



## **His Beatitude Patriarch John X of Antioch condemns attempts to adopt at Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada the bills directed against the Ukrainian Orthodox Church**

*In reply to the letter of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia concerning the bills Nos. 4128 and 4511, which were prepared for consideration at the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and which imply the implementation of discriminatory norms directed against the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, His Beatitude Patriarch John X of the Great Antioch and All the East sent a message to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill. The message states that such legislations "aim at increasing the tension and changing the cultural identity of the whole Ukrainian society." The full text is given below.*

**Your Beatitude, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, beloved brother and concelebrant in Christ the Lord, Kyrios Kyrios Kirill. With great joy, we embrace Your Beloved person in the Lord and we say,**

Among all the pain surrounding the hearts of our people and church, and in the midst of all tragedies facing our East, we address You in this blessed period with the paschal greeting: Christ is risen.

Having received your fraternal letter N: 01/2608 dated on 16 May 2017, we would like to express our deep solidarity with Your Beatitude and with all our brothers in the Patriarchate of Moscow and all Russia.

We condemn every step, which might affect the sovereignty of the Ukrainian people, and we condemn also firmly every step, which affect the independency, authenticity, integrity and freedom of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Such restrictive legislations are condemnable since they aim at increasing the tension and changing the cultural identity of the whole Ukrainian society. We take the opportunity to reaffirm our position concerning our support to the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church recognized by the Entire Orthodox Autocephalous churches.

It is an opportunity to appeal for peace and for peacekeeping efforts. It is also an opportunity to draw the attention of the international organizations, governments and all citizens of the world to the danger of cultivating the culture of conflict and hatred instead of that of tolerance and peace.

Embracing your Beatitude in the Lord, we express our deepest solidarity with your position towards the

new events in Ukraine asking the Lord to strengthen you and to grant us the peace.

With fraternal love and respect.

Balamand, 22 May 2017.

+John X

Patriarch of Antioch and all the East

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