Council of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate holds emergency meeting



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On 30th January 2024, the Council of the Estonian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) met for an emergency session at the Church of the “Quick to Hear” Icon of the Mother of God in Tallinn.

The meeting was preceded by the Liturgy. The Primate of the Estonian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Eugene of Tallinn and All Estonia, officiated at the divine service. Concelebrating with him were Bishop Lazar of Narva and Prichudye; Bishop Sergiy of Maardu, vicar of the Tallinn Diocese; and the clergy of the Tallinn and Narva dioceses.

According to the Statute, the Council is the highest governing body of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (EOC MP), consisting of all its clergymen, except non-staff and suspended priests, lay Synod members and lay parish representatives, one from every parish.

The Council was convened after the Estonian Police and Border Guard Board had denied Metropolitan Eugene's request to renew his temporary residence permit, patriarchia.ru **reports** citing **website** of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate.

After deliberation, the Council adopted a final document, expressing its resolute disagreement with the decision of the Police Board.

"Throughout the years of his service as Primate of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Eugene has been a zealous preacher of the Gospel teaching, which has earned him full support and understanding of our multi-ethnic flock, including Estonian-speaking faithful," the document reads, "Today, as unfounded complaints are being voiced against him alleging that he poses a threat to the security of Estonia, we testify that the EOC MP Primate has always been responsible in what he said, which prevented divisions amongst his flock, large in number and consisting of people of very different views. The Gospel calls us to unity in Christ, to love and longsuffering. And this, along with calls for peace and stability in the Estonian society, has been the heart of Metropolitan Eugene's homilies. The Church has inherent bonds with its Primate, similar to those existing between spiritual children and their spiritual father. So, should Metropolitan Eugene's residence permit be not renewed, it may become a severe ordeal for the whole of our Church."

"Acting through the Council, the plenitude of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate requests that Metropolitan Eugene's temporary residence permit be renewed," the document concludes.

On 29th January, members of the Estonian Orthodox Church Synod discussed a letter from the Police and Border Guard Board of 18th January, addressed to Metropolitan Eugene and informing him of proceedings to be commenced in relation to the Board's decision not to renew his temporary residence permit. The EOC MP Synod published its resolution, in which it petitioned the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Estonia to renew the temporary residence permit of Metropolitan Eugene of Tallinn and All Estonia.

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/91327/