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Kremlin Critic Roizman Fined Over Ukraine Comments

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Russian opposition figure and former Yekaterinburg Mayor Yevgeny Roizman in court. **Anna Yurieva / AFP**

Russian opposition figure Yevgeny Roizman has been fined for his comments about the Ukraine conflict, the state-run RIA Novosti news agency reported Friday.

Roizman, 60, the former mayor of Russia's fourth-largest city Yekaterinburg, is among a dwindling number of prominent opposition figures who are not in jail or exile.

A court in Yekaterinburg imposed a fine of 260,000 rubles ($3,259) over charges of discrediting the Russian military in a video he posted on YouTube in July 2022 in which he criticized Moscow's offensive in Ukraine.

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The 60-year-old former mayor had pleaded not guilty at the trial that began in early April and

which could have seen him jailed for up to five years.

“Many thanks to everyone who came to support me,” Roizman said outside of the court building to supporters who applauded him.

Since the start of the Kremlin’s invasion of Ukraine, Moscow has increased its efforts to silence dissent over the fighting.

The prosecutor justified the lenient sentence recommendation by the "low gravity" of the offense and "mitigating circumstances" including the fact that Roizman has young children and is involved in charitable activities.

In 2013, Roizman became Russia's highest-profile opposition mayor, a position he held in the Urals city of Yekaterinburg for five years.

He is a popular figure in the city and also a friend of jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny.

AFP contributed reporting.

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