



Participants in the joint OSCE-UN conference are informed about discrimination of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church's faithful



On November 12, 2021, Bishop Victor of Baryshevka, head of the Representation of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to the European International Organizations, took part in the joint OSCE-UN on-line conference on the “Effective Participation of National Minorities in Economic Life as a Strategy for Conflict Prevention.”

Participating in this event held at the United Nations Office in Geneva were Director-General of the UN Office in Geneva Tatiana Valovaya, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Kairat Abdrakhmanov, and UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues Dr. Fernand de Varennes.

Present-day international law classifies as minorities not only ethnic or national groups, living in a certain territory, but also any other community of people, united by certain categories, by religious beliefs including.

Although the topic of the conference was not focused on the observance of religious rights, it also concerned their possible realization in the economic sphere, which currently is very important for the religious organizations of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, since the so-called “renaming law” and in some cases the actual discriminating policy of state and local authorities often deprive them of the realization of their economic rights. Frequently encountering refusals on different levels, the members of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church are unable to exercise their lawful rights – from receiving a plot of land for constructing a church to the access for UOC clergymen to the system of military chaplaincy.

The participants in the conference exchanged opinions on how to improve the functioning of the international mechanism for the protection of minorities’ rights and offered recommendations to the international human rights organizations and structures, reports the Synodal Department of Information and Education of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

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