

Letter-Writing Campaign Supporting Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia

Instruction Sheet

March 23, 2017

- Make your participation a matter of prayer.—1 Tim. 2:1-4.
- Personal letters should be mailed no later than April 1, 2017.
- Send a personal letter to one or more of the officials listed at the end of these instructions. You may send more than one letter to the same official.

Format

- If you own a personal business, you may use business letterhead.
- Use your own language. There is no need to have letters translated into Russian. If you are fluent in Russian, you may write letters in Russian.
- Letters should be one page in length and should be typewritten or neatly handwritten.
- Give attention to proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation.—*be* pp. 71-73.
- Add your personal signature to the letter.
- No copies of letters need to be sent to the elders, to the branch office, or to anyone else.
- Literature should not be included.
- Use your personal return address on the envelope. Be sure that the address of the official you are writing to matches that listed at the end of these instructions.
- Send by postal mail with sufficient international postage. Do not use e-mail.

Content

- You are writing to the official to request his intervention. 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 interference. You could express appreciation for the laws of the Russian government that guarantee freedom of religion to all citizens.
- Letters should be candid but respectful. Summarize key facts in your own words. Letters may refer to one or two facts listed below or more recent information published on jw.org. Keep in mind that “a *mild answer* turns away rage,” and “a *gentle tongue* can break a bone.”—Prov. 15:1; 25:15.
- You could briefly mention how our meetings and publications have benefited you personally and your family. Do not mention the names of individuals in Russia who are Jehovah's Witnesses.

Facts

- 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.” A decision by the Supreme Court in favor of this claim will have 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 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 about their faith.

- 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, and under no circumstances would we ever resort to any activity that could legitimately be construed as "extremist" or criminal in nature.
- The activity of Jehovah's Witnesses and the publications that we 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.

Addresses

- **President of Russia**

Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin
23 Ilyinka Str.
Moscow
103132
RUSSIAN FEDERATION

- **Prime Minister of Russia**

Dmitry Anatolyevich Medvedev
2 Krasnopresnenskaya Naberezhnaya
Moscow
103274
RUSSIAN FEDERATION

- **Prosecutor General**

Yury Yakovlevich Chayka
Prosecutor General's Office of the
Russian Federation
15A Bolshaya Dmitrovka Str.
Moscow
GSP-3
125993
RUSSIAN FEDERATION

- **Minister of Justice**

Alexander Vladimirovich Kononov
Ministry of Justice of the Russian
Federation
14 Zhitnaya Str.
Moscow
GSP-1
119991
RUSSIAN FEDERATION

- **Minister of Foreign Affairs**

Sergey Viktorovich Lavrov
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Russian Federation
32/34 Smolenskaya-Sennaya Square
Moscow
119200
RUSSIAN FEDERATION

- **Chairman of the Supreme Court**

Viacheslav Mikhailovich Lebedev
Supreme Court of the Russian
Federation
15 Povarskaya Str.
Moscow
121069
RUSSIAN FEDERATION

On March 23, 2017, the format of the six addresses was adjusted slightly to expedite delivery. There is no need to resend letters that used the previous address format.