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Moscow Confirms It Captured British Man Fighting for Ukraine in Kursk Region

By AFP

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James Scott Rhys Anderson. **Video grab**

Russian authorities confirmed Tuesday that a British man had been captured while fighting alongside Ukrainian forces during Kyiv's offensive in the southwestern Kursk region.

A court in Kursk announced Monday that it remanded James Scott Rhys Anderson in custody, accusing him of participating in "armed hostilities on the territory of the Kursk region."

This marks the first official confirmation of Anderson's detention following the circulation of a video on pro-Kremlin Telegram channels over the weekend.

That video showed a man with his hands apparently tied, identifying himself as James Anderson. The man claimed he had joined Ukraine's armed forces after being dismissed from the British army in 2023.

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U.K. Foreign Secretary David Lammy said Monday that London had been "updated about that development" and pledged to "offer this UK national all the support we can."

The Leninsky District Court in Kursk accused Anderson of "a set of particularly serious offenses that pose a danger to society," including alleged membership in Ukraine's armed forces, illegal border crossing and participation in hostilities.

The court did not disclose the specific charges against Anderson or the length of his detention.

Russia classifies foreign fighters in Ukraine as "mercenaries," allowing prosecution under its criminal code instead of granting them prisoner-of-war protections under the Geneva Conventions.

In 2022, a Russian-controlled court in eastern Ukraine sentenced two British fighters to death for aiding Ukraine, though they were later freed in a prisoner exchange.

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