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Russia Sentences Leading Cybersecurity Entrepreneur to 14 Years for Treason

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Ilya Sachkov, former CEO of IS Group. **Andrei Lyubimov / RBC / TASS**

A Russian court has sentenced Ilya Sachkov, the founder of one of Russia's top cybersecurity firms, to 14 years in prison for treason, the independent news website Mediazona reported Wednesday.

Sachkov, 37, co-founded the Group-IB cybersecurity firm in 2003. The firm specializes in the detection and prevention of cyberattacks and works with Interpol and several other global institutions.

He claimed he was innocent after his September 2021 arrest for treason.

The Moscow City Court found Sachkov guilty and handed him a 14-year sentence in a maximum-security penal colony.

Sachkov was smiling as he appeared in court on Wednesday, wearing jeans and a black T-shirt, an AFP reporter said.

His mother and partner as well as several supporters were also present for the verdict.

State prosecutors had requested an 18-year prison sentence for Sachkov.

Treason cases are held behind closed doors in Russia.

Russian news agencies reported that Sachkov is accused of handing classified information to foreign intelligence and the charges were not connected to the work of Group-IB.

He pleaded guilty to the charges.

Group-IB, now headquartered in Singapore, said following the verdict that it had "full confidence in Ilya's innocence."

"While he remains wrongfully imprisoned, we will continue to stand up against injustice and operate our business with the same mission in mind — to fight against cybercrime," the company said in a statement.

AFP contributed reporting.

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