

## Russian soldier says he will accept punishment for Ukraine war crime



Lorenzo Tondo

**A Russian tank commander who pleaded guilty earlier this week to shooting dead an unarmed Ukrainian civilian has said he will accept any punishment from the court, on the third day of the first war crimes trial resulting from Russia's war in Ukraine.**

**Vadim Shysimarin**, 21, told courtroom No 201 of the Kyiv tribunal that he “was nervous about what was going on” on the day 62-year-old Oleksandr Shelipov died and that he “didn’t want to kill”.

Standing in the glass defence box, wearing a grey and blue hoodie, his shaved head lowered, Shysimarin added: “I’m truly and sincerely sorry. I didn’t want that to happen, I didn’t want to be there, but it happened. I would like to apologise once again. And I will accept all the measures of punishment that I will be offered.”

In closing arguments, Shysimarin’s lawyer, Viktor Ovsyannikov, said his client was not guilty of premeditated murder and war crimes, and asked the judges to acquit him.

In an interview with the Guardian at the end of the hearing, Ovsyannikov said his client killed a civilian by order and therefore he did not consider it to be a breach of the rules of war.

“There is an absence of intent here,” he said. “It was an execution of an order ... he didn’t want to kill him, and this has certain legal meaning.

“I would single out those bastards that shot at the back of civilians’ heads in Bucha during the occupation,” Ovsyannikov added. “It’s quite different from the circumstances my client was in.”