

Jehovah's Witnesses Launch Appeal Against Russia Ban

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Russia's Supreme Court judge Yuri Ivanenko reads the decision in a courtroom in Moscow on April 20, 2017 **Ivan Sekretarev / AP**

The Jehovah's Witnesses have launched an appeal against a court ruling banning the organization from Russia.

Moscow's Zamoskvoretsky Court will hear the appeal on Monday, [a court spokesperson said](#).

Russia's Supreme Court ruled to ban the Jehovah's Witnesses from Russia last week after branding them an “extremist organization.”

The church's property is currently being seized by the government, and believers will face criminal charges if they continue to meet or distribute literature.

Related article: [Jehovah's Witnesses Ban Spells End for Russia's Religious Diversity \(Op-Ed\)](#)

The Justice Ministry has defended its decision as being "in the interest of public safety," claiming that the organization "threatens human rights."

It particularly condemned believers' refusal to accept blood transfusions and publications which it claimed presented the Jehovah's Witnesses as a "superior" religion.

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