

Russia's FSB Raids Jehovah's Witness Office in Occupied Mariupol

January 15, 2024



Images from the FSB's raid in occupied Mariupol. **Social media**

Agents from Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) raided a Jehovah's Witnesses office in the occupied Ukrainian city of Mariupol, state media [reported](#) Monday.

"The FSB and military counterintelligence have uncovered a location in Mariupol that was used by the Jehovah's Witnesses to promote extremist ideology," Zvezda, the Russian Defense Ministry's broadcaster, [reported](#).

In 2017, Russia's top court branded the Jehovah's Witness movement an "extremist organization" and members of the religious group have faced prosecution from the authorities.

The port city of Mariupol was captured by Russian forces in the spring of 2022 and has been under Moscow's control ever since. Last year, the FSB established a local branch in the occupied region of Donestk, where Maripol is located.

Related article: [Russia Hands Jehovah's Witness Follower 7-Year Jail Term for 'Extremism'](#)

Video shared by Zvezda's channel on the Telegram messaging app showed uniformed officers confiscating stacks of books from an undisclosed building.

"Will There Be Peace Without War?" reads one of the booklets in the video.

The FSB said more than 20,000 copies of "extremist literature" were confiscated during the raid.

Russia's state-run news agency RIA Novosti [reported](#) that documents were also found "showing that the extremist organization Jehovah's Witnesses, which is banned in Russia, is involved in the financing of Ukrainian militants."

An investigation was underway to identify "those involved in the financing of Ukrainian neo-Nazis," RIA Novosti added.

The Jehovah's Witnesses is a U.S.-based Christian evangelical movement set up in the late 19th century that advocates non-violence.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2024/01/15/russias-fsb-raids-jehovahs-witness-office-in-occupied-mariupol-a83726>