



Earth Month Network, Inc. TM

March 27, 2017

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Sergey Viktorovich Lavrov
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Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
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The Chairman of the Supreme Court
Supreme Court of Russian Federation
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**Subject: Intervention Request in behalf of Jehovah's Witnesses
Within the Russian Federation**

Dear President Putin
Honorable Leaders of the Russian Federation:

This writing is humbly presented in positive light of which to cure the dismal situation involving the continual persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses within the Russian Federation, and for intervention of court proceedings April 5, 2017 and for immediate relief from their condition.

Earth Month ® was founded on Saturday April 4, 1970 as the full month of April is Earth Month. Earth Month Network, Inc.™ (EMN) is the legal entity nonprofit, NGO located in Phoenix, Arizona USA that operates the affairs for Earth Month. These include but are not limited to: environmental awareness and education, Environmental and Social Justice, Civil, Constitutional and *Human Rights* on a global basis.

The mission, work, and success of EMN are based upon the oldest book of science, law, history and prophesy; that being the Holy Bible. I too have based my life course and conduct upon the Holy Bible and teachings of Jesus Christ, and therefore a longtime Jehovah's Witness.

It appears evident that On March 15, 2017, the Ministry of Justice in Russia filed a claim with the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation seeking "to declare the religious organization, the Administrative Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, extremist, ban its activity, and liquidate it."

Additionally, such a decision by the Supreme Court in favor of this claim will without a doubt have unjust and dire consequences for all of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia. The Administrative Center and 400 local legal entities used to own or rent Kingdom Halls would be dissolved. This also means that the branch property in St. Petersburg and Kingdom Halls throughout the country could be seized by the State.

In addition, each of the more than 170,000 Witnesses could be criminally prosecuted merely for meeting for worship, reading the Bible together, or talking to others on an individual basis about their faith.

Russia's "Federal law on Extremist Activity" was originally intended to help stop terrorist. When amended, the long arm of said law became overreaching as a dragnet to include certain religious activities. Russia's "Federal Law on Extremist Activity" is being misapplied to Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia. Jehovah's Witnesses strive to be good citizens. We are known worldwide for our peaceful activities, non-political, pay taxes, protects the environment, morally clean, chaste and just; and under no circumstances would we ever resort to any activity that could legitimately be construed as "extremist" or criminal in nature.

In fact, Jehovah's Witness have great respect for government. The Apostle Paul wrote "Let every person be in subjection to the superior authorities, for there is no authority except by God; the existing authorities stand placed in their relative positions by God". *Romans 13:1,2*. This also means that the superior authorities or in this case Russian Federation stands in place to its relative position only by the grace of God, Jehovah. Does this not deem respect for the State?

The activities of Jehovah's Witnesses and the publications that are produce encourage love of God and neighbor, love for family, and respect for government. There is absolutely nothing "extremist" or criminal in such Bible-based publications. The pamphlet entitled Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia ¹has excerpts by: Dr. Sergei Ivanenko, a Russian religion scholar, Academician N. S. Gor dienko, professor of religious studies, Lyudmila Alekseeva, chairman of the Moscow Helsinki Group.

Additionally, in the book Religions of the Nations of Modern Russia, released under the editorship of Miran Petrovich Mchedlov, Chairman of the Expert Council for Conducting State Expert Religious Studies With the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation, the following is noted: "The Authorities are considered by Jehovah's Witnesses as an arrangement that is permitted to exist by God. They do not take part in conflicts with the law. They respect order and obedience to the law."—1999, page 463.

The Administrative Center and Jehovah's organization is a legal entity registered with the Russian Federation. There are not any missionaries that come to Russia and the organization is not known to practice in missionary activities as such. Jehovah's Witnesses do not preach from a pulpit, they are teachers also known as proclaimers of God's Kingdom. Jehovah's Witnesses do not proselytize but rather they allow others to hear their individual profession of personal faith. From the Bibles view, one must make the truth their own and no one is forced or coerced to do anything against their will. It is a personal matter much like the Psalmist David stated: "Make me know your own ways, O Jehovah; Teach me your own paths. Make me walk in your truth and teach me, For you are my God of salvation. In you I have hoped all day long". *Psalms: 25:4, 5*.

As a point of history, the utilization of God's personal name has been utilized in Russia for centuries prior to the Watchtower and Bible Tract Society taking on the Name of Jehovah's Witnesses in 1931. "YOU are my witnesses," is the utterance of Jehovah, "even myservant whom I have chosen, in order that YOU may know and have faith in me, and that YOU may

¹ Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia http://www.theocraticcollector.com/Jehovahs_Witnesses_in_Russia.pdf

understand that I am the same One. Before me there was no God formed, and after me there continued to be none. I—I am Jehovah, and besides me there is no savior.” *Isaiah 42: 8-12*.

This is evident from usage of the divine name by the Russian Orthodox Church in its chant- alleluia, which is done singularly or several times. The meaning is the same in every language which translates to *Praise Jah*. Jah is the short version of Jehovah from the original Hebrew. The meaning of Jehovah is ‘*He causes to become*’, as the creator of all things.

A careful reading of the Bible, will show you that Jehovah is the personal name of Almighty God, the Creator of the universe. In the Synodal translation of the Russian Bible, Exodus 15:3 says about God: “Jehovah is His name.” (See also Exodus 33:19.) The name Jehovah appears several thousand times in the Hebrew Scriptures of the Bible, which were translated into Russian in the first half of the 19th century by Orthodox priest Archimandrite Makarios. The 1825 Russian Bible Society Octateuch, edited by Gerasim Pavsky, contains the name Jehovah over 700 times.

Many religious buildings and others that are centuries old have inscriptions of Jehovah’s name on them. Some are represented in Russian as *Иерова* or a similar form or that of the Hebrew from (Tetragrammaton) יהוה . This being the fact, Russia and its religions have been utilizing Jehovah God’s personal name long before it was adopted by Jehovah’s Witnesses, and is still utilized by them today.

But yet, with all due respect, the State government and local governments go against the peaceful Jehovah’s Witnesses...persecuting them, planting false evidence, prosecuting them, and imprisoning them for the exercise of religious rights secured by Russian law and international law. This is found to be a direct and compounded violation of individual and organizational Human Rights, protected under The Preamble of the Russian Constitution² and contravenes:

Chapter 1 Fundamentals of the Constitutional System

Article 6 [Citizenship] Sec. 1, 2 and 3.

Article 14 [Secularity of the State] Sec. 1 and 2.

Article 13 [Political Plurality] Sec. 1, 2, 4, and 5.

Article 14 [Secularity of the State] Sec. 1 and 2.

Article 15 [Supreme Law] Sec. 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Chapter 2 Rights and Liberties of Man and Citizen

Article 17 [Basic Rights and Liberties] Sec. 1, 2 and 3

Article 18 [Direct Effect]

Article 19 [Equality] Sec. 1, 2, and 3

Article 21 [Human Dignity] Sec. 1 and 2

Article 22 [Personal Freedom] Sec. 1 and 2

Article 23 [Privacy] Sec. 1 and 2.

Article 25 [Home]

Article 26 [National Identity, Native Language] Sec. 2.

Article 28 [Belief, Religion]

Article 29 [Expression] Sec. 1, 3 and 4.

² Russian Constitution

Article 30 [Association] Sec. 1.
Article 31 [Assembly, Demonstration]
Article 33 [Petitions]
Article 35 [Private Property] Sec. 1, 2 and 3.
Article 36 [Land Ownership] Sec. 1.
Article 43 [Education] 1, 4 and 5.
Article 44 [Arts, Sciences, Culture] Sec. 1, 2 and 3.
Article 45 [State Protection] Sec. 1 and 2.
Article 46 [Legal Protection] Sec. 1, 2 and 3.
Article 47 [Access to the Courts] Sec. 1 and 2.
Article 50 [Ne Bis In Idem] Sec. 2.

Such action by government agents to create false charges is in violative of ‘*the clean hands doctrine*’ is a violation of aforementioned Constitutional Rights, and such agents are also in violation of The criminal Code of The Russian Federation and subject to punishment and fines:

Article 127. Illegal Deprivation of Liberty
Article 129. Slander
Article 130. Insult

Chapter 19. Crimes Against the Constitutional Rights and Freedoms of Man and Citizen
Article 136. Violation of the Equality of Human and Civil Rights and Freedoms: Sec. 1 and 2.
Article 137. Invasion of Personal Privacy: Sec. 1 and 2.
Article 148. Obstruction of the Exercise of the Right of Liberty of Conscience and Religious Liberty.
Article 149. Obstruction of the Holding of a Meeting, Assembly, Demonstration, Procession, or Picketing, or of Participation in the Aforesaid.
Article 158. Theft: Sec. 1 and 3.
Article 163. Extortion: Sec. 1 and 3.
Article 167. Willful Destruction or Damage of Property: Sec. 1.
Article 282. Incitement of National, Racial, or Religious Enmity: Sec. 1 and 2.

Chapter 30. Crimes Against State Power and the Interests of the Civil Service and the Service in Local Self-government Bodies.
Article 285. Abuse of Official Powers: Sec 1.
Article 286. Exceeding Official Powers. Sec 1.

We would like to express the hope that the Russian authorities will stop the legal action being taken against the branch office and the congregations in Russia so that our brothers and sisters can continue to gather peacefully for Christian meetings without any impediments. In appreciation for law and order, it is reasonably believed that there is a total lacking of probable cause to move against the Witnesses, as there is no plan, preparation, intent, motive or willfulness to commit any offence.

In hind sight, has any police officer local or federal government official every sat down and spoke peaceably with Jehovah's Witnesses representatives? Have you ever gone to a meeting at a Kingdom Hall? Have you ever attended a convention or the Memorial of Jesus Christ's Death? Have you requested a tour of the Branch Office in St. Petersburg or that of the new World Headquarters in the United States? Why not? They would be more than glad to accommodate you. By not doing so it creates enmity, strife, animosity, biases and prejudice without reasonable or lawful cause. When we apply wisdom to this, these items have no place where a system is supposed to be equal fair and just do they?

Mr. President and Honorable Leaders of the Russian Federation — we humbly ask that the current proceedings against Jehovah's Witnesses set for April 5, 2017 and any pending and future actions in Russia against Jehovah's Witnesses be set aside, and that the individuals and Organization be fully restored to their previous position without further harassment, threat, intimidation or harm to them. It is further requested pursuant to the Russian Constitution Article 85 that a formal document issue to restore and enforce the Constitutional and Human Rights of Jehovah's Witness and the Organization in Russia.

Thank you for your valuable time and serious consideration in this important matter.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brad Follett

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