

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

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RUSSIA: FECRIS says the persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses is propaganda

"All tales of alleged 'harassment' against Jehovah's Witnesses [in Russia] are nothing more than a primitive propaganda stroke. This information is not true," FECRIS says.

By Willy Fautré, Human Rights Without Frontiers

HRWF (25.05.2021) – This quote from FECRIS (European Federation of Centres of Research and Information on Cults and Sects), is from the decision of a German court which condemned FECRIS for defaming the movement of Jehovah's Witnesses in

public statements in the framework of its conferences from 2009 to 2017 that were posted on its website.

Several disputed statements concerned Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia. This is not surprising as the vice-president of FECRIS is Alexander Dvorkin, the well-known anti-cult activist of the Russian Orthodox Church against whom USCIRF (US Commission on International Religious Freedom) asked the US to take sanctions (see p 7 on top of the sanctions): "*Publicly censure Alexander Dvorkin and the Saint Irenaeus of Leon Information-Consultation Center (SILIC) for their ongoing disinformation campaign against religious minorities.*" See more on FECRIS [here](#).

On 27 November 2020, the District Court of Hamburg released its verdict in the case *Jehovah's Witnesses in Germany v. FECRIS* (Ref. 324 0 334/18) about a long list of 32 claimed defamatory statements: 17 were fully justified and one was partially justified.

Jehovah's Witnesses in Germany considered that a number of slanderous statements in dispute about Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia could adversely impact their right to asylum as FECRIS denies that they are persecuted in Russia and states that they are criminals. The two main statements are analyzed below.

FECRIS' most slanderous statement about Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia

The statement below related to Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia needs to be understood in the context of the ban of Jehovah's Witnesses as an "extremist organization" in 2017, the enforced liquidation of their 395 communities, the confiscation of all

their places of worship and properties by the Russian State. They quote is from the judgment of the District Court of Hamburg.

“(…), all tales of alleged ‘harassment’ against Jehovah’s Witnesses [in Russia] are nothing more than a primitive propaganda stroke. This information is not true.”

“(…) the ban on Jehovah’s Witnesses in Russia was ordered on the basis of a law and thus did not occur arbitrarily or without cause. In the broader context, the statement could not be understood in any other way than to the effect that stories were not true that Jehovah’s Witnesses in Russia were ‘harassed’ without reason, but that any official measures were due to the ban on Jehovah’s Witnesses, which was based on a law. No one is ‘harassed’ or persecuted with state measures simply because he or she is an adherent of Jehovah’s Witnesses in Russia.”

Reports by numerous human rights organizations – Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International – , the United Nations, the US Commission of International Religious Freedom, the US Department of State, and statements by other international institutions ruthlessly contradict and ridicule FECRIS’ position. See as well as cases documented by Human Rights Without Frontiers and its FORB Prisoners Database.

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content/plugins/pdf-print/pdf-print.php on line **1267**

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