

RUSSIA

Evangelical rehabilitation mission faces liquidation

Russian Supreme Court finds suspension of activity of "Transformation of Russia" legal

Rossiiskaia gazeta (07.06.2011) / HRWF (08.06.2011) - <http://www.hrwf.net> - On 7 June, the Supreme Court of the Russian federation found legal the decision regarding suspension of the activity of the Russia-wide philanthropic public organization, "Transformation of Russia," which engages in rehabilitation of drug addicts. As reported at the court, in this way the appeal of representatives of the organization was rejected.

On 8 June the Supreme Court will review the lawsuit of the Russian Ministry of Justice for liquidation of "Transformation of Russia."

In April of this year the Supreme Court turned down a request by representatives of the organization and found an order of the Ministry of Justice suspending its activity to be legal. The order had been issued in November 2010 after an inspection revealed a number of violations. In particular, there were established instances of conducting illegal business activity and use of people as free labor; the organization had not submitted information about the financing of charitable programs. In addition, a logo used on the printed and promotional products of "Transformation of Russia" is absolutely identical with the coat of arms of Moscow, which violates the law. At the Ministry of Justice it was affirmed that the organization had not eliminated a single one of the discovered violations.

Representatives of "Transformation of Russia," in protesting the decision of the Ministry of Justice, insisted that the organization has not violated legislation but is engaged in its centers in the rehabilitation and socialization of people who have fallen on hard times. The work of the organization has been accompanied by noisy scandals, dealing with the methods of reeducation it practices, as a result of which in the spring of 2009 a participant in a rehabilitation program died from a beating. At the present time, almost 400 divisions of "Transformation of Russia" are active in Russia, involving around 7,000 persons.

In rehabilitation centers there are used, inter alia, religious rituals and occupational therapy. This is not the first scandal involving organizations engaged in healing persons suffering from drug and alcohol dependency. Thus, in 2010 in Nizhnyi Tagil, Egor Bychkov, 23, who was directing a division of the "City without drugs" foundation, was given a suspended sentence for illegal imprisonment of patients. On a similar accusation, in March of this year Albert Sazhin, director of a rehabilitation center of the noncommercial "Novosibirsk against drugs" foundation, was given a four-year suspended sentence. (tr. by PDS, posted 7 June 2011)