



**THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**  
Department for External Church Relations

## **Archbishop of Bălți and Fălești Marcellus speaks at the UN in defense of the rights of the faithful of the Orthodox Church of Moldova.**



**UNITED NATIONS  
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

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On 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025 the archbishop of Bălți and Fălești Marcellus spoke in Geneva at the sixtieth regular session of the UN human rights council on the problem of the mutual relationship between the Orthodox Church of Moldova and the country's authorities.

“We are extremely concerned by the position adopted by the Moldovan authorities in relation to our church. Thus, quite recently the Moldovan president Maia Sandu without any justification labelled our church an ‘instrument of influence of the Russian Federation’”, said archbishop Marcellus.

Moreover, believers are detained for very long periods when crossing the border, while some are not

allowed to leave the country, thus violating their freedom to travel, the archbishop emphasized. “Three times without any justification I was not let out of Moldova.”

Archbishop Marcellus testified that in Moldova there are instances of violent attempts to transfer the parishes of the Orthodox Church of Moldova to another religious jurisdiction. Court cases are now ongoing involving the removal from the Church of more than 800 monastery buildings and churches.

“I would like to remind the Moldovan authorities that the religious organizations of the Russian Orthodox Church conduct their activities openly in all European Union countries, of which Moldova wishes to be a part, and nobody limits their rights as a result of their canonical links with the Russian Orthodox Church. I ask the mandatories of the UN to examine the position of believers of the Orthodox Church of Moldova as part of the complaints with the special procedures of the UN, as well as to pay due diplomatic attention to the problems which I have outlined in order to change Moldova’s policies towards our Church in accordance with the international standards for the defense of human rights,’ concluded the representative of the Orthodox Church of Moldova.

Archbishop Marcellus spoke to the members of the UN council for human rights, as well as delegations of the member states of the UN and representatives of international organizations.

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