



THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Department for External Church Relations

Patriarch Kirill appeals to religious leaders and representatives of international organizations over guilty verdict pronounced by the Ukrainian court upon the metropolitan of Tulchyn and Bratslav



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His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill has written to the primates of the Local Orthodox Churches and a number of religious figures and representatives of international organizations concerning the persecution of the Metropolitan Jonathan of Tulchyn and Bratslav.

The primate of the Russian Orthodox Church has sent letters to the primates of the Local Orthodox Churches, Pope Francis, the Patriarch of the Coptic Church Tawadros II, the head of the Anglican communion the archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, the general secretary of the World Council of Churches Jerry Pillay, the secretary general of the United Nations Antonio Guterres, the secretary general of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Helga Schmid, the secretary general of the Council of Europe Marija Pejčinović Burić, the chairman of the United Nations Human Rights Commission Volker Türk and the Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights Matteo Mecacci, reports the press service of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.

Patriarch Kirill stated that “on 7th August the Vinnytsia city court pronounced sentence upon the ruling hierarch of the diocese of Tulchyn and Bratslav under the Ukrainian Orthodox Church metropolitan

Jonathan (Yeletskykh).”

As His Holiness noted, “this illegal decision was preceded by numerous attempts to exert pressure upon metropolitan Jonathan, who in spite of everything remained loyal to his Church and brothers in the Christian faith.”

According to His Holiness, the elderly and infirm bishop, widely known within the Orthodox world as an ecclesiastical composer, has been “sentenced to five years incarceration with the confiscation of property based on absurd accusations, including ‘acts aimed at the violent change or overthrow of the constitutional order or the seizure of state power,’ as well as ‘attempts to violate the territorial integrity of Ukraine.’”

“All of these accusations are absolutely worthless, and the evidence has been falsified. His Grace Jonathan, as does all the Church, prays for peace, calls for the spiritual unity of Holy Rus’, as well as defends the rights of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in exposing the canonical falsehood of schism. This is why he has been condemned,” said the Patriarch.

His Holiness believes that “in this court decision dictated by hatred towards the Ukrainian Orthodox Church we see a routine act of the blatant violation of religious freedom and an example of persecution for the faith.”

His Holiness the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia has called upon the world community, religious and political leaders, human rights organizations to “look closely at the intentional policies of the Ukrainian authorities aimed at destroying the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the continuing unpunished persecution of her bishops and clerics, monastics and laymen and women.”

Source: <https://mospat.ru/en/news/90608/>