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UOC requests Poroshenko to reject bill on church renaming passed by Verkhovnaya Rada



The Ukrainian Orthodox Church has requested Ukrainian President Pyotr Poroshenko to veto the bill that obliges the UOC to indicate in its official name that it belongs to the Russian Orthodox Church.

“We find this law unconstitutional and are planning to defend our rights using all legal means. We are requesting the Ukrainian president to resort to his right of veto with regard to this bill,” the UOC’s legal department said in a statement after Ukraine’s Verkhovnaya Rada passed the bill.

The bill violates freedom of religion and discriminates against millions of Ukrainian believers belonging to the UOC on a religious basis. It is also against the Ukrainian Constitution, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the UOC said.

“Ukraine is a secular state, which makes it impossible to impose, on a legislative

level, any benefits or restrictions for any kind of religious associations. And forcing the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to change its name is nothing but interference with its business that can lead to unpredictable consequences for society,” it said.

Ukraine’s Verkhovnaya Rada on Thursday approved in general a bill obliging the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate to indicate in its official name that it is part of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Source: Interfax