



COUR EUROPÉENNE DES DROITS DE L'HOMME  
EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

FIRST SECTION  
(as composed before 1 April 2006)

**CASE OF KUZNETSOV AND OTHERS v. RUSSIA**

*(Application no. 184/02)*

JUDGMENT

STRASBOURG

11 January 2007

**FINAL**

*11/04/2007*

*This judgment will become final in the circumstances set out in Article 44 § 2 of the Convention. It may be subject to editorial revision.*



**In the case of Kuznetsov and Others v. Russia,**

The European Court of Human Rights (Former Section I), sitting as a Chamber composed of:

Mr C.L. ROZAKIS, *President*,

Mr P. LORENZEN,

Mrs S. BOTOCHAROVA,

Mr A. KOVLER,

Mr V. ZAGREBELSKY,

Mrs E. STEINER,

Mr K. HAJIYEV, *judges*,

and Mr S. NIELSEN, *Section Registrar*,

Having deliberated in private on 7 December 2006,

Delivers the following judgment, which was adopted on that date:

**PROCEDURE**

1. The case originated in an application (no. 184/02) against the Russian Federation lodged with the Court under Article 34 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (“the Convention”) by Mr Konstantin Nikanorovich Kuznetsov and one hundred and two other Russian nationals whose names are listed in the schedule (“the applicants”), on 17 December 2001.

2. The applicants were represented before the Court by Mr A. Leontyev and Mr J. Burns, lawyers practising in St. Petersburg and Mr R. Daniel, a barrister of the Bar of England and Wales. The Russian Government (“the Government”) were represented by Mr P. Laptev, Representative of the Russian Federation at the European Court of Human Rights.

3. The applicants alleged, in particular, a violation of Articles 8, 9, 10 and 11 of the Convention, taken alone or in conjunction with Article 14 of the Convention, in that their meeting for religious worship had been unlawfully disrupted. They further complained under Articles 6 and 13 of the Convention that they had been denied a fair hearing and an effective remedy for their grievances.

4. A hearing took place in public in the Human Rights Building, Strasbourg, on 9 September 2004 (Rule 54 § 3).

There appeared before the Court:

**(a) for the Government**

Mr P. LAPTEV, Representative of the Russian Federation at the European Court of Human Rights,

Mr Y. BERESTNEV,

Mr D. YUZVIKOV,

*Counsel,  
Adviser;*

(b) *for the applicants*

Mr R. DANIEL,

*Counsel,*

Mr A. LEONTYEV,

Mr J. BURNS,

*Advisers.*

The Court heard addresses by Mr Laptev and Mr Daniel.

5. By a decision of 9 September 2004, following the hearing on admissibility and the merits, the Court declared the application partly admissible.

6. The applicants, but not the Government, filed further written observations on the merits (Rule 59 § 1).

## THE FACTS

### I. THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CASE

7. The applicants are Jehovah's Witnesses. The applicant Mr Konstantin Nikanorovich Kuznetsov is a representative of the Administrative Centre of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia. The other applicants are members of the Chelyabinsk community of Jehovah's Witnesses.

#### **A. Background of the case**

##### *1. Registration of the Chelyabinsk community*

8. Between 1997 and 2001 the Chelyabinsk community of Jehovah's Witnesses filed twelve applications for State registration with the regional Department of the Ministry of Justice. Their applications were refused on 17 May 1996, 20 June and 3 November 1997, 21 January, 30 April, 28 June, 15 July and 16 December 1999, 30 June and 17 August 2000, 11 May and 24 September 2001. Each refusal was justified by reference to alleged formal defects in the registration documents.

9. The applicants complained to a court. On 24 July 2002 the Tsentralniy District Court of Chelyabinsk ruled that the refusal of 24 September 2001 had been unlawful. On 28 October 2002 the Chelyabinsk Regional Court upheld this decision and ordered the registration of the Chelyabinsk community of Jehovah's Witnesses. On 31 March 2003 the community was officially registered by the Chief Directorate of the Ministry of Justice for the Chelyabinsk Region.

## *2. Criminal investigation into the local community of Jehovah's Witnesses*

10. In the applicants' submission, Ms Yekaterina Gorina, appointed by the Chelyabinsk Regional Governor as Chairwoman of the regional Human Rights Commission (“the Commissioner”), had attempted on several occasions to initiate criminal proceedings against the Chelyabinsk community of Jehovah's Witnesses on the ground that the community had “lured” young children into their “sect”.

11. On 25 May 1999 a senior investigator with the Chelyabinsk town prosecutor's office found no indications of a criminal offence and decided not to open a criminal investigation into the activities of the members of the Jehovah's Witnesses' community.

12. Following the Commissioner's intervention, the decision of 25 May 1999 was reversed and an additional inquiry was ordered.

13. On 3 March 2000 the deputy Chelyabinsk town prosecutor again dismissed the allegations against the members of the Jehovah's Witnesses' community on the ground that no evidence pointing towards a criminal offence could be found.

## *3. Negotiation of the lease agreement*

14. On 6 February 1999 Mr Z., a member of the local community of Jehovah's Witnesses, acting on behalf of the Administrative Centre of the Religious Organisation of Jehovah's Witnesses, negotiated a lease agreement with Mr U., principal of vocational training college no. 85 in Chelyabinsk, in respect of the college auditorium and associated facilities. According to Article 1.1 of the lease agreement, the premises were rented for the purpose of holding religious meetings on Tuesdays between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. and on Sundays between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., outside the normal college teaching hours.

15. The lease agreement was intended to run from 7 February to 31 December 1999. It also contained a provision that it would be automatically renewed on the same terms and conditions and for the same period unless either side gave one month's advance notice of its intent to terminate the agreement. No such notice appears to have been given by either party. Thereafter the agreement continued to run for the extended one-year period, but with the lessees only authorised to terminate it subject to two months' notice in writing. There was no reciprocal power for the college to terminate the agreement during the extended period.

16. By April 2000 the applicants had been using the college facilities for fourteen months and had paid their rent on time and in accordance with the terms and conditions. As a means of raising additional revenue for the college, its principal entered into similar lease agreements with four other organisations.

#### *4. Attempts to terminate the lease agreement*

17. On 31 March 2000 the Chief Directorate for Vocational Training and Science of the Chelyabinsk Regional Administration issued an order prohibiting all educational establishments in the Chelyabinsk Region from renting out their premises for religious services, meetings, and so forth.

18. On 12 April 2000 the Commissioner, together with an unidentified senior police officer, visited Mr U., principal of college no. 85, and attempted to persuade him to terminate the lease agreement with the applicants. The principal refused the request. The Commissioner demanded to see the agreement and took a photocopy of it. She then asked a number of detailed questions about the days and times of the Jehovah's Witnesses' meetings. The principal provided the information.

#### **B. Alleged disruption of a religious meeting on 16 April 2000**

19. On Sunday 16 April 2000, in accordance with the lease agreement, the Jehovah's Witnesses used the college facilities. Two consecutive meetings were on the agenda. The first meeting ended without incident.

20. The second meeting, from 1.30 to 3.30 p.m., was of a group with special needs; most of the participants were profoundly deaf. Many of those in attendance were elderly and also had impaired vision. A person trained in sign language provided interpretation at the meeting, the purpose of which was to study the Bible and join in public worship. The meeting was open to the general public: attendants were positioned near the entrance to the meeting place to greet newcomers and assist with seating.

21. The first part of the meeting was a talk given from the platform by Mr Kuznetsov, who had a mastery of sign language. There were 159 persons present, including all the applicants.

22. At some time between approximately 2.10 and 2.15 p.m. the Commissioner entered the foyer which gives access from the street to the meeting place, holding a child by the hand. The applicant Mr Setdarberdi Oregeldiev, who is profoundly deaf but has no speech impairment, was the attendant on duty. He went out into the foyer to greet the Commissioner and the child and show them to a seat. Realising that the visitor was not deaf, another applicant, Mr Dmitri Gashkov, who did not have impaired speech or hearing, went to assist. He invited the Commissioner into the meeting hall and offered her a chair; she refused and said that the police were about to arrive.

23. After this brief exchange the Commissioner left the foyer. The speaker went on with his talk, which ended at approximately 2.25 p.m.

24. The second part of the meeting was conducted in sign language. This part was in progress, with about 15 minutes left and 45 minutes to go before the end of the contracted rental time of 4 p.m., when the Commissioner

again entered the foyer, this time without the child. She was now accompanied by Mr Tomskiy, managing director of the Commissioner-affiliated commercial company Man. Law. Power, and by two senior police officers, Mr Vildanov, deputy head of the District Inspectors' Service of the Traktorozavodskiy Police Department of Chelyabinsk, and Mr Lozovyagin, a senior district inspector with the same department. Mr Tomskiy was holding and using a camcorder to film.

25. The Commissioner led the way forward and walked to the threshold of the door into the meeting hall. Mr Tomskiy was a short distance behind, filming with the camcorder. One of the applicants, Ms Lappo, who was not hearing-impaired and was sitting close to the door in a position to observe the events, later testified before the District Court as follows:

“On 16 April 2000 a woman accompanied by two police officers and a man in plain clothes came to the meeting. They stood in the entrance so that I couldn't see the programme. The Commissioner said to one of the men 'Stop the meeting', but he hesitated and said 'But they are deaf mutes'.

I told one of the congregation to go and get Konstantin [Kuznetsov]. When Konstantin came out to them there was a conversation with raised voices. The Commissioner asked if there were children in the hall and whether they were all with their parents. Then they asked Konstantin for his passport in an unpleasant manner...

...When I found out who the Commissioner was I was very displeased. I demand that you fire her from her position in the Human Rights Commission...”

When asked by the judge what the Commissioner had said to the police officer, Ms Lappo responded:

“She said: 'You – go up on to the stage and say that the congregation has to disperse'.”

26. Mr Kuznetsov approached the Commissioner and the police officers. As he was standing in the doorway with his back to the meeting hall, the police officer Mr Lozovyagin asked him for his identity papers. He also asked Mr Kuznetsov whether he had a registered residence in Chelyabinsk. Mr Lozovyagin testified before the District Court as follows:

“So I asked him [Kuznetsov] to show me his passport. It showed that he was registered in the Krasnodar Region. I told him that he did not have the right to conduct arrangements without documents”.

Mr Kuznetsov submitted that that statement had been incorrect; it was true that his registered place of birth was in the Krasnodar Region, but he also had a properly and lawfully registered temporary residence in Chelyabinsk.

27. In his testimony before the District Court, Mr Lozovyagin continued as follows:

“I told Kuznetsov that their organisation did not have the right to conduct its activities without the appropriate documents. He promised to bring the documents to the police station. I asked him to produce the documents. He said 'They exist and are

elsewhere', but which documents and where he did not say. I asked him for a document confirming his relationship to the organisation..."

Responding to the judge's question about the violations of law and order that he had observed, Mr Lozovyagin said:

"Yes, to start with a meeting of an organisation whose activities could not be confirmed by any documents... By law I had to stop the activities until the documents were produced."

This was confirmed by the police officer Mr Vildanov who spoke as follows before the District Court:

"Lozovyagin said that the meeting should no longer be conducted and that documents should be prepared giving permission [for services of worship in educational establishments]."

In their written submissions on the admissibility and merits of the case, the Government indicated that Mr Lozovyagin had invited Mr Kuznetsov to cancel all events until such time as the appropriate documents had been produced.

28. Mr Kuznetsov submitted that he had been faced with authoritarian demands and the intimidating behaviour of the Commissioner and the police and had thought it best to comply. He described the situation in the following manner:

"I believe that we were conducting the meetings on a lawful basis. Pressure was being put on me. Tomskiy gave me an official warning. I was afraid they would start removing those present at the meeting by force. Vildanov and Lozovyagin were in uniform. I understood that they were in a position of authority and must be obeyed..."

29. Mr Kuznetsov went to the platform, interrupted the Bible discussion and made an announcement in sign language: "Police. We have to submit". The attendees offered no resistance. They gathered their personal belongings and filed out of the meeting place and the foyer. The Commissioner and the police officers stood outside the building and watched; Mr Tomskiy was no longer filming.

30. According to the applicants, the Commissioner came up with several conflicting and mutually exclusive versions of her role in the events. Initially she maintained that the visit had been purely for the purpose of fact-finding; that neither she nor the police had done anything to cause the meeting to be stopped; and that Mr Kuznetsov had stopped the meeting entirely of his own free will. As the case progressed and more evidence was heard from eyewitnesses who testified to the part played by her and the police, the Commissioner eventually admitted that steps had indeed been taken to stop the meeting; however, she blamed the police. She insisted that she had made no demands to Mr Kuznetsov as the operation had been organised and carried out by the police officials. At the trial, however, she was pressed to say that she had agreed with and supported the police decision. Finally, in explaining her agreement with the police decision and



when pressed as to why, as Chairwoman of the Human Rights Commission, she had given her agreement, she gave the following answer:

“I still consider these actions to be lawful – I was defending the rights of all the children who study at college no. 85.

[Question:] In which documents is information about the danger of Jehovah's Witnesses to the neighbourhood contained?

[The Commissioner:] As far as I'm concerned, the reports in the press are sufficient.”

### **C. Termination of the lease agreement**

31. On 17 April 2000, the day after the disruption of the religious meeting, the principal of college no. 85 informed Mr Z. that the lease agreement between the college and the community of Jehovah's Witnesses would be terminated as of 1 May 2000 “because of certain irregularities committed by the college administration at the time of its signing”.

### **D. The applicants' complaints and judicial proceedings**

#### *1. Complaint to a prosecutor's office*

32. On an unspecified date the applicants complained to the Chelyabinsk town prosecutor about the actions of the Commissioner and the police officers. They requested a criminal investigation into the officials' actions.

33. The prosecutor's office put questions to the Commissioner, Mr Lozovyagin and Mr Vildanov. In their written statements of 3 May 2000 the officials claimed that they had investigated a complaint by a 15-year-old girl who had been “lured” into the Jehovah's Witnesses “sect”. The Commissioner stated that “Lozovyagin and Vildanov [had] decided to halt the event, which was being held by an unknown organisation in sign language”. Mr Lozovyagin did not deny that he had asked Mr Kuznetsov for documents and told him that the event would be halted until such time as they had been produced. Mr Vildanov testified in the same vein. As to the lawfulness of their actions, all three officials claimed that, as it was not registered with the State as a legal entity, the Chelyabinsk community of Jehovah's Witnesses had no right to hold religious services and that the lease agreement with the college principal had been null and void.

34. On an unspecified date the prosecutor's office decided not to institute criminal proceedings against the Commissioner and the police officers.

#### *2. Proceedings before the courts*

35. On 11 July 2000 the applicants filed a civil complaint with the Sovietskiy District Court of Chelyabinsk alleging unlawful actions on the part of the Commissioner.

36. On 13 November 2000 the applicants amended their complaint and joined Mr Tomskiy, Mr Lozovyagin, Mr Vildanov and Mr Kuryshkin, deputy head of the Traktorozavodskiy police department, as co-defendants. The applicants alleged violations of their rights to freedom of religion and freedom of association, as guaranteed both by the Russian Constitution and the Convention.

37. During the trial the presiding judge did not consent to the use of audio-recording equipment provided by the applicants' lawyers. However, this injunction applied only to advocates and one of the applicants was able to record the trial on a personal audio recorder.

38. On 25 January 2001 the Sovietskiy District Court of Chelyabinsk gave judgment. It found it established that the Commissioner, Mr Tomskiy, Mr Lozovyagin and Mr Vildanov had arrived at college no. 85 on 16 April on a fact-finding mission to check whether a religious meeting had been taking place there. However, as it had been Mr Kuznetsov who had got up on the stage and announced, in sign language, that the meeting was to end, the District Court found that the applicants had failed to show that the religious meeting had been terminated on the defendants' orders. As regards the assessment of the evidence given by the applicants, the District Court held as follows:

“Assessing the statements given by certain plaintiffs, and in particular by Ms Lappo and Ms Kadyrova, who claimed that they had heard Ms Gorina giving the police officers the instruction to halt the meeting and that they, in turn, had relayed it to Mr Kuznetsov... the court takes into account the fact that these individuals are interested in the outcome of the proceedings and, for that reason, the court views their submissions critically ...

During the trial, none of the State officials... admitted to taking action to halt the meeting; their position concurs with the witness statements given by many of the plaintiffs, who confirmed that they had not entered the hall but remained in the foyer”.

The District Court dismissed the applicants' complaint for their failure to prove that the early termination of the meeting had been brought about by the Commissioner and her aides.

39. The applicants filed a statement of appeal. They pointed to multiple admissions by the Commissioner and the police officers, before the District Court and in their statements to the prosecutor dated 3 May 2000, that they had instructed Mr Kuznetsov to terminate the meeting. They also submitted that the concordant statements of fifteen applicants could not be rejected as those of “interested witnesses” and that the District Court had not specified what the applicants' “interest” had been, given that no claim for damages had been filed.

40. On 28 June 2001 the Chelyabinsk Regional Court, ruling on an appeal by the applicants, upheld the judgment of 25 January 2001. The Regional Court repeated verbatim the reasoning of the District Court. It did not address the arguments set out in the statement of appeal.

### 3. *Complaint to the Ombudsman*

41. The applicants also complained about the actions of the regional Commissioner to Mr Mironov, Ombudsman of the Russian Federation.

42. On 1 December 2000 the Ombudsman sent a letter to Mr Ustinov, the Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation. The Ombudsman strongly condemned the use of derogatory terms such as “sect” and “totalitarian sect” in the documents issued by State officials. In its relevant part the letter read as follows:

“...In particular, the letter from the deputy Prosecutor General, Ye.G.Chuganov, to the Chairwoman of the Governor's Commission for Human Rights in the Chelyabinsk Region, Ye.V.Gorina, was widely distributed... It recommended using as reference material on the activity of the Jehovah's Witnesses the book *An Introduction to Sectarianism* by A. Dworkin, and the handbook *New Destructive and Occult-Related Religious Organisations in Russia*, prepared by the Missionary Department of the Moscow Patriarchate [of the Russian Orthodox Church]...

The publication referred to in the letter is highly condemnatory in respect of certain faiths. It reflects the judgment of one religious organisation about others and its contents serve to prove the 'authenticity' of one religion and the 'falseness' of the other(s)...

The situation is further aggravated by the fact that Chuganov's letter was used in trials where it was portrayed as reflecting the official stance taken by the Prosecutor General's Office of Russia. For example, in Chelyabinsk, in the course of examination of a complaint by the local community of Jehovah's Witnesses against the Chairwoman of the regional Commission for Human Rights Ms Gorina, the latter constantly referred to Dworkin's book as a handbook recommended by the Prosecutor General's Office that contained reliable information on the activity of so-called destructive sects, including the community of Jehovah's Witnesses. This was used to justify the extremely heavy-handed conduct of the municipal authorities towards the Jehovah's Witnesses, in particular their breaking-up, with the aid of the police, of the believers' prayer meeting being held on the premises which they had been renting for an extended period of time.”

## II. RELEVANT DOMESTIC LAW AND PRACTICE

### A. **Statutory provisions**

#### 1. *Constitution of the Russian Federation*

43. Article 29 guarantees freedom of religion, including the right to profess either alone or in community with others any religion or to profess no religion at all, to freely choose, have and share religious and other beliefs and to manifest them in practice.

2. *Religions Act of 26 September 1997*

44. The State may not interfere with the activities of religious associations provided that they comply with the law (section 4 § 2). State and other public officials may not use their position to foster any specific attitude towards a religion (section 4 § 4).

45. Religious associations may take the form of either a religious group or a religious organisation (section 6 § 2). A religious group carries on its activities without State registration and without obtaining legal entity status (section 7 § 1). The right to use rented property for religious purposes is conferred only on registered religious organisations; religious groups may only use premises provided by participants (section 22).

46. Services of worship and other religious rites and ceremonies may be performed without interference in buildings and structures intended for worship and their adjacent areas, and in other premises made available to religious organisations for these purposes (section 16 § 2).

3. *Law of 27 April 1993 on complaints about actions and decisions impinging upon the rights and freedoms of citizens*

47. A court of general jurisdiction may hear complaints about actions or decisions of State and public officials which infringe citizens' rights or freedoms or prevent citizens from exercising their rights and freedoms. It is incumbent on the officials concerned to demonstrate the lawfulness of their actions or decisions (section 2).

4. *Education Act of 10 July 1992 (as amended on 16 November 1997)*

48. The Education Act prohibits structural units of political parties, political and religious movements and organisations from being set up and operated in State and municipal educational establishments and education management bodies (section 1 § 5).

49. An educational establishment may lease and rent out property. Rental income must be used for educational needs (section 39 § 11).

**B. Case-law of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation**

50. On 30 July 1999 a deputy President of the Supreme Court ruled on the complaint brought by the local authorities of Kaluga against an elder of the local community of Jehovah's Witnesses who had allegedly failed to give notice of a religious meeting to the local authorities:

“...according to the Russian Law on freedom of conscience and religious associations, the phrase 'without obstruction' means that no permission from, or clearing of the matter with, the secular authorities is required for performing religious ceremonies on premises provided [for that purpose].”

51. On 14 August 2001 a deputy President of the Supreme Court ruled on a similar complaint brought by the authorities of Kislovodsk against a Jehovah's Witness in connection with an allegedly unauthorised religious gathering:

“According to Article 16 of the Russian Federation Law on freedom of conscience and religious associations, religious services and other religious rites and ceremonies can take place without any interference... in other places made available to religious organisation for that purpose... Therefore, the local religious organisation was not required to inform the State authority of its gathering.”

## THE LAW

### I. ALLEGED VIOLATION OF ARTICLES 8, 9, 10 AND 11 OF THE CONVENTION

52. The applicants complained under Articles 8, 9, 10 and 11 of the Convention that on 16 April 2000 they had been prevented from having a religious meeting without undue interference on the part of the authorities.

53. The Court notes that the main purpose of the applicants' gathering on 16 April 2000 was to join in Biblical study and public worship. In doing so they undeniably exercised their rights to freedom of expression and to freedom of peaceful assembly under Articles 10 and 11 of the Convention. That being said, since the nature of the assembly was primarily religious and the participants belonged to the religion of the Jehovah's Witnesses (see *Thlimmenos v. Greece* [GC], no. 34369/97, § 42, ECHR 2000-IV), the Court will first examine this complaint from the standpoint of Article 9 of the Convention, which reads as follows:

“1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.

2. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.”

#### A. Whether there has been interference

##### *1. Arguments by the parties*

54. The Government claimed, firstly, that the applicants had failed to produce – in the domestic proceedings or before this Court – any evidence in support of their allegation that the meeting had been disrupted. In their

submission, Mr Kuznetsov, confronted with the request to produce documents demonstrating the lawfulness of the community meeting, realised that “the meeting should not be held” and indicated to the congregation that the meeting should end. The Government also asserted that the founding documents of the Jehovah's Witnesses religious organisations did not provide for the forms of worship mentioned by the applicants – a “worship meeting” or “religious meeting”.

55. The applicants pointed to the overwhelming body of evidence submitted to the domestic courts, including statements by independent witnesses such as the college principal, to the effect that the meeting of their congregation had been disrupted following the arrival of the Commissioner and her aides. There was no requirement in law to demonstrate the lawfulness of the meeting or to show that it was “necessary” or “should be held”. In any event, Mr Kuznetsov had never made an admission of the kind alleged by the Government. The Government's attempts to reverse the burden of proof notwithstanding, it was incumbent on the intervening authorities to show that the meeting had been unlawful, which they had been unable and failed to do. As to the form of the meeting in question, the applicants considered that its actual form – be it a rite, ceremony, prayer, hymn or other liturgy – was of no relevance for the legal analysis of the alleged violation.

## 2. *The Court's assessment*

56. As enshrined in Article 9, freedom of thought, conscience and religion is one of the foundations of a “democratic society” within the meaning of the Convention. It is, in its religious dimension, one of the most vital elements that go to make up the identity of believers and their conception of life, but it is also a precious asset for atheists, agnostics, sceptics and the unconcerned. The pluralism indissociable from a democratic society, which has been dearly won over the centuries, depends on it. While religious freedom is primarily a matter of individual conscience, it also implies, *inter alia*, freedom to “manifest [one's] religion”. Bearing witness in words and deeds is bound up with the existence of religious convictions (see *Metropolitan Church of Bessarabia and Others v. Moldova*, no. 45701/99, § 114, ECHR 2001-XII, and *Kokkinakis v. Greece*, judgment of 25 May 1993, Series A no. 260-A, § 31).

57. The Court further reiterates that Article 9 of the Convention protects acts of worship and devotion which are aspects of the practice of a religion or belief in a generally recognised form (see *C. v. the United Kingdom*, no. 10358/83, Commission decision of 15 December 1983, Decisions and Reports 37, p. 142). It is undeniable that the collective study and discussion of religious texts by the members of the religious group of Jehovah's Witnesses was a recognised form of manifestation of their religion in

worship and teaching. Thus, the applicants' meeting on 16 April 2000 attracted the protection of Article 9 of the Convention.

58. The Government claimed that there had been no interference since the applicants had interrupted the meeting on their own initiative, once their attention had been drawn to the fact that they did not have the appropriate documents for holding it. The Court considers that this claim is not borne out by the materials produced before it.

59. There is nothing in the parties' submissions to indicate that the religious meeting would have been wound up ahead of time had it not been for the arrival of the Commissioner and her aides. The Government did not furnish any alternative explanation or reason for the early termination of the applicants' meeting. The Court therefore considers that there was a causal link between their arrival at the site and the disruption of the meeting.

60. It is not contested that the command to halt the meeting was given by Mr Kuznetsov, who had gone on stage and indicated, in sign language, that the police wanted the meeting to end (see paragraph 29 above). However, in so doing, he was relaying the demand of the senior police inspector, Mr Lozovyagin, who had told him that the meeting could not be continued without the appropriate documents (see paragraphs 27 and 33 above). It further appears that neither Mr Lozovyagin nor any other person in the Commissioner's team mastered sign language. For that reason they were unable to communicate directly with the audience, which consisted mostly of profoundly deaf applicants. The Court notes the testimony of the applicant Ms Lappo in the domestic proceedings. She is not hearing-impaired and witnessed an exchange between the Commissioner and one of her aides, who claimed to be unable to stop the meeting because the participants were "deaf mutes" (see paragraph 25 above). The Commissioner then told Mr Kuznetsov to disperse the gathering. The Court finds that in these circumstances Mr Kuznetsov merely acted as a medium of communication, passing on the Commissioner's order.

61. The Court further recalls that the responsibility of a State under the Convention may arise for acts of all its organs, agents and servants, even where their acts are performed without express authorisation and even outside or against instructions (see *Wille v. Liechtenstein*, no. 28396/95, Commission decision of 27 May 1997, and *Ireland v. the United Kingdom*, Commission Report of 25 January 1976, Yearbook 19, p. 512 at 758). In the present case the Government did not contest the fact that the Commissioner and the accompanying police inspectors had acted, or pretended to act, in their official capacity. The police officers wore uniforms and were perceived by the applicants as law-enforcement officials. It follows that their actions engaged the State's responsibility.

62. In sum, the Court finds that there has been interference with the applicants' right to freedom of religion in that, on 16 April 2000, the State officials caused their religious assembly to be terminated ahead of time. It

will next examine whether this interference was justified, that is whether it was “prescribed by law”, whether it pursued one or more legitimate aims enumerated in paragraph 2 of Article 9 and whether the interference was “necessary in a democratic society”.

## **B. Whether the interference was justified**

### *1. Arguments by the parties*

63. The Government asserted that the meeting had been attended by hearing-impaired and disabled children without proof of the consent of their parents or legal guardians. The Commissioner asked the police officers to assist her in verifying whether this was the case. In the Government's view, the suspected participation of children had been sufficient justification for the interference, which was “prescribed by law” and necessary for the protection of the health and rights of others.

64. The Government further alleged that the applicants had no right to use the rented premises for religious purposes. Firstly, religious groups which did not have legal entity status could only use property or premises provided by their members and the lease agreement between the Administrative Centre of the Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia and college no. 85 had therefore been void. Secondly, the Education Act prohibited religious organisations from being set up or operated in State or municipal educational establishments, both during and after school hours, and the lease agreement had therefore been void *ab initio* because it contravened this absolute prohibition and because it had been signed by the college principal acting *ultra vires*.

65. The applicants pointed out that the Government had not disputed that there had been no police documents or authorisation for the raid, that the Commissioner and Mr Tomskiy were civilians and had no legal authority to take part in a police operation and that they had travelled to the college by private car and filmed the events with a private video camera.

66. The applicants further submitted that the Government's assertion about the presence of children without parental consent was untenable in the light of the facts of the case and unsupported by any evidence. The Commissioner and police officers had never entered the auditorium but had remained in the foyer, so they could not see who was inside. They had only asked Mr Kuznetsov for the documents and never attempted to establish the identity or parentage of the minors present or any other information relating to them, either while the meeting was in progress or after its termination.

67. In so far as the Government alleged that the lease agreement had been void, the applicants contended that the Government's arguments were factually incorrect and inconsistent. The lease agreement had been signed not by a religious group which did not have legal entity status but by the



Administrative Centre of the Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia, that is, the umbrella organisation at national level, which had legal entity status. The Government had failed to specify on the basis of which facts or law the legally binding lease agreement, the terms and mutual obligations of which had been fulfilled by both parties for more than fourteen months, could be rendered void without the intervention of a judicial authority. Indeed, the validity of the agreement on the date in question (16 April 2000) was not contested and the notice of termination had only been served on the following day. Moreover, even assuming that there was a defect in the agreement, this would be a matter *inter partes* and it would not justify the disruption by a third-party civilian such as the Commissioner of a religious meeting held under the agreement.

68. Lastly, the applicants challenged the Government's reliance on the Education Act as a misinterpretation of the law. They pointed out that the community had been lawfully using an auditorium outside college hours and without involving college students or staff, whereas the legal provision invoked by the Government referred only to the setting-up of "structural units" of religious organisations.

## 2. *The Court's assessment*

69. The parties disagreed as to whether the interference had been "prescribed by law". The Government advanced several legal grounds for the acts of the Commissioner and her aides; the applicants disputed that their acts had had any legal basis. The Court will examine these grounds in turn.

70. In so far as the Government claimed that the applicants had not had the appropriate documents for holding the religious meeting, the Court observes that the Government never specified the nature of the allegedly missing documents. Furthermore, it notes the consistent case-law of the Russian Supreme Court to the effect that religious assemblies do not require any prior authorisation from, or notification to, the authorities (see paragraph 50 et seq.). It is striking that the police officer Mr Lozovyagin only asked Mr Kuznetsov about his registered home address, but did not specify what other documents he wanted to see (see paragraph 27 above). Although it is in dispute whether Mr Kuznetsov had a valid registered address in Chelyabinsk or in Krasnodar, this issue is obviously of no relevance to the legal ability of the other applicants to hold a service of religious worship. It follows that the Government's allegation that the applicants lacked the appropriate documents for the religious meeting has not been made out.

71. As regards the validity of the lease agreement, the Court notes at the outset that, contrary to the Government's submission, it was entered into by the organisation of the Jehovah's Witnesses officially registered at national level rather than by the local religious group which did not have legal entity

status. The lease had no obvious legal defect and by the date of the events it had been duly fulfilled by both parties for at least fourteen months. By 16 April 2000 there had been no eviction order, no pending court proceedings and no other legal challenges to the validity of the lease agreement. Nor has it been claimed that the administrative order of 31 March 2000 prohibiting colleges from renting out their premises for religious meetings had affected the validity of earlier leases retrospectively. It follows that the applicants had a lawful contractual basis for using the college premises on 16 April 2000.

72. The Government also claimed that the holding of the meeting on the college premises had been contrary to section 1 § 5 of the Education Act (cited in paragraph 48 above). The Court observes, however, that this ground was not relied upon in the domestic proceedings and that the Government relied on it for the first time in their pleadings before the Court. In any event, it appears that the Education Act expressly authorised educational establishments to rent out their premises (see paragraph 49 above). The provision on which the Government relied did not prohibit the physical use of college space by third parties, but rather the clericalisation of schools through the setting-up of religious structures involving students and/or staff. In the present case the applicants used the college premises for their meetings on Tuesday nights and on Sundays, that is, outside normal college hours, and there is no evidence that their activities interfered in any way with the educational process or involved college students or teachers. Thus, the Education Act could not serve as a legal basis for the interference.

73. Finally, the Government alleged that the Commissioner, assisted by two police officers and one civilian, had come to the meeting to investigate a complaint about the unauthorised presence of children at a religious event. The Court observes firstly that no evidence – such as, for example, a copy of the complaint or materials from a police investigation – has been produced in support of that contention. Similar allegations by the Commissioner had been examined previously by the Chelyabinsk prosecutors, who had found them unsubstantiated and decided not to institute criminal proceedings (see paragraphs 10-13 above). Furthermore, the course of action adopted by the Commissioner suggests that her purpose was to disrupt the meeting rather than to investigate a complaint of that nature. Had there been a genuine attempt to investigate the matter, the identities of the participants in the meeting should have been established and the presence of children without their parents ascertained. However, the Commissioner and the accompanying officers did neither; they did not enter the hall, but stayed behind in the foyer; the only person who was asked for documents of any kind was the applicant Mr Kuznetsov, and no checks were carried out after the termination of the meeting. Moreover, the only list of participants in the meeting available to the Court is that compiled by the applicants (see the schedule), and no person on that list was younger than

nineteen at the material time. It follows that the Government's contention that the Commissioner investigated a complaint is untenable on the facts.

74. Lastly, the Court observes that the Government did not submit any documents relating to the official powers of the Commissioner and that no such documents were produced in the domestic proceedings. There are, however, strong and concordant indications that she acted without any legal basis in pursuance of her private ends. The involvement of two senior police officers gave her intervention a spurious authority. However, the police officers were not formally subordinate to her and she had no authority to give them orders, such as the one she gave to have the meeting dispersed (see paragraph 60 above). There was no ongoing inquiry of any kind, nor had there been any complaint about disturbance of the public order or any other indication of an offence warranting police involvement. Thus, as the Court has found above, the legal basis for breaking up a religious event conducted on the premises lawfully rented for that purpose was conspicuously lacking. Against that background the Court finds that the interference was not “prescribed by law” and that the Commissioner did not act in good faith and breached a State official's duty of neutrality and impartiality vis-à-vis the applicants' religious congregation (see *Hasan and Chaush v. Bulgaria* [GC], no. 30985/96, § 62, ECHR 2000-XI). Since the Court has already found that the interference with the applicants' right was not “in accordance with the law”, this finding makes it unnecessary to determine whether it pursued a legitimate aim and was necessary in a democratic society (see *Gartukayev v. Russia*, no. 71933/01, § 21, 13 December 2005).

75. There has therefore been a violation of Article 9 of the Convention on account of the disruption of the applicants' religious meeting on 16 April 2000 by the Commissioner and her aides. In these circumstances, the Court does not consider it necessary to examine the same events from the standpoint of Articles 8, 10 or 11 of the Convention.

## II. ALLEGED VIOLATION OF ARTICLE 14 OF THE CONVENTION, TAKEN IN CONJUNCTION WITH ARTICLE 9

76. The applicants further complained under Article 14 of the Convention, taken in conjunction with Article 9, that they had been victims of discrimination on account of their religious beliefs. Article 14 reads as follows:

“The enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in [the] Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status.”

77. The Court reiterates that Article 14 has no independent existence, but plays an important role by complementing the other provisions of the

Convention and the Protocols, since it protects individuals placed in similar situations from any discrimination in the enjoyment of the rights set forth in those other provisions. Where a substantive Article of the Convention or its Protocols has been invoked both on its own and together with Article 14 and a separate breach has been found of the substantive Article, it is not generally necessary for the Court to consider the case under Article 14 also, though the position is otherwise if a clear inequality of treatment in the enjoyment of the right in question is a fundamental aspect of the case (see *Chassagnou and Others v. France* [GC], nos. 25088/94, 28331/95 and 28443/95, § 89, ECHR 1999-III, and *Dudgeon v. the United Kingdom*, judgment of 22 October 1981, Series A no. 45, § 67).

78. In the circumstances of the present case the Court considers that the inequality of treatment, of which the applicants claimed to be victims, has been sufficiently taken into account in the above assessment that led to the finding of a violation of a substantive Convention provision (see, in particular, paragraph 74 above). It follows that there is no cause for a separate examination of the same facts from the standpoint of Article 14 of the Convention (see *Metropolitan Church of Bessarabia*, cited above, § 134).

### III. ALLEGED VIOLATION OF ARTICLE 6 OF THE CONVENTION

79. The applicants complained under Article 6 of the Convention that they had been denied a fair hearing because (i) the trial judge had been manifestly biased against them and had overtly favoured the defendants; (ii) they had not benefited from the equality-of-arms principle; and (iii) the court had refused to admit their evidence and made findings that had been perverse and unsustainable in the light of the facts. Article 6, in its relevant part, provides as follows:

“In the determination of his civil rights and obligations... everyone is entitled to a fair... hearing ... by [a]... tribunal established by law...”

#### A. Arguments by the parties

80. The Government submitted that the judgments of the domestic courts did not disclose any violations of the procedural rights of the parties. Both parties had submitted their observations to the courts and the courts had made an impartial, comprehensive and thorough examination of the evidence before them.

81. The applicants submitted that the proceedings had been fundamentally defective in that the judge had rejected crucial evidence on which they had sought to rely. They pointed out that the judgment had been silent on the issue of the credibility of key witnesses, especially the Commissioner, who had given three mutually exclusive accounts of the

events. The judicial decision had not stated any reasons for rejecting the evidence given by the applicants.

### **B. The Court's assessment**

82. After the prosecutor had decided against initiating a criminal investigation into the actions of the Commissioner and her aides, the applicants lodged a civil complaint in accordance with the procedure for contesting unlawful actions on the part of State officials. The burden of proof was on the officials concerned to show that their actions had been lawful (see paragraph 47 above). The domestic courts rejected the applicants' complaint, finding that they had failed to show that the religious meeting had been terminated ahead of time on the orders of the Commissioner and/or the police officers accompanying her. The evidence produced by the applicants to that effect was rejected as emanating from "interested witnesses" (see paragraphs 38 and 40 above).

83. The Court reiterates that, according to its established case-law reflecting a principle linked to the proper administration of justice, judgments of courts and tribunals should adequately state the reasons on which they are based. Article 6 § 1 obliges courts to give reasons for their judgments, but cannot be understood as requiring a detailed answer to every argument. The extent to which this duty to give reasons applies may vary according to the nature of the decision (see *Ruiz Torija v. Spain*, judgment of 9 December 1994, Series A no. 303-A, § 29). Even though a domestic court has a certain margin of appreciation when choosing arguments in a particular case and admitting evidence in support of the parties' submissions, an authority is obliged to justify its activities by giving reasons for its decisions (see *Suominen v. Finland*, no. 37801/97, § 36, 1 July 2003). A further function of a reasoned decision is to demonstrate to the parties that they have been heard. Moreover, a reasoned decision affords a party the possibility to appeal against it, as well as the possibility of having the decision reviewed by an appellate body. It is only by giving a reasoned decision that there can be public scrutiny of the administration of justice (see *Hirvisaari v. Finland*, no. 49684/99, § 30, 27 September 2001).

84. In the present case the applicants repeatedly – in their oral and written submissions to the District and Regional Court – pointed to multiple admissions by the police officers Mr Lozovyagin and Mr Vildanov that they had instructed Mr Kuznetsov to tell the audience to end the meeting (see, in particular, their oral testimony before the District Court in paragraph 27 above and their statements to the prosecutor in paragraph 33 above). The judgments of the domestic courts did not address their submissions on that issue and remained silent on that crucial point. Neither the District nor the Regional Court explained the reasons for rejecting the evidence given by those applicants who had been witnesses to the exchange between the

Commissioner, the police officers and Mr Kuznetsov and who had given concordant testimonies on the matter. The Court is struck by the inconsistent approach of the Russian courts, on the one hand finding it established that the Commissioner and her aides had come to the applicants' religious meeting and that it had been terminated ahead of time, and on the other hand refusing to see a link between these two elements without furnishing an alternative explanation for the early termination of the meeting. Their findings of fact appear to suggest that the Commissioner's arrival and the applicants' decision to interrupt their religious service had simply happened to coincide. That approach permitted the domestic courts to avoid addressing the applicants' main complaint, namely that neither the Commissioner nor the police officers had had any legal basis for interfering with the conduct of the applicants' religious event. The crux of the applicants' grievances – a violation of their right to freedom of religion – was thus left outside the scope of review by the domestic courts which declined to undertake an examination of the merits of their complaint.

85. In these circumstances, the Court finds that the domestic courts failed in their duty to state the reasons on which their decisions were based and to demonstrate that the parties had been heard in a fair and equitable manner. There has therefore been a violation of Article 6 of the Convention.

#### IV. ALLEGED VIOLATION OF ARTICLE 13 OF THE CONVENTION

86. The applicants further complaint that they did not have an effective remedy for a violation of their rights, as required by Article 13 which reads as follows:

“Everyone whose rights and freedoms as set forth in [the] Convention are violated shall have an effective remedy before a national authority notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity.”

87. The Court reiterates that the role of Article 6 § 1 in relation to Article 13 is that of a *lex specialis*, the requirements of Article 13 being absorbed by more stringent requirements of Article 6 § 1 (see, among other authorities, *Brualla Gómez de la Torre v. Spain*, judgment of 19 December 1997, *Reports of Judgments and Decisions* 1997-VIII, § 41). Consequently, it is unnecessary to examine the complaint under Article 13 separately.

## V. APPLICATION OF ARTICLE 41 OF THE CONVENTION

88. Article 41 of the Convention provides:

“If the Court finds that there has been a violation of the Convention or the Protocols thereto, and if the internal law of the High Contracting Party concerned allows only partial reparation to be made, the Court shall, if necessary, afford just satisfaction to the injured party.”

### A. Damage

89. The applicants claimed 750 euros (EUR) for each victim of the alleged violations, or an overall amount of EUR 75,000, in respect of non-pecuniary damage, representing the suffering resulting from the premeditated violation of their rights by a prejudiced State official advancing her own political ends to the detriment of a disadvantaged minority, namely the deaf Jehovah's Witnesses. They authorised Mr Kuznetsov (the forty-seventh applicant and the community elder) to receive the sum awarded and to apply it to the benefit of all the applicants.

90. The Government claimed that the amount was excessive and “not proved by the circumstances of the case”.

91. The Court has found that the applicants' religious meeting was disrupted through unlawful interference by the State officials and that the applicants did not benefit from a fair hearing. These events affected a significant number of individuals, many of whom suffered from a physical disability. The Court considers that the finding of violations would not constitute sufficient compensation for the distress and frustration the applicants must have endured. However, it finds the particular amount claimed excessive. Making its assessment on an equitable basis, it awards the applicants a global amount of EUR 30,000, plus any tax that may be chargeable on that amount, to be paid into the bank account of Mr Konstantin Kuznetsov on behalf of all the applicants.

### B. Costs and expenses

92. The applicants were represented in the domestic proceedings by three Russian lawyers at a rate of EUR 50 per hour and one paralegal at a rate of EUR 30 per hour, and in the Strasbourg proceedings by Mr Daniel, a member of the English Bar, at a rate of EUR 200 per hour. The nature of the applicants' disability made it necessary to employ specialist translators qualified in Russian, English and deaf signing. It was also necessary to prepare a verbatim transcript of the domestic hearings.

93. The applicants claimed EUR 91,059 in respect of costs and expenses relating to their legal representation. This included:

- EUR 15,290 for the preparation of the domestic trial;

- EUR 12,700 for their representation by two Russian lawyers during seventeen days' trial before the District Court;
- EUR 1,190 for a deaf signing translator during the trial;
- EUR 2,428 for other trial disbursements (meals, travel, etc.);
- EUR 2,200 for the costs of appeal to the Regional Court;
- EUR 1,736 for the preparation of the trial transcript;
- EUR 10,657 for the preparation of the application to the Court and exchange of observations;
- EUR 5,711 for attending the oral hearing;
- EUR 39,147 for Mr Daniel's fees and travel expenses.

94. The Government did not dispute the details of the calculations submitted by the applicants, submitting that any reimbursement should be reasonable and cover only real and necessary expenses.

95. The Court notes that this case was rather complex, in view of the number of the applicants and their particular disability, the length of the domestic proceedings, the seriousness of the violations alleged and the considerable number of documents involved. There was an oral hearing before the Court which required additional preparation of documents and oral submissions. The Court, however, considers excessive the amount of time spent by counsel on the case. Having regard to the materials in the case file, it awards the applicants the entire amount claimed in respect of the domestic proceedings, that is EUR 35,544, and EUR 25,000 in respect of the Strasbourg proceedings, plus any tax that may be chargeable on these amounts. The total amount of EUR 60,544 is to be paid into the bank account of Mr Konstantin Kuznetsov on behalf of all the applicants.

### **C. Default interest**

96. The Court considers it appropriate that the default interest should be based on the marginal lending rate of the European Central Bank, to which should be added three percentage points.

## **FOR THESE REASONS, THE COURT UNANIMOUSLY**

1. *Holds* that there has been a violation of Article 9 of the Convention;
2. *Holds* that no separate examination of the same issues under Articles 8, 10 or 11 of the Convention is necessary;
3. *Holds* that no separate examination of the complaint under Article 14 of the Convention is necessary;



4. *Holds* that there has been a violation of Article 6 of the Convention;
5. *Holds* that no separate examination of the complaint under Article 13 of the Convention is necessary;
6. *Holds*
  - (a) that the respondent State is to pay Mr Konstantin Kuznetsov on behalf of all the applicants, within three months from the date on which the judgment becomes final in accordance with Article 44 § 2 of the Convention, the following amounts, to be converted into Russian roubles at the rate applicable at the date of settlement:
    - (i) EUR 30,000 (thirty thousand euros) in respect of non-pecuniary damage;
    - (ii) EUR 60,544 (sixty thousand five hundred and forty-four euros) in respect of costs and expenses;
    - (iii) any tax that may be chargeable on the above amounts;
  - (b) that from the expiry of the above-mentioned three months until settlement simple interest shall be payable on the above amounts at a rate equal to the marginal lending rate of the European Central Bank during the default period plus three percentage points;
7. *Dismisses* the remainder of the applicants' claim for just satisfaction.

Done in English, and notified in writing on 11 January 2007, pursuant to Rule 77 §§ 2 and 3 of the Rules of Court.

Søren NIELSEN  
Registrar

Christos ROZAKIS  
President

**SCHEDULE – List of applicants**

<b>#</b>	<b>Name (last name, first name, and father's name)</b>	<b>Year of birth</b>
1.	Abilmazhinov Yertustik Gazizovich	1957
2.	Abrosimova Valentina Nikolaevna	1931
3.	Akimochkina Anastasia Dmitrievna	1933
4.	Alekseyeva Galina Leonidovna	1952
5.	Aptasheva Olga Alekseyevna	1974
6.	Aptasheva Valentina Alekseyevna	1977
7.	Arkadyeva Valentina Mikhailovna	1936
8.	Avdieva Valentina Petrovna	1951
9.	Batayeva Olga Vasilievna	1958
10.	Berchatov Viktor Vasilievich	1947
11.	Berkutova Nadezhda Leonidovna	1962
12.	Brovina Lyubov Alekscandrovna	not known
13.	Butina Nelli Fyodorovna	1970
14.	Chernyenko Tatiana Ivanovna	1948
15.	Cheskidova Lyudmila Ivanovna	1960
16.	Chmykhalo Galina Alekseyevna	1948
17.	Chugayeva Anna Stepanovna	1935
18.	Fattakhova Darya Ivanovna	1925
19.	Fokina Gaishura Gainullova	1953
20.	Fomina Galina Anatolievna	1957
21.	Gaas Andrey Aleksandrovich	1959
22.	Galyanova Lyubov Stepanovna	1952
23.	Gashkov Dmitri Valerievich	1975
24.	Gavrilova Tatiana Mikhailovna	1969
25.	Gerashenko Tatiana Mikhailovna	1962
26.	Goryunova Tatiana Borisovna	not known
27.	Grigoriev Aleksei Nikolayevich	1975
28.	Grigorieva Natalya Viktorovna	1977
29.	Guskova Tatiana Alekseyevna	1963
30.	Gusyeva Nina Mikhailovna	1947
31.	Israfilova Irina Leonidovna	1968
32.	Kadirova Elmira Faskhutdinovna	1978
33.	Kapashev Kurgalebek Berkutovich	1965
34.	Kapasheva Natalya Anatolyevna	1963
35.	Karpushenko Denis Sergeevich	1977
36.	Khamidullina Mavlikha Farkhitovna	1959
37.	Khudaigulova Mindiyamal Mansurovna	1960
38.	Khusainova Hadezhda Mikhailovna	1958
39.	Kochkova Aleksandra Yegorovna	1932
40.	Kotov Yevgeniy Vladimirovich	1966

41.	Kotova Alyona Petrovna	1971
42.	Kovshov Valeriy Nikolayevich	1930
43.	Kozhakhmetova Saulye Nabievna	1970
44.	Kozhevnikova Lidia Miniyakhmetovna	1946
45.	Kozhin Sergei Aleksandrovich	1979
46.	Lappo Olga Viktorovna	1977
47.	Kuznetsov Konstantin Nikanorovich	1970
48.	Lebsak Nadezhda Vasilievna	1954
49.	Levchenko Oleg Petrovich	not known
50.	Levchenko Olga Yurievna	1970
51.	Loshmanov Viktor Andreyevich	1940
52.	Lyubchenko Gennadiy Vladimirovich	1960
53.	Lyubchenko Marina Genadiyevna	1981
54.	Lyubchenko Olga Vasiliyevna	1960
55.	Makashova Madina Rayinbekovna	1976
56.	Malygina Iraida Nikolayevna	1956
57.	Mamayev Mikhail Gennadiyevich	1972
58.	Markina Vera Vasilievna	1956
59.	Matveyeva Lyudmila Vasilievna	1961
60.	Morets Fridrikh Ivanovich	1947
61.	Morets Tatiana Semionovna	not known
62.	Nadyrshinna Inna Rustamovna	1981
63.	Nizametdinova Flyura Ivanovna	1946
64.	Nizhegorodtseva Galina Borisovna	1959
65.	Nurmiyeva Lyudmila Nuritdinovna	1959
66.	Ogneva Olga Yevgenievna	1963
67.	Oregeldiev Setdarberdi	1964
68.	Oregeldieva Galina Fridonovna	1962
69.	Ovchinnikova Nina Aleksandrovna	1951
70.	Parshukov Andrei Viktorov	1973
71.	Parshukova Irina Vladimirovna	1975
72.	Peshkova Yelena Valerievna	1972
73.	Petrova Lyubov Romanovna	1927
74.	Pechenkina Maria Fyodorovna	1935
75.	Pidzhakov Sergei Borisov	1956
76.	Pidzhakova Larisa Nikolayevna	1957
77.	Pleshkova Vera Karlovna	1966
78.	Prokhorova Irina Vladimirovna	1958
79.	Puzanov Vladimir Aleksandrovich	1969
80.	Puzanova Yelena Leonidovna	1976
81.	Safiyulin Ruslan Nasritdinovich	1977
82.	Samoilova Marina Nikolayevna	1963

83.	Samsonova Yekaterina Petrovna	1926
84.	Shalakov Vladimir Konstantinovich	1941
85.	Shalakova Valentina Pavlovna	1950
86.	Shilyayeva Tamara Ivanovna	1941
87.	Sinyukin Oleg Vladimirovich	1968
88.	Sinyukina Tatiana Vladimirovna	1973
89.	Sorokina Vera Alekseyevna	1960
90.	Stepina Zoya Sergeevna	1940
91.	Sveshnikova Nina Nikolayevna	1947
92.	Taruta Tatiana Alekseyevna	1950
93.	Taskayev Ivan Mikhailovich	1940
94.	Taskayeva Anna Aleksandrovna	1933
95.	Tereschuk Larisa Igoryevna	1976
96.	Tereschuk Svetlana Yurievna	1964
97.	Tipyao Galina Pavlovna	1947
98.	Tipyao Gennadiy Ivanovich	1936
99.	Verednikova Anna Borisovna	1958
100.	Volosnikova Iraida Vladimirovna	1964
101.	Yegorova Yekaterina Grigorievna	1979
102.	Zinovieva Lyubov Porfiryevna	1927
103.	Zhuravlyova Larisa Yevgenievna	1969