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Bulgarian Patriarch holds meeting on Ukrainian question with Cypriot hierarch and expert on combating sects



His Holiness Patriarch Neofit of Bulgaria held an inter-Orthodox meeting on countering heresies and sects on Tuesday, July 16, 2019 at the Holy Metropolis of Sofia. Gathering a number of hierarchs, clergy, and experts, the meeting aimed to find a solution to the ongoing Ukrainian ecclesiastical issue, reports the press service of the [Bulgarian Orthodox Church](#).

The Bulgarian Church is among the Local Churches that has not made any official decision whether or not to recognize the “Orthodox Church of Ukraine” created by the Patriarchate of Constantinople and Petro Poroshenko, though several individual bishops have spoken out strongly in support of the canonical Ukrainian Church and its primate His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufry of Kiev and All Ukraine.

Pat. Neofit recently discussed the matter with His Beatitude Archbishop Chrysostomos of Cyprus, who is working to coordinate the Local Churches on how

to handle the Ukrainian issue. The Bulgarian Holy Synod created a commission in October to examine the issue, though the Synod has not discussed the matter in depth yet, His Eminence Metropolitan Gabriel of Lovech recently said.

Besides His Holiness, the meeting was attended by three bishops: His Eminence Metropolitan Seraphim of Nevrokospki, His Grace Bishop Polycarp of Belogradchik, vicar of the Sofia Metropolis, and His Grace Bishop Christopher of Karpasia, a member of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus and its representative on issues relating to sects.

Also attending were Archimandrite Vasily, the protosingel of the Diocese of Sofia, Professor Alexander Dvorkin from the Orthodox University of St. Tikhon in Moscow, the President of the Russian Association of Centers for the Study of Religions and Sects, Professor Ivan Zhelev, Chairman of the Center for the Study of New Religious Movements, and Associate Professor of law Maria Koseva.

Bp. Christopher noted that inter-Orthodox meetings have been held on the topic for 10 years already, amassing about 2,000 pages of materials on countering heresies and sects, which are planned to be published. There was also a discussion on the issue of holding an inter-Orthodox educational seminar on the topic, and on the unity of the Orthodox Church in times of difficulties and divisions.

“We should monitor and prevent the growth of sectarian communities, but with the idea that we treat those who are interested in them,” Pat. Neofit commented.

Following a discussion on general issues, the meeting continued behind closed doors.

– Source: [OrthoChristian](http://OrthoChristian.com)