Archbishop Theodosios of Sebastia: The Orthodox Church is subjected to unprecedented persecution and violence in Ukraine



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Archbishop Theodosius of Sebastia (Patriarchate of Jerusalem) issued an appeal to all Christian Churches of the world, noting the need for an immediate intervention and support for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which is being subjected to unprecedented persecution by government authorities in Kiev. It was emphasised that the situation is reminiscent of what this Church faced during the communist era, while today the persecution is taking a different, extremely dangerous form.

The appeal, quoted by the website of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, says: "Attacks on bishops, priests, monks and nuns, seizure of churches and monasteries, threats to ban the Church, which has been present in Ukraine for a thousand years and is the first, oldest and most ancient church in Ukraine. Silence in the face of persecution of this Church, led by His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufry, with bishops serving this Church with devotion and sincerity, as well as fathers and monks, is unacceptable. The people of this Church are attached to it and hold firmly to their belonging to it".

The archpastor is convinced that the oppression faced by the legitimate and canonical Ukrainian

Orthodox Church "should attract the attention of all Christian Churches, human rights and humanitarian organisations, as this kind of oppression is a form of religious persecution."

"Our brothers in Christ are being purposefully persecuted for belonging to the legitimate Orthodox Church. It is very important to demand from the authorities in Kiev to stop their aggressive activities and unacceptable and unjustified persecution of this fraternal Church," Archbishop Theodosius of Sebastia emphasised.

Addressing the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, he said, "From Jerusalem we express our solidarity with the Church in Ukraine, its bishops, priests and people. You are present in our prayers, and we pray that God will preserve you in these difficult times when you are being persecuted by a system that does not wish well for the Orthodox Church, whose target is you as followers of the original and only canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church."

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Archbishop Theodosius of Sebastia is a member of the international human rights organisation "The Church Against Xenophobia and Religious Discrimination". It was established in December 2023 by a number of hierarchs and clergy of the local Orthodox Churches together with the non-governmental organisations Public Advocacy, VSI Zmogaus teisiu apsauga and European institute for religion and law, which have a consultative status within the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/91550/