

Swedish Prosecutors Seek Prison Sentence for Russian-Swede Accused of Spying

By [AFP](#)

September 28, 2023



Sergei Skvortsov. **Yelena Kulkova / OK.ru**

Swedish prosecutors on Thursday urged a prison sentence of up to five years for a Russian-Swedish citizen accused of passing Western technology to Russia's military.

Sergei Skvortsov, who was arrested in a dawn raid on his suburban Stockholm home in November 2022, has lived in Sweden since the 1990s, running import-export companies.

The 60-year-old is charged with two counts of "unlawful intelligence activities" against the United States and Sweden for over a decade until his arrest.

Prosecutors have argued that Skvortsov was part of a vast Russian organization built to acquire technology off-limits to Moscow because of international sanctions.

According to experts quoted in Swedish media, the technology was mainly electronic devices that can be used, among other things, in nuclear weapons research.

Much of the three-week trial has been held behind closed doors on national security grounds.

"He is a procurement agent for the Russian military complex and its intelligence unit GRU," prosecutor Henrik Olin told the Stockholm district court in his final arguments.

Related article: [Russian-Swede Accused of Illicit Western Technology Transfers to Moscow](#)

"Russia has a need for electronic technology. There is a Russian procurement system, and this system is run by the intelligence services... Skvortsov and his two companies are a part of this system," Olin said.

Skvortsov, clad in a dark suit for Thursday's court appearance, has maintained he is innocent.

He says he is a legitimate businessman who sought the proper Swedish authorizations for his exports.

But Olin said that the authorizations were designed to "provide a veil of legitimacy" and that Skvortsov used false names of business partners, omitted information about the types of products he exported and provided false information about their end users.

Links to U.S. case

Olin asked the court to hand down a sentence of between four-and-a-half and five years.

Sweden's charge of "unlawful intelligence activities" is a notch lower than espionage.

Skvortsov's lawyer Ulrika Borg called for her client's acquittal, arguing that the prosecution had failed to provide evidence that Skvortsov was a part of Russia's procurement system.

"He has testified that he is a businessman with a lot of contacts in many areas, ranging from vegetables to Roscosmos," she said, referring to Russia's space agency.

"Among all of these, the prosecution has chosen to pick out people that it claims are part of or connected to Russian intelligence, just because they may have lived on the same street," Borg said.

Olin previously told AFP the electronic devices were mainly from the United States.

He said that U.S. authorities had prosecuted people in New York in 2016 for providing Russia's "military complex" with electronic devices, and that U.S. authorities believe Skvortsov took over that role from those individuals.

A US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) official testified behind closed doors during the Stockholm trial, alongside officials from the Swedish intelligence services.

Skvortsov and his wife were arrested in a raid on their home in the Stockholm suburb of

Nacka, when two Black Hawk helicopters and an elite commando force swooped down on their house.

His wife was later released and allegations against her dismissed.

The verdict is to be announced on Oct. 26, the court said.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/09/28/swedish-prosecutors-seek-prison-sentence-for-russian-swede-accused-of-spying-a82595>