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Moscow Animal Rights Activist Sentenced to 15 Years on Treason Charges

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Yevgeniya Konforkina. **SOTAvision**

A Moscow military court has sentenced animal rights activist Yevgenia Konforkina to 15 years in prison on treason and terrorism-related charges after she was accused of filming a helicopter manufacturing facility, the exiled news outlet Mediazona reported Thursday.

Prosecutors said Konforkina filmed the perimeter of the Mil and Kamov National Helicopter Engineering Center in the Moscow region in September 2023 and sent the footage to the Freedom of Russia Legion, a paramilitary group of anti-Kremlin Russians fighting on the side of Ukraine.

Konforkina, 43, told the court she was unknowingly drawn into contact with the group by a Ukrainian animal rights activist who had asked for help rescuing horses.

“I asked how I could help, she sent me two links and I clicked on the first one,” Konforkina

said, adding that she did not know about the Freedom of Russia Legion at the time.

According to prosecutors, the link took Konforkina to a volunteer form that she filled out and then emailed to the paramilitary group, after which she was alleged to have been assigned the task of filming the helicopter production facility.

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A judge from the Second Western District Military Court found Konforkina guilty of state treason and participation in a terrorist organization and sentenced her to 15 years in a penal colony.

Prosecutors had sought an 18-year sentence.

Konforkina's lawyer had argued in court that the terrorism charge should be dropped because she stopped communicating with the Freedom of Russia Legion more than six months before her arrest in October 2024.

The defense also said investigators failed to prove that Konforkina had knowingly communicated with the anti-Kremlin paramilitary group or that her actions posed a threat to Russia's national security.

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