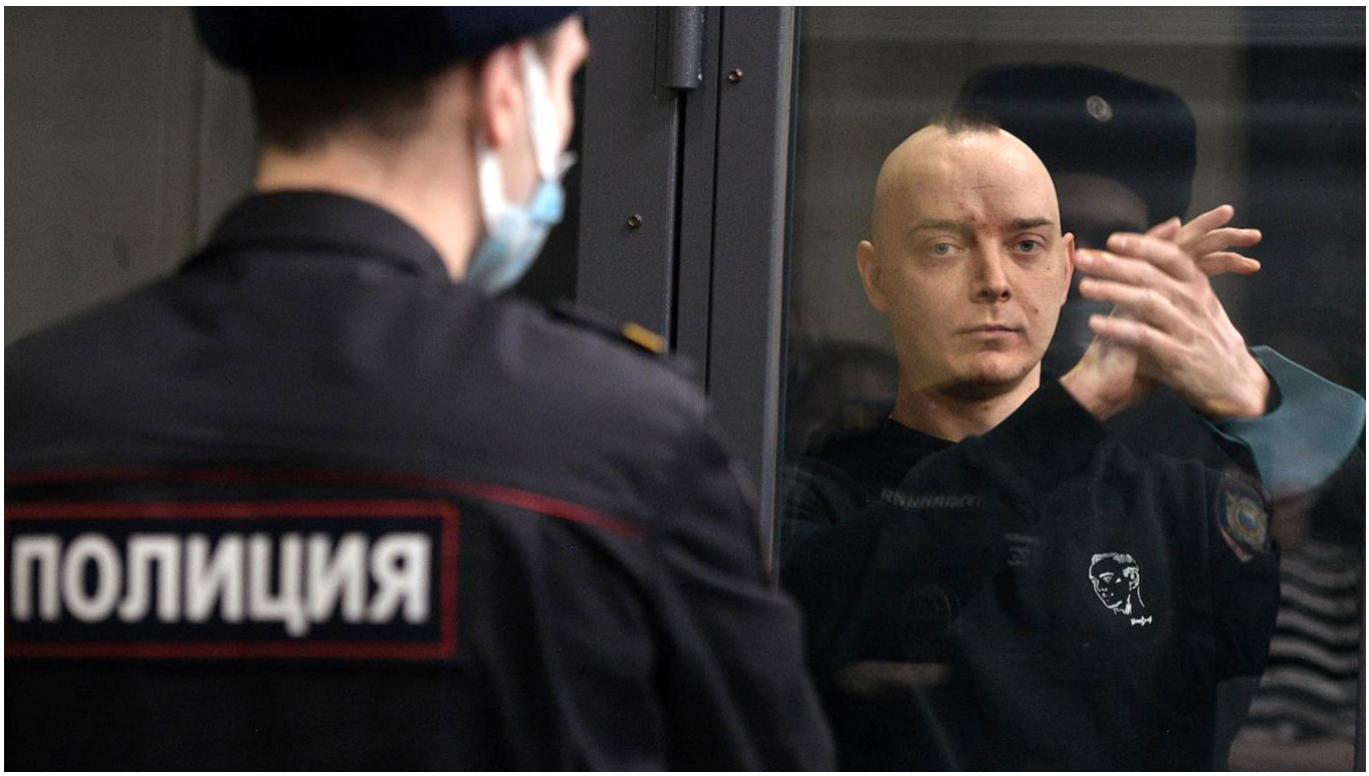
The Moscow Times
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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Moscow Court Upholds 22-Year Jail Sentence for Defense Journalist

December 07, 2022



Ivan Safronov. **Gleb Schelkunov / Kommersant**

A Moscow court on Wednesday rejected an appeal by the jailed Russian journalist Ivan Safronov against his 22-year jail sentence for treason earlier this year.

The decision to uphold Safronov's sentence, which was announced at a closed-doors hearing, means that the journalist will soon be transferred from the detention facility where he is currently being held to a penal colony.

Safronov, a defense journalist who worked for several top Russian newspapers before going on to work for Russian space agency Roscosmos, was convicted of gathering classified information about the Russian military and passing it to spies working for the Czech intelligence services in September.

Safronov has always denied the allegations against him, saying that his prosecution was legal retribution for his work as a journalist.

Safronov's lawyers said they would appeal the verdict as they believe it constituted a direct violation of the Russian criminal code as well as prior rulings of Russia's Constitutional and Supreme Courts.

Earlier in November, Nobel Peace Prize-winning Russian rights organization Memorial listed Safronov as a political prisoner.

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