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Persecution for Orthodox Christians continues unabated in Montenegro, Kosovo



The situation for Serbians and Orthodoxy in Montenegro and Kosovo continues to deteriorate, threatening ethnic Serbs with displacement from the lands they've lived on for many centuries.

In Belgrade, in fact, the government referred to an organized plan to remove ethnic Serb populations.

In Montenegro, the government announced that it was easing coronavirus-related border restrictions for citizens of several countries, including Albania, Slovenia, Croatia, Germany, Hungary and Greece – but not for neighboring Serbia.

The Montenegro government has stepped up its persecution and harassment of the Orthodox Church and its clergy in the small Adriatic country, especially in the wake of the passing of a controversial law earlier this year.

The latter allows the state to confiscate assets and relics of religious institutions, if they cannot prove ownership prior to WWI.

The Orthodox Church in Montenegro charges that this law is directly aimed against it.

In Belgrade, Serbian Foreign Minister Ivica Dačić called the decision by the Montenegro government ridiculous and politically motivated.

In Kosovo, the situation for Orthodox Christians remains woeful.

The Bishop of Raska and Prizren, His Grace Teodosije, this week bemoaned the fact that local Kosovo authorities refuse to hand over the historic monastery of Dechani to the Orthodox Church, despite repeated court rulings.

The monastery continues to be guarded by NATO forces.

In another statement, His Grace emphasized the standing position of the Serbian Orthodox Church against any recognition of Kosovo as an independent state, or any territorial-ethnic division.

In a related development, Kosovo leader *Hashim* Thaci on Tuesday announced that he will not participate in EU-brokered talks to normalize relations with Serbia.