

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

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RUSSIA: Six years and five months of prison for a Jehovah's Witness

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By Willy Fautré



The European Times (13.03.2023) – Despite Russia's war in Ukraine and a decision of the European Court in 2022 urging Russia to stop all pending criminal proceedings against Jehovah's Witnesses, Putin has not halted his repression policy against

Jehovah's Witnesses.

Konstantin Sannikov sentenced to 6 years and 5 months in a penal colony

On 15 February 2023, the Sovetskiy District Court of Kazan sentenced **Konstantin Sannikov** to 6 years and 5 months in a penal colony. For conducting peaceful religious services of Jehovah's Witnesses, the court found him guilty of extremism.

Throughout the preliminary investigation and trial – for more than two years – Konstantin has been in a detention center.

In August 2020, the FSB of Tatarstan initiated a criminal case under part 1 of Art. 282.2 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (organizing the activity of an extremist organization) against Konstantin Sannikov, doctor of forensics and the father of 4 children. Conversations about the Bible among friends were regarded as organizing extremist activity. Sannikov was placed in a detention center, and his bank accounts were frozen. In August 2021, court hearings began. While in custody for about two years, he was never allowed a visit from his wife. During his imprisonment, his chronic illnesses worsened. In court, his boss spoke of him as a responsible and honest worker who had never been reprimanded, but, on the contrary, repeatedly received commendation, incentives and awards. The testimonies of secret witnesses did not correspond to reality and indicated personal aversion to this denomination.

On 20 February 2023, the Vakhitovsky District Court of Kazan found **Andrey Bochkarev** guilty of organizing the activities of an extremist organization. He pleaded non-guilty. He was sentenced to three years and one month of imprisonment, but he was released in the courtroom, since he has actually served his long term in a pre-trial detention center!

During the first two months and a half of 2023, there were also a lot of suspended sentences to prison; appeal courts and

the Cassation Court also confirmed the sentences to effective prison terms of many other Jehovah's Witnesses who were already in pretrial detention. [LINK](#).

The European Court of Human Rights ruled that the Russian Federation "must take all necessary measures to secure the discontinuation of all pending criminal proceedings against Jehovah's Witnesses... and the release of all Jehovah's Witnesses in custody" (§ 285).

Photo courtesy of: jw-russia.org – Sannikov Konstantin Yevgeniyevich Russia JW photo.png

[Further reading about FORB in Russia on HRWF website](#)

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