

UNPUBLISHED

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

No. 16-7053

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff - Appellee,

v.

CHRISTOPHER JAMES MILLS, a/k/a Christopher James Nichols,

Defendant - Appellant.

Appeal from the United States District Court for the Western District of Virginia, at Roanoke. Glen E. Conrad, Chief District Judge. (7:12-cr-00013-GEC-RSB-1; 7:15-cv-80834-GEC-RSB)

Submitted: December 15, 2016

Decided: December 20, 2016

Before SHEDD, DUNCAN, and AGEE, Circuit Judges.

Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

Melvin LeRoy Hill, Roanoke, Virginia, for Appellant. Ronald Andrew Bassford, Assistant United States Attorney, Roanoke, Virginia, for Appellee.

Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

Christopher James Mills seeks to appeal the district court's order denying relief on his 28 U.S.C. § 2255 (2012) motion. The order is not appealable unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability. 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1)(B) (2012). A certificate of appealability will not issue absent "a substantial showing of the denial of a constitutional right." 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(2) (2012). When the district court denies relief on the merits, a prisoner satisfies this standard by demonstrating that reasonable jurists would find that the district court's assessment of the constitutional claims is debatable or wrong. Slack v. McDaniel, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000); see Miller-El v. Cockrell, 537 U.S. 322, 336-38 (2003). When the district court denies relief on procedural grounds, the prisoner must demonstrate both that the dispositive procedural ruling is debatable, and that the motion states a debatable claim of the denial of a constitutional right. Slack, 529 U.S. at 484-85.

We have independently reviewed the record and conclude that Mills has not made the requisite showing. Accordingly, we deny a certificate of appealability and dismiss the appeal. We dispense with oral argument because the facts and legal

contentions are adequately presented in the materials before this court and argument would not aid the decisional process.

DISMISSED