His Holiness Patriarch Kirill expresses his condolences to Metropolitan Agafangel of Odessa and Izmail over tragedy in Odessa, which claimed lives of dozens of people

The message reads, in particular: "the horrific news about the people, burnt to death in the House of Trade Unions in Odessa, has most strongly affected me and pierced my soul with the deepest pain. A terrible crime, which neither heart nor mind can put up with has been committed in view of the whole world."

His Eminence Agafangel

Metropolitan of Odessa and Izmail

Your Eminence, dear Vladyka,

The horrific news about the people, burnt to death in the House of Trade Unions in Odessa, has most strongly affected me and pierced my soul with the deepest pain. A terrible crime, which neither heart nor mind can put up with, has been committed in view of the whole world.

The tragic developments in Odessa have resulted in the death of dozens of people. Millions are suffering grief and despair. People fear for their relatives and for their life, as well as for the future of their country.

My heart is with you, Vladyka, with your flock, and with Odessa, which is mourning over her children, as well as with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, with all those who day after day call to peace and to end of violence in Ukraine.

I lift up my ardent prayer to God for the repose of souls of the dead, for the survival of those, whose lives doctors are fighting to save, and for the recovery of the injured. I also pray for the salvation and healing of Ukraine, for the cessation of bloodshed, and reconciliation of enemies. I pray for the people of opposite political positions to be able, by God's mercy, to hear one another and to realize that any attempts to impose one's opinion on the other by force only lead to the death of the beautiful, blessed county.

May this terrible ordeal, occurred on the radiant Paschal days, strengthen us in our commitment to follow the path of our saints – St Vladimir, Equal-to-the-Apostles, St Sergius of Radonezh, the saints of the Laura of the Caves in Kiev, St Seraphim of Sarov, numerous new martyrs of the Russian Church, and St Kuksha of Odessa. May it strengthen us in our adherence to those Christian and moral values that alone can help to save the people of Ukraine.

Let us find strength and consolation in the good tidings that Christ the Saviour has conquered death, falsehood, and enmity, and that the doors of hell will not overcome His Church.

Christ is Risen!

+KIRILL

Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

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