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Court Confirms Dissolution of Russia's Top Rights Group Memorial

By AFP

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Mikhail Metzel / TASS

Russia's most prominent rights group Memorial said Tuesday the country's Supreme Court had rejected an appeal to delay its closure pending a decision from the European Court of Human Rights.

"The court considers that the reasons for a delay must be truly exceptional and proportionate," Memorial said on Telegram.

It said the court argued that there was no "threat to life and health," as usually required for such a move.

The group chronicles Stalin-era purges and maintains extensive archives in Moscow.

In late December 2021, the Supreme Court ordered the group's central structure, called Memorial International, to shut down over alleged violations of a controversial "foreign

agents'' law.

The European Court of Human Rights swiftly urged Russia to suspend the shutdown while it examined the case.

The ruling was also condemned by the U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and EU foreign policy chief Josep Borell.

Also in December, a lower Moscow court ordered the dissolution of Memorial's Human Rights Center, which campaigns against contemporary rights abuses in Russia, at the request of prosecutors.

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