

Notice: Undefined index: et_header_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1214

Notice: Undefined index: et_header_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1215

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1215

Notice: Undefined index: et_template in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1216

BREAKING NEWS: BELARUS - RUSSIA: A Russian Jehovah's Witness to be extradited from Belarus to Russia?

– Human Rights Without Frontiers (Brussels) and Forum for Religious Freedom Europe (FOREF, Vienna) are urging the international community to advocate against this extradition

HRWF (26.02.2020) – A Russian Jehovah's Witness is under threat of being extradited from Belarus to Russia, a sinister precedent that must be urgently prevented, according to *Human*

Rights Without Frontiers in Brussels and *Forum for Religious Freedom-Europe* (FOREF) in Vienna.

“The time for Belarus to stand up for religious freedom is now,” the two organizations said.

Nikolay Andreyevich Makhalichev, born 1 July 1984 in the city of Cherepovets (Vologda Region), was arrested and detained on the territory of the Republic of Belarus on 21 February 2020 sometime after 3.30 p.m.

On 31 January 2019, Nikolai was charged under Article 282.2(1) of the Russian Criminal Code: “Organisation of the activity of a social or religious association or other organization in relation to which a court has adopted a decision legally in force on liquidation or ban on the activity in connection with the carrying out of extremist activity.” This article is related to the ban of the movement of Jehovah’s Witnesses in Russia since 2017 based on the law against extremism.

Since then Russian authorities have been actively searching for him. Russian police conducted searches in the home where he is registered, but could never find him because by then he had already relocated to another part of Russia. In May 2019, they placed him on the wanted list in an effort to arrest him.

Mr Makhalichev had traveled to Belarus in his car together with three other people. He was arrested and detained upon crossing the border when his car was stopped by a government

automobile inspectorate as part of a standard traffic stop and his driver's license was taken to check for fines.

During the check, the officials asked for Mr Makhalicev's passport and found that he is wanted in Russia.

The law enforcement forces did not return his passport and told him he would be detained until Russian authorities replied back to them. They put him in their patrol car and took him to the Gorodokskiy DDIA (2) in the Vitebsk Region of the Republic of Belarus: g. Gorodok, ul. Krasnoarmeyskaya, d. 25. The prosecutor was notified that he had been detained.

On 21 February 2020 the investigator in charge of the case against N. A. Makhalicev in Russia was notified that he had been arrested and detained.

He will be held until the Republic of Belarus prosecutor's office receives the needed documents and an explanation from Russia. On this basis, it will be determined whether to turn him over to Russia or not.

On 22 February 2020 Mr Makhalicev, with the assistance of licensed lawyer V. A. Shuplyak, filed an application for asylum in the Republic of Belarus because he is being persecuted for his religious convictions in his country.

Between 2017 and 2020, about 250 Russian Jehovah's Witnesses have applied for asylum in Finland.

As of Monday, Feb 24, 2020

35 JW in prison (26 in pretrial detention; 9 convicted and serving time in prison)

25 JW under house arrest

29 JW convicted (9 imprisoned, 8 fined, 12 other restrictions)

See the detailed cases of all JW in prison in Russia in the Database of FORB Prisoners of Human Rights Without Frontiers:

<https://hrwf.eu/prisoners-database/>

Notice: Undefined index: et_footer_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1266

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1266

Notice: Undefined index: et_footer_layout in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1267

Notice: Trying to access array offset on value of type null in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1267

Notice: Undefined index: et_template in /home/hrwfe90/domains/hrwf.eu/public_html/wp-content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line 1268