14/01/2019

Met. Hilarion: UOC is going through a time of persecution by authorities



The ROC is concerned about the future of the monks and believers of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

What is happening today in Ukraine is a blatant intervention of the state in the internal affairs of the Church, reports the ROC DECR site, referring to the ROC DECR head Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk.

“At every Liturgy we offer special petitions and prayers to God that He helps our Ukrainian brothers and sisters survive at this difficult time of persecution by the Ukrainian political authorities. I deliberately call it persecution because what is happening in Ukraine is evidently an intervention of the state in the internal affairs of the Churches. It was the state which initiated the process of granting autocephaly to two schismatic groups, unified with the view of receiving this document from the Patriarchate of Constantinople. It is the Ukrainian authorities which now insist that the Ukrainian Orthodox Church should change its name. However, according to the international norms, a Church itself should choose its name; it is not for the state to grant the Church a particular name,” said Met. Hilarion.

The ROC DECR head noted that many representatives of the Ukrainian authorities are considering measures aimed at transferring the property from the canonical Church to the newly created church organization.

“It concerns, in particular, the two great monasteries – the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra and the Pochaev Lavra. Each of these monasteries has several hundred monks. Besides, the Kiev Theological Academy is located at the Kiev-Pechersk Lavra. So, it is impossible to imagine what will happen to these monks and to the students of the Theological Academy, if these properties will be transferred to the newly created church organization which has not many, but just a few monks. It is not clear at all who will be living in these monasteries and what fate awaits the monks once they are expelled from their abodes. We hope very much that it will not happen, that, as Mr. Poroshenko said many times, each person will be able to choose to which church to go and that there will be no violent seizures of monasteries, churches or other properties,” stressed Met. Hilarion.

Earlier, Archbishop Theodosius of Boyarka said that the state began to move from intimidation of believers to repression against the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. As the UOJ reported, the clergy of the Chernovtsy eparchy in an open letter reported pressure from the authorities.

(Source: Union of Orthodox Journalists)