

# Russian Court Rejects Girkin's Appeal for Pre-Trial Release

By [AFP](#)

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Igor Girkin in court. **Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency**

A Russian court on Tuesday rejected an appeal from former separatist commander in Ukraine and nationalist blogger Igor Girkin to be freed from pre-trial detention in Moscow.

Girkin, a high-profile critic of the Kremlin's military strategy in Ukraine, was detained in July and remanded in custody on extremism charges. He faces up to five years in prison.

Speaking in Moscow City Court, Judge Yulia Komleva said that the earlier decision of a Moscow court to remand Girkin in custody would remain unchanged.

At the hearing, Girkin said he had no plans to flee Russia, pointing to the decision by a Dutch court to jail him for life in absentia, and complained of poor health.

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In 2022, Girkin was among three people sentenced by a Dutch court to life imprisonment over the downing of Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 in 2014.

"I have no reason to hide from the court and investigation," he said.

Girkin — better known by his alias Igor Strelkov — was arrested following a series of posts critical of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

He was a key leader of pro-Russian forces when fighting broke out between separatists and Ukrainian forces in the east of the country in 2014.

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