The Moscow Times
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Russia's Supreme Court to Review Taliban Terrorist Status

March 31, 2025

AP/TASS

Russia's Supreme Court will consider a request from the Prosecutor General's Office to remove the Taliban from its list of terrorist organizations on April 17, the Interfax news agency reported Monday.

If approved, the decision would mark the end of more than two decades of the Taliban's designation as a terrorist group in Russia.

A legal mechanism allowing for the removal of groups from the terrorist list was introduced in December, when President Vladimir Putin signed it into law.

The legislation permits Russia's top prosecutor to request a temporary removal if it can demonstrate that the group has ceased supporting or promoting terrorism in Russia.

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According to Interfax, the Supreme Court's press service confirmed it had received the request from the Prosecutor General's Office. The closed-door hearing is scheduled for 2:00 p.m. Moscow time on April 17.

Russia first banned the Taliban as a terrorist organization in 2003. The Kremlin has strengthened ties with the group since it returned to power in Afghanistan after the United States' withdrawal in 2021.

Since then, the Taliban has enforced strict Islamic law, effectively banning women from public life.

Putin has referred to the Taliban as "allies in the fight against terrorism," while Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has urged Western nations to lift sanctions on Afghanistan and take responsibility for its post-war reconstruction.

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