

# Christian Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses



675 Red Mills Road Walkkill NY 12589-3292 Phone: (845) 306-1100

March 20, 2017

TO ALL CONGREGATIONS

Re: Letter-Writing Campaign Supporting Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia

Dear Brothers:

As reported on [jw.org](http://jw.org), a ban on our Christian worship in Russia is imminent. If the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation decides against us, it will have dire consequences for over 170,000 brothers and sisters in that country.

To draw international attention to these serious matters, the Governing Body is arranging a global letter-writing campaign. All who are associated with the congregation are encouraged to participate. A set of instructions is now available in the "Newsroom" section of [jw.org](http://jw.org). Please carefully read and follow the instructions provided. If you do not have access to the Internet, the elders will be happy to supply you with a copy of the instructions. **Since the Supreme Court hearing is scheduled to take place on April 5, 2017, letters should be sent no later than April 1.**

Your participation in this campaign gives evidence of love for your brothers. (1 Pet. 2:17) At the same time, we know that the most important thing that any of us can do to support fellow Christians who face persecution is to supplicate Jehovah in their behalf.—**Read 1 Timothy 2:1-4.**

As we put our complete trust in Jehovah, we are confident that no weapon formed against Jehovah's people will have any success.—Isa. 54:17.

Your brothers,

*Christian Congregation  
of Jehovah's Witnesses*

c: Circuit overseers

PS to coordinators of the bodies of elders:

Please arrange for this letter to be read to the congregation at the next midweek meeting and the next weekend meeting. Please print enough copies of the attached instruction sheet for those who may not have access to the electronic copy on [jw.org](http://jw.org).

PS to circuit overseers:

If you have a circuit assembly this weekend, please arrange for this letter to be read by the concluding speaker at the end of the last talk.

**Letter-Writing Campaign Supporting Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia**  
**Instruction Sheet**  
**March 20, 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  
Russian Federation  
103132
- **Prime Minister of Russia**  
Dmitry Anatolyevich Medvedev  
2 Krasnopresnenskaya Naberezhnaya  
Moscow  
Russian Federation  
103274
- **Prosecutor General**  
Yury Yakovlevich Chayka  
Prosecutor General’s Office of the  
Russian Federation  
15A Bolshaya Dmitrovka Str.  
Moscow  
Russian Federation  
GSP-3  
125993
- **Minister of Justice**  
Alexander Vladimirovich Kononov  
Ministry of Justice of the Russian  
Federation  
14 Zhitnaya Str.  
Moscow  
Russian Federation  
GSP-1  
119991
- **Minister of Foreign Affairs**  
Sergey Viktorovich Lavrov  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the  
Russian Federation  
32/34 Smolenskaya-Sennaya Square  
Moscow  
Russian Federation  
119200
- **The Chairman of the Supreme Court**  
Viacheslav Mikhailovich Lebedev  
Supreme Court of Russian Federation  
15 Povarskaya Str.  
Moscow  
Russian Federation  
121069