

Russian Supreme Court Rejects Jehovah's Witnesses Appeal

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Alexandr Tyryshkin / Reuters

Russia's Supreme Court on Monday rejected an appeal to lift a ban on the Jehovah's Witnesses, the state-run news agency [RIA Novosti](#) reported.

Svetlana Borisova, a representative of the Justice Ministry defended the court's decision saying the "Administrative Center of the Jehovah's Witnesses hasn't ceased its extremist activity and continues to insist that such activity is not extremist."

The Jehovah's Witness were prepared for the decision, but a spokesman said the ruling was "still very upsetting."

"The disturbing fact is that despite the overwhelming amount of evidence that points to the contrary, powerful forces within Russian continue to label our organization extremist," David Semonian [said](#).

Related article: [Russia's Phony Jehovah's Witnesses](#)

In April, four former members of Jehovah's Witnesses said the organization had tried to maintain "total control" over its followers in a testimony before the Supreme Court.

Natalia Koretskaya, who was a member from 1995 to 2009, told the court that "Jehovah's Witnesses formally monitor that people follow rules and regulations, but in fact, we are talking about total control over one's personal life, intimate life, education and work."

The organization, which has 171,000 adherents and 2,315 congregations in Russia, was banned as a result of the trial.

Last week, the independent polling company Levada Center, reported that around 80 percent of Russians support a government ban on Jehovah's Witnesses. However, more than half of the 1,600 people questioned claimed they knew very little or nothing about the group.

Related article: [Russia's Jehovah's Witnesses Meet in Defiance of 'Extremism' Ban](#)

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