The World Council of Churches has expressed concern over the situation of the Kiev Lavra of the Caves

DECR Communication Service, 21.03.2023.

‘The World Council of Churches is concerned and saddened to hear about alleged actions taken against the Ukrainian Orthodox Church’, the WCC General Secretary, Dr Jerry Pillay stated on March 17, 2023.

It was reported earlier that the state authorities demanded that the community of the Dormition Kiev Caves Lavra of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church should leave the territory of the monastery until the 29th of March.

‘It is unfortunate that such actions – including with regard to the UOC’s monastic community of the ancient Dormition Kiev Caves Lavra – appear to target the church itself, Dr Jerry Pillay stressed, ‘The

actions being taken against the UOC do appear to raise genuine questions with regard to respect for freedom of religion or belief'.

As the World Council of Churches General Secretary noted, 'We believe that it is important to protect the presence and witness of the church wherever it is found, as we proclaim the grace, peace, and love of Christ to the world'. He stated that 'The WCC will monitor this situation closely, and respond appropriately in accordance with the principles of international human rights law and the protection of religious freedom'.

As is known, on March 11, 2023, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia sent massages to the Primates of Local Orthodox Churches, several religious leaders and representatives of international organizations in which he shared his profound concern for the drastic state pressure on Orthodox Christians. Dr Jerry Pillay was among his addressees. His Holiness called 'to exert all possible efforts to prevent the coercive closure of the monastery, which will lead to the violation of the rights of millions of Ukrainian believers to religious freedom guaranteed by the Ukrainian Constitution, as well as such documents as the UN Charter, the General Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief and many other acts of international importance.

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/90145/