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Russian Woman Sentenced for Criticizing Muslims Who Celebrate New Year's

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A court in Russia's Sverdlovsk region has sentenced a Muslim woman in the city of Pervouralsk for extremism after she criticized fellow Muslims who celebrate New Year's, Interfax reported on Monday.

In comments in a group on the VKontakte social network, Elvira Sultanakhmetova wrote that Muslims shouldn't celebrate secular holidays or those associated with other religions, such as Christmas, New Year's Eve and Victory Day, the report said.

The local branch of the Federal Security Service logged her message and a criminal case into extremism was opened in July 2014. Sultanakhmetova denied the charge.

Under the Russian Criminal Code, incitement of national, racial or religious enmity is punishable by up to four years in prison. Sultanakhmetova was given 120 hours of community service.

Russia's anti-extremism legislation was last amended in February 2014, when bigger fines and longer prison terms were introduced. The measure was criticized as giving the government a tool for political repressions.

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