

Serbian Patriarch Irinej had a telephone conversation with President Vucic



The President of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Aleksandar Vucic and His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Irinej have had a telephone conversation. The joint statement of the two cabinets has been given below:

The President of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Aleksandar Vucic and His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Irinej have expressed great concern over the detention of His Grace Joanikije, Bishop of Budimlije and Niksic, and priests of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Montenegro, hoping that our people will act peacefully and calmly in these moments when it would be unreasonable to get involved in any riots or conflicts.

Serbian Patriarch Irinej reminds that the culmination of the hostile attitude of the state authorities of Montenegro towards the Serbian Orthodox Church has begun with the adoption of the controversial Law on Freedom of Religion and flagrant ignoring of the requirements of the Serbian Orthodox Church for having equal position with all the other churches and religious communities and for enjoying the protection of rights that our Church has been having for centuries. The fact that the adopted law has made a great displeasure of our people at the end of last year and the beginning of this year, and that the Bishop and the priests have been arrested and detained now, is the very proof that the Serbian Orthodox Church is being persecuted by the Montenegrin state authorities.

President Vucic has given full support to the Serbian Patriarch Irinej and the

bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Montenegro in their efforts to resolve all the problems they face through dialogue, peacefully, with full respect for the rights and freedoms of the Serbian Orthodox Church and expressed his hope that Bishop Joanikije and the arrested priests will be released in the shortest possible time.

[Source](#)