The Moscow Times
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Khodorkovsky Jailed 10 Years in Absentia Over 'War Fakes'

June 08, 2026



Mikhail Khodorkovsky. **Alexander Khanin (CC BY-SA 4.0)**

A judge in Moscow on Monday sentenced exiled businessman Mikhail Khodorkovsky to 10 years in prison in absentia after finding him guilty of spreading "fakes" about the war in Ukraine.

Prosecutors had accused Khodorkovsky of posting "knowingly false information" on social media about the Russian military's actions in Ukraine.

The exiled news outlet Mediazona identified those posts as a tweet about the reported number of Russian soldiers killed fighting in the war and a YouTube video about the deadly bombing of a children's hospital in Kyiv.

Khodorkovsky's court-appointed lawyer had asked the judge to acquit him on the grounds that foreign media outlets had allegedly misled him into reporting a "deliberate falsehood," Mediazona reported.

Moscow's Meshchansky Court on Monday found Khodorkovsky guilty of spreading false information about the Russian army and sentenced him to 10 years in a medium-security prison in absentia.

Khodorkovsky was also banned from managing websites and other online platforms for five years.

Prosecutors had requested a 14-year prison sentence for Khodorkovsky.

Related article: Russia Charges Khodorkovsky, Other Exiled Dissidents With 'Terrorism'

The "war fakes" charge was reportedly brought against Khordokovsky in September 2023. A warrant for his arrest was issued in January 2024, and the case was submitted to court in January 2026.

Khodorkovsky faces a number of other charges in Russia.

He is a leading member of the Russian Anti-War Committee, an organization founded abroad after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Authorities in Moscow accused the group of trying to overthrow the Russian government and charged its members with terrorism last year.

Khodorkovsky, the former owner of the dismantled oil company Yukos, has lived abroad since being pardoned by President Vladimir Putin in 2013 after serving several years in prison for fraud, tax evasion, embezzlement and money laundering.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2026/06/08/khodorkovsky-jailed-10-years-in-absentia-over-war-fakes-a92954