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Patriarch of Serbia: Ultimate goal of Montenegro govt is for Orthodox faithful, Orthodoxy not to exist there



Intense reactions followed another statement by Montenegro president Milo Đukanović over the creation of a so-called “Montenegro Orthodox Church”.

In an interview with the Afp, Đukanović, whose government has passed a controversial law that threatens to confiscate assets and relics of religious institutions in the country unless the latter can prove ownership prior to WWI, charged that the Serbian Orthodox Church is undermining his efforts to consolidate the 14-year independence of the small Adriatic country.

The contentious law and stepped up persecution of the Orthodox Church and its hierarchs in the country has generated peaceful but determined protests, as well as international condemnation by other Churches and countries.

In commenting on Đukanović's latest inflammatory statement, the Metropolitan-Bishop of Montenegro and the Littoral, His Eminence Amphilochios, underlined that the real Montenegro is the one of St. Peter the Wonder-worker, the Bishop of Argos, whose relics are preserved by the Orthodox Church there.

He added "... this Montenegro has never followed a path that leads to impasse ... but instead has followed a path that leads to eternal life."

From Belgrade, the Patriarch of Serbia, His Holiness Irinej, warned that the current Montenegro government's plan is "... for a Serbian Orthodox Church not to exist there; their ultimate goal is for the Orthodox faithful and Orthodoxy not to exist".