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Moscow Patriarchate's Holy Synod to convene on Thur. to review Greek Church decisions over Ukrainian autocephaly



The Moscow Patriarchate's Holy Synod will convene on Thursday, during an extraordinary session, in order to allow members the opportunity to evaluate recent decisions by the Church of Greece's hierarchy, regarding the issue of the Tomos of Autocephaly for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

Autocephaly was granted by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople last November to the Ukrainian Church, a move bitterly opposed by the Moscow Patriarchate.

The unscheduled meeting by Holy Synod hierarchs of the Russian Church comes a day before the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All Holiness Bartholomew I, is due to arrive in Greece.

In statements carried by the Russian news agency Tass, the Metropolitan of Volokolamsk, His Eminence Hilarion, said whatever reaction and decisions by the Holy Synod first requires a “detailed analysis”.

Hilarion, who is also the chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate’s department of external Church relations and a permanent member of its Holy Synod, added that a break of communion between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Russian Orthodox Church – as dictated by His Holiness, the Russian Patriarch Kirill – has not resulted in negative repercussions for the Russian Church.

He said “...Up until now we have learned, through the press, what the Greek Church decided. Of course, the announcement after an extraordinary hierarchical meeting and the proposal by Ieronymos, the Archbishop of Athens, has been published... A reaction to this decision is pending, one which will be taken by the Holy Synod of our Church, which will convene immediately.”