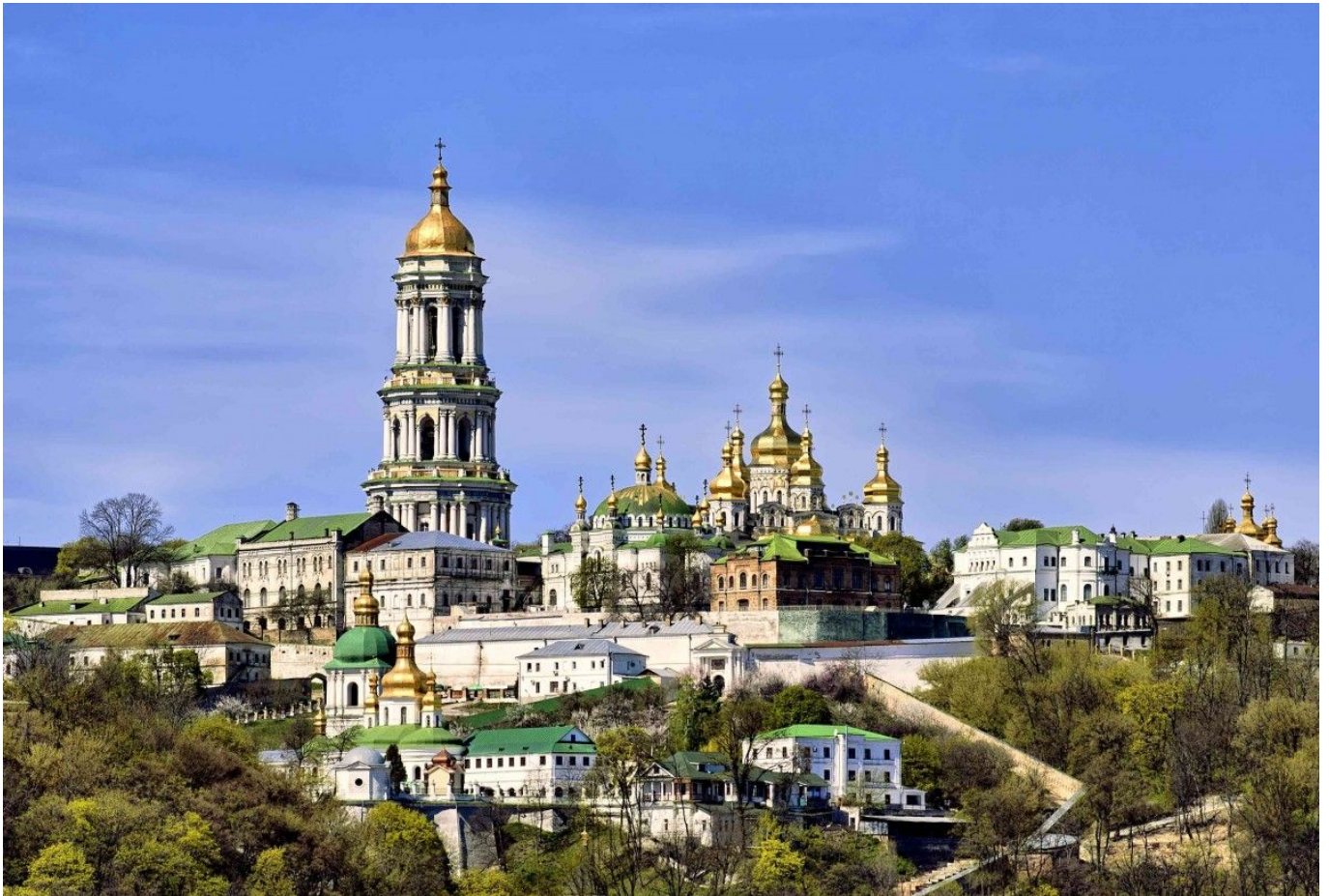


UOC lawyer: “Only the Synod of Bishops can change the Church’s name”



Only the Holy Synod, the governing body of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, can rename the canonical Church, Archpriest Alexander Bakhov, the head of the UOC’s legal department, commented on his [Facebook page](#) on Thursday, December 20, 2018.

The Ukrainian Parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, certainly doesn’t have this right, the priest writes, and even if Law No. 5309 comes into effect, it won’t automatically deprive the UOC and its dioceses, monasteries, and parishes of their correct name, Fr. Alexander explains.

Nevertheless, the Ukrainian Church has entreated President Poroshenko to veto the bill that has been sent for his approval, as the bill is nothing more than a convenient way to deprive the UOC of the right to use of state-owned churches and monasteries, as Fr. Alexander says.

Bill no. 5309, “On Amendments to the Law of Ukraine ‘On Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations’ as Regards the Names of Religious Organizations (Associations) Which are a Part of the Structure of a Religious Organization (Association), Whose Administrative Center is outside Ukraine—in the State Which, as Recognized by the Law, Committed Military Aggression against Ukraine and/or Temporarily Occupied a Part of the Territory of Ukraine,” was passed by the Verkhovna Rada yesterday and has been passed on for President Poroshenko’s signature.

He also stressed that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is registered under its current name with the relevant bodies of state power, and any attempt by the state to force a name change is illegal. Even if done through the adoption of such laws, the legal head says, it will be regarded from the point of view of international law as political interference in the internal affairs of a religious group.

Meanwhile, “Metropolitan” Epiphany of the new Ukrainian nationalist church has expressed his support for the law.

Source: orthochristian.com

Photo: unian.net