



## **Documentary "Christ's People. Our Time" about persecution of Ukrainian Orthodox Church was shown at Russian House in Beirut**



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On February 20, the Russian House in Beirut, Lebanon, hosted a presentation of the documentary "Christ's People. Our Time" telling about the persecution against the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The renowned Serbian film director Emir Kusturica also acted as its producer.

Attending the presentation were Metropolitan Antonios of Zahleh and Baalbek, the Orthodox Church of Antioch; H.E. Alexander Rudakov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Lebanon; archimandrite Philip (Vasiltsev), representative of the Russian Orthodox Church to the Antiochian Patriarchal Throne; archpriest George Freiha of the Archdiocese of Mount Lebanon; archpriest Joseph Khouri of the Archdiocese of Tyre and Sidon; Mr. Alexander A. Sorokin, director of the Russian House in Beirut; Ms. Svetlana D. Safa, member of the Coordinating Council of Russian Compatriots in the Middle East and North Africa; employees of the Russian

Embassy; and representatives of public and cultural organizations of Lebanon.

The screening was preceded by Ambassador Rudakov's welcome speech, in which he called the actions of the Ukrainian authorities against the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church outrageous. "Mass persecution of its parishioners and clergy is continuing. Western countries close eyes to all this, presenting the Ukrainian draconian orders as almost a standard of European values and human rights," he underscored.

Metropolitan Antonios said in his welcoming address: "The Ukrainian Orthodox Church and the Russian Church have a common history of the thousand years. Today, the canonical Ukrainian Church, headed by Metropolitan Onufry, is experiencing the most painful ordeals that remind us of various periods of severe persecution in the history of Christianity. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church has historically existed on this land, its roots are here, and its center is Christ, who preserves it. Bishops and priests are detained and beaten; believers are ousted from their churches. All this is happening in our days, though it seems that all these persecutions should have remained in the past. The suffering and oppression of bishops and believers of the Ukrainian Church points to the fact that this Church remains faithful to Christ and his teaching. Having withstood all the upheavals, it will certainly remain a witness to the truth, peace, and purity of faith in God."

Archimandrite Philip emphasized that the level of persecution of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is unprecedented in modern times and gave some specific examples.

The international premiere in Belgrade on September 18, 2024 was attended by His Holiness Patriarch Porfirije of Serbia. His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' attended the Russian premiere in Moscow. The film was shown at the Russian Embassy in the USA on February 13, 2025.

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