Archbishop Theodosius of Sebastia: We oppose persecutions the Estonian Orthodox Church is suffering because of its spiritual affinity with Moscow Patriarchate



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Archbishop Theodosius of Sebastia, the hierarch of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem, issued a statement with a call to pay attention to the persecution against the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate.

Having expressed the hope that hostilities in the Gaza Strip, Ukraine and other countries of the world "would end through dialogue and the search for ways to mutual understanding, and not through war, the victims of which are innocent civilians," Archbishop Theodosius emphasized: "We also oppose the use of military conflict as an excuse for persecuting the canonical Orthodox Church in Ukraine, Estonia and other countries."

In particular, the archbishop pointed out that the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate with its “historical presence in this country” is subjected “to various kinds of oppression.”

“We call on the ruling authorities of Estonia to immediately stop these persecutions and unjust actions against the Estonian Orthodox Church, which is not a party to any political or military conflict, but, like any Orthodox Church, is an envoy of peace, love and unity,” Archbishop Theodosius wrote.

He is convinced that the use of the ongoing military conflict in Ukraine for persecuting the Orthodox Church in a number of countries is “an inhuman and uncivilized act.”

“We believe that persecution of any Orthodox Church in the world is persecution of the plenitude of the Church,” the archpastor underscored and called on “all Christian, spiritual leaders and human rights organizations to pay attention to the current persecution against the Orthodox Church in Estonia carried out under false pretences.”

The statement reads: “During the holy days of Easter, we express our support for the Estonian Orthodox Church and assure you, our beloved brothers, in our prayers in the hope that the power of good will triumph over the power of evil, and the power of life will triumph over the power of death. It is He, whose resurrection we are celebrating, who has given us life, which is Divine grace and Divine blessing. Therefore, we beseech and pray that all the wars of the world will end: in Gaza, Ukraine and in all other places. As Christians, we do not believe in the power of war, violence and murder. We believe in the power of love, mercy and the unity of the people. Our common duty now is to stand beside the Orthodox Churches that are being persecuted because of their spiritual affinity with the Moscow Patriarchate. Nowadays, when the Estonian Orthodox Church is subjected to unprecedented persecution, we must denounce the unjust measures taken against our sister Church and call for their cessation at an early date.

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