

Left-Wing Activist Sergei Udaltsov Pleads Not Guilty During Trial for 'Justifying Terrorism'

By [AFP](#)

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Sergei Udaltsov. **AP / TASS**

Russian left-wing activist Sergei Udaltsov went on trial Monday on charges of “justifying terrorism” online, a charge that carries a sentence of up to seven years in prison.

“The trial has begun. The indictment has been announced. Sergei pleaded not guilty,” state news agency RIA Novosti quoted Udaltsov’s lawyer, Dmitry Agranovsky, as saying.

The exact allegations remain classified, but Udaltsov previously said he is accused of expressing support online for Marxist activists charged with forming a “terrorist group” in the city of Ufa.

Udaltsov, 48, is being tried at Moscow’s Second Western District Military Court. He has been held in pre-trial detention since January 2024.

Related article: [Russia Adds Leftist Activist Udaltsov to 'Extremists and Terrorists' List](#)

A prominent opposition figure during the 2011–2012 anti-Kremlin protests, Udaltsov was jailed in 2014 for organizing what authorities called “mass riots” and served a three-year sentence.

Despite his history as a Putin critic, Udaltsov has publicly backed Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, saying he opposes Putin from a “patriotic” standpoint.

A vocal admirer of Soviet dictator Josef Stalin, Udaltsov has long called for the restoration of the Soviet Union.

In a 2012 interview with independent broadcaster TV Rain, he said that “Stalin wasn’t a criminal” and has been repeatedly arrested and fined for staging memorial events on Stalin’s birthday.

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