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# Luhansk Court Jails Polish Man 13 Years for Fighting for Ukraine

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Krzysztof Flaczek. **Video grab**

A Russian-installed court in occupied eastern Ukraine sentenced a Polish man to 13 years in prison after he was found guilty of fighting as a mercenary for the Ukrainian military.

The 47-year-old, identified as Krzysztof Flaczek, was captured in November 2024 near the city of Chasiv Yar, Russia's Prosecutor General's Office said Thursday.

The supreme court of the self-proclaimed People's Republic of Luhansk handed down the prison sentence. Russia claimed the annexation of Ukraine's Luhansk region in September 2022.

Flaczek is the latest foreigner to be put on trial in Russia or Russian-occupied Ukraine for fighting as a mercenary.

Both Ukraine and Russia have recruited foreigners to fight alongside their militaries since the 2022 invasion.

Although Russia has only officially acknowledged the presence of North Korean troops, journalists and monitoring groups estimate that thousands of foreign recruits, including at least 3,300 from the global south, have been killed in the war.

*AFP contributed reporting.*

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