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VOA (01.03.2018) - <https://www.voanews.com/a/church-of-scientology-claims-victory-after-hungarian-court-rules-raid-was-illegal/4275918.html> - The Church of Scientology is claiming victory after a Hungarian court declared a government raid last year at its Budapest headquarters was illegal and that materials seized must be returned.

"This is also a victory for religious freedom and human rights for our church," the church said in a statement.

The National Investigation Bureau raided the church's headquarters in October, as part of an investigation into possible exploitation of personal information and other criminal acts. The Central Court of Buda ordered the return of "hundreds of boxes of unlawfully seized documents and IT tools", after ruling the raid and seizure were "coercive and restrictive," the church said.

The Hungarian government officially recognizes 32 churches, but the Church of Scientology's state-recognized status was revoked when a controversial law took effect in 2012. As a result, The Church of Scientology, along with numerous other churches, are limited in their ability to seek tax-deductible donations and receive church-related subsidies.

The bureau declined to release more information shortly after the raid occurred because the investigation was still underway, nor has it commented on the court's decision.
