



## **Archbishop Theodosius of Sebastia: We demand to stop systematic persecution of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church by Kiev authorities**



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On March 27, Archbishop during his meeting with a church delegation in Jerusalem: “We resolutely condemn the systematic harassment and persecutions against the Ukrainian Orthodox Church organized by the Kiev authorities, who, as we know, are implementing western programs hostile to the entire Orthodox Church. These programs run contrary to her values and mission and threaten her very existence.”

The publication about this meeting quotes the Archbishop as saying: ‘We consider the persecution of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church as the persecution of the entire Church, since at the moment there remains a threat of evicting bishops, priests and monks from the Lavra in Kiev, this ancient historical

monument well-known as one of the largest monasteries of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.”

“The Ukrainian Orthodox Church headed by His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufry is subjected to systematic hostile campaigns with many threats and assaults,” Archbishop Theodosius noted, pointing out that “her message has always been to preserve love, brotherhood and peace.”

Archbishop Theodosius underscored: “We demand urgent actions from the entire Orthodox community for stopping these severe persecutions. His Beatitude Onufry is a holy man of God. He visited us in Jerusalem several times. He is notable for his particular humility, spirituality and wisdom. He is being guided by these principles now, at the darkest hour and under the most difficult circumstances in the historical monuments of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. We express our support to all religious leaders who have spoken about the necessity of putting an end to the persecution of the UOC.”

The hierarch expressed his hope that such statements “would become a strong deterrent for the Kiev authorities whose actions towards the Ukrainian Orthodox Church are hostile and who resort to incitement, thus carrying out the instructions of their masters.”

He continued to say: “We state that we do not recognize legitimacy of any other organization created in Ukraine to replace the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church and call on the entire Christian and civilized world to exert all possible efforts to stop systematic persecution of the UOC.”

Archbishop Theodosius of Sebastia has warned against the danger of violation that the authorities could use for the eviction of monks from their monasteries, scetes, and churches.

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