

[UA] Russian journalist sentenced for calls to genocide

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On 13 February 2023, the Shevchenkivsky district court in Kyiv sentenced Anton Krasovsky to five years' imprisonment with confiscation of property for public calls to overthrow the constitutional order of Ukraine and dissemination of such calls in the mass media (paragraph 3 of Article 109 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine), as well as for public calls to genocide and dissemination of such calls (paragraph 2, Article 442 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine), the maximum term of imprisonment envisaged by both articles – *in absentia*. It appears that this was the first verdict in Ukraine of a Russian media worker, following such grave crimes.

At the time of the crime, Mr Krasovsky was the presenter of the talk show “Antonimys Antonom Krasovskim” (Antonyms with Anton Krasovsky), as well as the director of Russian-language programming on RT (RT-Rossiya). According to the verdict of the court in Kyiv, he had disseminated on RT's YouTube channel (then accessible in Ukraine), during January to March 2022, audiovisual statements denying the existence of an independent Ukraine, such as (in Russian), “bitch! This country should not exist! And we should do everything we can so that it is no longer here.” In April 2022, in comments on his personal Telegram-channel “Anton Vyacheslavovich”, he made a call to kill “brothers” (Ukrainians) in response to a presumed Ukrainian attack in Belgorod.

The investigation into the case started on 16 March 2022 by the Head Investigative Department of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU). Following the conclusions of a linguistic expert, the investigator issued a “Notice of Suspicion” on 14 June, approved by the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine on the same day. This procedure formally makes the addressee a suspect in a criminal case. The “Notice of Suspicion” substantiated the accusations that were later confirmed by the Shevchenkivsky court. The court said, in particular, that the statements had been made “by a public figure, who had influence over the audience of the TV channel in question, and who clearly understood that his categorical expressions, in the material form of publications and video recordings, were made available to an unlimited number of individuals and were capable of forming a negative mass perception of Ukraine”.

On 9 August 2022, the Shevchenkivsky court ordered Mr Krasovsky to be detained. On 16 August 2022, the Head Investigative Department of the Security Service of Ukraine subpoenaed – through the governmental daily *Uryadovyi kurier*

– Mr Krasovsky to attend an interrogation on 17, 18 or 20 of August, to no effect. Ukraine has issued an international warrant for Mr Krasovsky.

In a parallel development, the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation (SKRF) started, in October 2022, a criminal investigation regarding comments Mr Krasovsky had made in “Antonimy” with calls to “drown Ukrainian children”, but in December the case was closed due to the “absence of crime”. The comments he made still caused a backlash and he was reportedly suspended from RT in October 2022.

Decision, Shevchenkivsky district court of Kyiv, case No. 761/15376/22, 9 August 2022

Повістка про виклик підозрюваного, Uryadovyi kurier, 16 СЕРПНЯ 2022 РОКУ

https://ukurier.gov.ua/media/newspaper/adv/2022-08-15/177_7298r.pdf

Subpoena to a suspect, Uryadovyi kurier, 16 August 2022, p.12

За матеріалами СБУ судитимуть директора Russia Today

<https://ssu.gov.ua/novyny/za-materialamy-sbu-sudytymut-dyrektora-russia-today>

Director of Russia Today will be tried with the help of SBU files). Press statement of the SBU, 29 August 2022

Following SSU's investigation, 'russia today' director, who called for genocide of Ukrainians, sentenced to prison term, Press statement of the SBU, 17 February 2023

<https://ssu.gov.ua/en/novyny/za-materialamy-sbu-tiuremnyi-strok-otrymav-dyrektor-russia-today-yakyyi-zaklykav-do-henotsydu-ukraintsiv>

Глава СК РФ Баstryкин поручил проверить высказывания журналиста Красовского

<https://rg.ru/2022/10/24/glava-sk-rf-bastrykin-poruchil-proverit-vyskazyvanie-zhurnalista-antona-krasovskogo.html>

Head of SKRF, Bastrykin, assigned to assess statements by journalist Krasovsky), in Rossiyskaya gazeta, 24 October 2022

