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JEHOVAH’S WITNESS OFFICE SUSPENDED IN KAZAKHSTAN

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RELIGIOUS OPPRESSION IS ON THE RISE.

A Kazakhstan court ordered the Jehovah’s Witness branch office in Almaty to suspend their operations for three months and fined them 680,000 KZT (\$2,107). In addition, the Kazakhstan government has already taken two actions against Jehovah’s Witnesses. First, a raid against the branch office on May 17. Second, [the arrest of Teymur Akhmedov](#) who was charged with inciting religious hatred.

Jehovah’s Witness Office Suspended in Kazakhstan

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The United Nations Commission on Religious Freedom [classifies](#) Kazakhstan as a Tier 2 country. Tier 2 means religious freedom is blocked by state actions. Moreover, the commission criticized a 2011 religious law. This law has led to religious oppression by registering of religious groups and cracking down on religious organizations. The most common reason is “inciting of religious hatred.”

Some groups have accused Kazakhstan of [being influenced](#) by social conservatives in Russia. Russia has recently [banned Jehovah Witnesses](#) and arrested members. It is using the same type of charge as [Teymur Akhmedov](#). It is unclear whether the branch office will be reinstated at the end of the three months.

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