

## **Georgian Church rebukes the pressure against it to recognize Ukrainian nationalist church**



The Georgian Patriarchate is under pressure from governmental and non-governmental forces to recognize the new Ukrainian nationalist church, according to the head of the Patriarchate's press service Archpriest Andria Dzhagmaidze.

Those who do not support autocephaly for the Ukrainian schismatics are being painted as having pro-Russian sentiments, whereas the Church has stated that it will base its eventual decision on the canon law of the Church, not on any national or ethnic considerations. For the Georgian Church, such pressure is unacceptable.

The Patriarchate of Jerusalem is also under heavy pressure to recognize the new Ukrainian structure, though it has thus far withstood the pressure.

“Increased pressure on our Church and clergy continues today under the call that

supposedly those who do not support the new church structure in Ukraine have pro-Russian sentiments. Meanwhile, the question demands careful consideration, as in both the Greek and Slavic Churches there is no unequivocal attitude towards it," Fr. Andria said, reports Interfax-Religion.

He also noted that the issue is being studied by the members of the Holy Synod and that the decision will be made solely on the basis of the canons.

His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia and His Beatitude Metropolitan Sawa of Poland have also declared that their Churches decisions against the Ukrainian schismatics are based in the canons rather than politics, though Constantinople supporters and Ukrainian nationalists refuse to believe them.

Framing the issue as one of alliances rather than of Orthodoxy, Archbishop Daniel of Pamphylia, one of Constantinople's two Exarchs to Kiev, stated in a recent interview: "Of course, the Serbian and Antiochian Churches are dependent on the ROC." The Antiochian Church also rejected Patriarch Bartholomew's request to recognize the new Ukrainian church.

The Georgian Holy Synod has repeatedly said that it would wait to see how things develop regarding Ukraine before taking a position. Most recently, it announced in December that it would make a statement sometime this month about it. The Ukrainian outlet Cerkvarium reported on Monday that 10 of the 46 bishops have openly stated their support for Ukrainian autocephaly, though it is not clear if they are all speaking in principle or specifically about the new church.

His Eminence Metropolitan Nikoloz (Pachuashvili) of Akhalkalaki, Kumurdo and Kari recently stated that while the Georgian Church is in favor of Ukrainian autocephaly in principle, they cannot serve with anathematized and self-consecrated bishops.

(Source: OrthoChristian)