

Amnesty International to Return to Its Seized Moscow Office

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The Russian branch of Amnesty International announced Friday its plans to return to its Moscow office, seized by the city authorities earlier this month.

“Today I’m going to sign a new rental contract, [the authorities] promised to open the office for us today, after 16 days of us not being able to get in,” Sergei Nikitin, director of the branch, said at a press conference.

He added that during negotiations between Amnesty International and the City Hall’s department of property, it became clear that the latter seized the office because of a mistake.

On Nov. 2 the Moscow office of Amnesty International was closed by city authorities. The electricity in the entryway had been turned off and new locks had been installed in the office’s door. A notice on the door stated that the office was now city property. Amnesty received no advance warning about the closure.

The international human rights organization has rented offices in a 19th century Moscow mansion for 20 years.

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