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Montenegro authorities step up persecution of Orthodox Church; trial of Bishop Ioannicus on Friday



The trial of the Bishop of Niksic, His Grace Ioannicus, along with another eight Orthodox priests in Montenegro is set to begin on Friday. All of the clergymen were arrested and held for three days by Montenegro authorities on flimsy charges of violating coronavirus-related restrictions against public assembly, early last month. A letter of protest signed by 46 university professors in the small Adriatic country expresses their heightened opposition to what they called the continuing persecution of Orthodoxy and the Orthodox Church by the current Montenegro government. Among others, the letter reads: "... we forcefully condemn the use of violence and abuse by police authorities towards achieving the political goals of one party, under the pretext of a struggle for respect of law and democracy."