Moscow Court Jails Ukrainian TV Presenter 8 Years in Absentia for Inciting Hatred

October 14, 2024

Yanina Sokolova. **Yanina Sokolova / Facebook**

A Moscow court on Monday sentenced Ukrainian journalist and TV presenter Yanina Sokolova to eight years in prison in absentia for making public calls to kill Russians.

In August 2022, the head of Russia's Investigative Committee, Alexander Bastrykin, accused Sokolova of "openly threatening the Russian people, emphasizing the need for their merciless destruction" during a television broadcast.

According to independent Russian media, the Ukrainian journalist said during an interview the month before that "Russians cannot be taken prisoner. They must be killed," seemingly referring to Russian soldiers fighting in Ukraine.

Russia has since issued an international arrest warrant for Sokolova and placed her on its list of "terrorists and extremists."

Moscow's court system announced Monday that the Basmanny District Court found Sokolova guilty of "inciting hatred" and handed her an eight-year sentence at a medium-security penal colony in the event she is extradited to Russia. Prosecutors said the sentence can be appealed before coming into force.

Sokolova, 40, is a well-known Ukrainian journalist, social activist, blogger and cancer survivor who has been an outspoken critic of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.