

## **Bartholomew's actions contributed to Black Sea region instability, undermine Minsk agreement - Russian Orthodox Church**



Moscow, Interfax – The activities of Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople are increasingly taking on a political nature, making him a factor of international destabilization in the Black Sea region, the Moscow Patriarchate said.

“In the Russian society, among religious people, there exists categorical non-acceptance of Fener’s actions. These are seen as encroaching on the unity of the Russian Orthodox Church,” a Moscow Patriarchate source told Interfax on Friday.

The Patriarch of Constantinople “is not only the head of a small Orthodox Church, he is also a Turkish citizen and his actions are bound to affect Russian-Turkish relations,” the source said.

On the other hand, Bartholomew “gladly participates in the escalation of Russian-Ukrainian relations by undermining the position of the only institute possessing the peacekeeping potential in the Russian-Ukrainian relations,” which is the Ukrainian Church led by Metropolitan Onufry, the source said.

“Both the Russian and the Ukrainian public and, perhaps, sensible people within

the political elites of the two countries will soon be wondering whether Turkish partners realize what meaning this man's actions have for tension escalation in the Black Sea region.

“Without the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, a reintegration of Donbass is not possible, because it is precisely Metropolitan Onufry who commands respect on both sides of the front line and the Church can act as a conduit in the reconciliation process, as happened more than once in European history.

“Thus, the Turkish citizen Patriarch Bartholomew, with a tacit consent of the state of his citizenship, is undermining the Minsk process and the Black Sea regional stability,” the source said.