

Russian Supreme Court Upholds Sentence for Jailed Sociologist Kagarlitsky

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Boris Kagarlitsky. **Nataliya Kazakovtseva / TASS**

Russia's Supreme Court on Wednesday [upheld](#) a five-year prison sentence against the prominent anti-war sociologist Boris Kagarlitsky on charges of “justifying terrorism,” state media reported.

Kagarlitsky, 65, was initially [fined](#) 600,000 rubles (\$6,600) in December over a since-deleted YouTube video about the 2022 Crimea bridge explosion. In February, a military court of appeals reversed that ruling and [sentenced](#) him to five years in prison after an appeal by prosecutors.

During Wednesday's appeal hearing, Kagarlitsky [said](#) naming the offending YouTube video “Explosive Congratulations for Mostik the Cat” — in reference to a real cat that lived on the Crimea bridge — was “an extremely unfortunate joke.” However, he argued that his jail term was disproportionate to the offense, according to the independent news outlet Sotavision.

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The state-run TASS news agency reported that Kagarlitsky's defense lawyers asked Russia's Supreme Court to [replace](#) his jail term with a fine of up to 1 million rubles (\$11,200), arguing that the sociologist had cooperated with investigators and was not a flight risk. But the Supreme Court sided with military prosecutors.

Kagarlitsky's attorney Sergei Yerokhov told TASS he plans to appeal the verdict with Russia's Constitutional Court on the grounds that his client received "excessive" punishment.

Kagarlitsky, a well-known academic and Marxist theorist who has spoken out against Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, chose to remain in the country despite the Kremlin's crackdown on dissent.

Russian authorities labeled Kagarlitsky's Institute of Globalization and Social Movements a "foreign agent" in 2018. The academic was himself designated a "foreign agent" in 2022.

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