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Russia: Protests in Rostov against Jehovah's Witnesses

After accusations, trials and physical attacks, street protests now target the JW. Slogans and banners stigmatize the community as an extremist sect.

By Asia News 

Friday, July 29, 2011

Moscow - After house raids, court trials for extremism and physical aggression now the Jehovah's Witnesses (JW) in Russia are also the target of street protests. Last July 23, in Rostov-on-Don, southern Russia, different public organizations and institutions took part in a picket organized by the movement "Rostov without drugs" targeting the JWs.

The protest which took place in Gorky Park was attended by around fifty people, including members of the Orthodox youth centre, youth organizations "Aktiv 61" and "Concept of Social Security."

The demonstrators gathered hoisting placards and chanting slogans "against the sect" as the JWs are regarded in Russia. Some banners recalled the various sentences for extremism inflicted on the community, while others read: "Denial of patriotism, stupidity or treason?" Or "refusing blood transfusions is a crime."

Rostov is one of the areas where the authorities and population aversion to the Jehovah's Witnesses is strongest. Already in 2009 the city of Taganrog JWs provincial court had ruled that they were religious extremists and ordered the dissolution of the organization, the confiscation of property and the prohibition of any activity.

As reported by Sova Center, according to an improvised survey by journalists who followed the protest, out of 40 respondents among the locals, 34 were opposed to Jehovah's Witnesses calling them "inadequate to the traditions of the Russian people."

Of the religious minorities in the former USSR, the Jehovah's Witnesses are among the most harassed. With about 200 thousand believers scattered throughout the

Federation, they are accused of sectarianism, "religious extremism", "incitement to social isolation" and behaviours that undermine the country's civic life.

Moreover Russian authorities do not like some of the practices of the faithful such as

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conscientious objection to military service, the refusal to use weapons, the renunciation of blood transfusions and the demand for total dedication of followers to the community.

Source: Asia News

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Featured



Ban to appoint experienced Dutch diplomat to head UN mission in Côte d'Ivoire

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today announced his intention to appoint Bert Koenders of the Netherlands as his Special Representative for Côte d'Ivoire and head of the United Nations peacekeeping operation in the West African country. [more](#)

Myanmar: Ban underlines need to release all remaining political prisoners

Releasing all remaining political prisoners is the single most important step that authorities in Myanmar can take, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said today, expressing hope that the Government of the Asian nation will soon take steps towards greater democracy. [more](#)

UN urges anti-drug measures for both Afghanistan and ? consumer countries?

The head of the United Nations anti-drugs agency has called for strengthening border controls around Afghanistan - still the world's leading producer of opium and heroin - boosting security in that country, and lowering demand in so-called "consumer countries." [more](#)

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[p]>[/p> Very sad. Do they feel that threatened from a group that is known for their worldwide preaching work.

by Terwiler gant | Saturday, July 30, 2011 2:42:00 AM

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