Ukrainian Orthodox Church reports captures of churches and violations of human rights



On March 26, 2019, a press conference took place at the Kiev Laura of the Caves on ‘The Ukrainian Orthodox Church in March: the reaction of international organizations, legal action, religious conflicts in regions – figures and facts’.

It was given by Archbishop Clement of Nezhin and Priluki, head of the UOC information-education department; Bishop Victor of Baryshevka, head of the OUC representation at European international organizations; Archpriest Alexander Bakhov, head of the UOC legal department; and Archpriest Oleg Tochinsky, head of the press-service of the UOC diocese of Volyn. Among the speakers were members of the affected communities.

During the briefing, an interaction map was presented showing the capture of churches belonging to religious communities of the canonical Church.

Journalists were also informed about a legal suit filed by the UOC Metropolitan of Kiev against the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture demanding to revoke the order to undertake a religious expertize with the aim to identify religious organizations (associations) falling under Par. 7 and 8 Article 12 of the Ukrainian Law ‘On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations’.

In addition, the speakers informed journalists about the work carried out by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church on international level in March, the reaction of the international public to violations of the rights of the canonical Church’s faithful as well as the Church’s legal work and lawsuits.

By the example of the diocese of Volyn, the mechanism for capturing churches was shown as typical for all the regions in Ukraine and facts were given about violations of people’s rights because of their religious beliefs as well as cases of beating the faithful.

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