Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Awa III: Ukrainian government's support for schism and persecution of the major canonical Church is a religious pogrom against the faithful Orthodox Christians of that country



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The Primate of the Assyrian Church of the East, Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Awa III, sent a letter to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus', in which he denounced "great atrocities… committed by the local government" in Ukraine, which "are not only against the canonical Orthodox Church, but… against Christianity itself."

Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Awa III wrote, in particular: "The Ukrainian government's support for schism and persecution of the major canonical Church clearly indicates that this is a religious pogrom against the faithful Orthodox Christians of that country." He added, "It is indeed a further source of sorrow that

this campaign is being supported by many western nations and their governments. Without a doubt, we strongly condemn such acts and interference by a lay-state and its government in the internal matters and religious affairs of an autonomous and historical religious body, namely the Ukrainian Orthodox Church."

As the Primate of the Assyrian Church of the East informed His Holiness Patriarch Kirill, he had sent letters to the UN Secretary-General, Mr António Guterres, and the President of the European Parliament, Ms Roberta Metsola, "in protest of these contemptable acts on the part of the Ukrainian government." In those letters, Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Awa III outlined "many of the obvious incidents of persecution of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church" and pointed to "the founding charters of these respective international bodies which are being blatantly violated by the government of Ukraine with respect to the canonical Orthodox Church of that country." The Primate of the Assyrian Church of the East expressed his hope that the "letters will have a positive effect on those in the position of leadership of each."

Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Awa III noted that it was "with a heavy heart and deep suffering" that he read the letter of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' concerning "the urgent matter of the persecution of the canonical Church in Ukraine." He added, "We too share in their pain and will continue to pray for our brethren of the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church and carry their sufferings in our supplications before the Lord."

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