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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russia Sentences Meta Spokesman to Jail in Absentia for 'Terrorism'

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Andy Stone. **Andy Stone / LinkedIn**

A Russian court has sentenced Meta spokesman Andy Stone to six years in prison in absentia on "terrorism" charges linked to the company's wartime content moderation policy, the independent Mediazona news website reported Monday.

Stone was charged with the "promotion," "public calls for" and "justification" of terrorism after his March 2022 announcement that the Facebook and Instagram parent company would temporarily lift its ban on violent speech for comments against the "Russian invaders" of Ukraine.

Moscow's Second Western Military Garrison Court on Monday found Stone guilty of the "justification of terrorism" and handed him a six-year sentence in a high-security prison in absentia, according to Mediazona.

Embed:

> Our statement on what's happening: pic.twitter.com/UQqb3vQeep
>
> — Andy Stone (@andymstone) March 10, 2022

Prosecutors had requested a seven-year prison sentence for Stone.

The prosecution dropped the charges of promotion and public calls for terrorism against Stone over "confusion in the wording of the indictment," according to Mediazona.

Following Stone's statement in March 2022, Meta President for Global Affairs Nick Clegg said the policy only applied to users inside Ukraine.

Neither Meta nor Stone have commented on Russia's criminal charges.

Russia blocked Facebook and Instagram and banned Meta as an "extremist" organization after invading Ukraine in February 2022.

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg has been on Russia's entry ban list since April 2022.

Russia has cracked down on independent media and social media after outlawing criticism of what the Kremlin calls its "special military operation" in Ukraine.

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