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Russian Anti-War Store Owner Jailed 1.5 Years

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Dmitry Skurikhin seen outside his store. **Dmitry Skurikhin / Facebook**

A Russian grocery store owner who has openly opposed the war in Ukraine was sentenced to one-and-a-half years in prison on Thursday, independent media reported.

Dmitry Skurikhin, 48, gained notoriety for featuring pro-Ukrainian slogans and posters on the facade of his store outside of St. Petersburg following Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014.

Skurikhin has been repeatedly fined and the shop's walls vandalized over his storefront activism. In the latest criminal case against him, the father of five is accused of repeatedly discrediting the Russian military under wartime censorship laws.

St. Petersburg's Lomonosovsky District Court on Thursday found Skurikhin guilty and ordered him to serve 1.5 years in prison, according to the independent Sotavision media outlet.

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Prosecutors had requested a prison sentence of two-and-a-half years for Skurikhin, who denied the charges.

Skurikhin's time in pre-trial detention will count toward his sentence, according to another independent outlet SOTA, which adds that he is expected to be released in just over a year.

The business owner turned activist was arrested on Feb. 25 after staging a one-man picket outside his store to mark the one-year anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which took place the previous day.

Skurikhin was previously fined in May 2022 for "discrediting" the Russian Armed Forces.

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