



## **Metropolitan Joanikije of Montenegro and the Littoral expresses support for the imprisoned abbot of Svyatogorsk Lavra**



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Metropolitan Joanikije of Montenegro and the Littoral, Serbian Orthodox Church, expressed his sincere support to Metropolitan Arseny of Svyatogorsk and the brethren of the Dormition Svyatogorsk Lavra entrusted to his care and hope “for a democratic and impartial approach to resolving the case of Vlyadyka Arseny, after which he could return to managing the monastery and continue its social activities.”

It is known that at the end of April, the Security Service of Ukraine carried out searches in the Svyatogorsk Lavra, one of the largest monasteries of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, famous in Ukraine and beyond its bounds. Suspicions on a political charge were presented to Metropolitan Arseny of Svyatogorsk, abbot of the monastery. His words said in the church were used as a basis for prosecution. Metropolitan Arseny was detained during the search, and the next day the court sent him into custody for two months without the right to bail. On May 13, the Court of Appeal left this measure of

restriction unchanged.

“We know Metropolitan Arseny as a wise pastor who is respected by his fellow bishops both in Ukraine and beyond, by the brethren of the Svyatogorsk Lavra, its numerous parishioners, pilgrims and refugees who have found shelter in the holy monastery since the beginning of the war,” says Metropolitan Joanikije’s letter published on the website of the Svyatogorsk Lavra. “Since 2014 to this day, the monastery, at its own expense and with the support of many social missions of various dioceses of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, has been consistently conducting humanitarian activities and supporting local residents not only in the difficult circumstances of wartime, but quite often in the most severe survival conditions.”

“On these holy days, we believe that the Risen Christ will not abandon His faithful servant, will bless the triumph of the law and will govern Metropolitan Arseny to return in good health to his immediate duties as the abbot of the Lavra,” Metropolitan Joanikije of Montenegro and the Littoral wrote.

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