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Exiled Intelligence Expert Andrei Soldatov Jailed 4 Years in Absentia for Breaking 'Foreign Agent' Law

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Andrei Soldatov. **Popular Politics / YouTube**

A Moscow judge has sentenced exiled author and investigative journalist Andrei Soldatov to four years in prison in absentia after finding him guilty of violating Russia's "foreign agent" law.

The Justice Ministry labeled Soldatov a "foreign agent" in November 2023.

In January, Moscow's Basmanny District Court placed him in pre-trial detention in absentia on charges of ignoring requirements for "foreign agents" and participating in the activities of an "undesirable" organization.

Soldatov was handed a four-year sentence to be spent at a medium-security penal colony once he is extradited to Russia, the Moscow Prosecutor General's Office said in a statement on Monday.

He was also banned from running websites during the four years of his imprisonment.

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Over the past year, Soldatov was twice found guilty of administrative charges related to "foreign agent" requirements and twice more for participating in the activities of an "undesirable" organization.

Months after invading Ukraine, Russian authorities issued an arrest warrant for Soldatov on charges of spreading "fake news" about the Russian military. Soldatov said Monday that the verdict in that case is "still pending" nearly four years later.

Soldatov, who lives in London, is an expert on Russia's security services and has co-authored several books with Irina Borogan.

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