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New Montenegro justice minister: Previous law on religious institutions was merely a ‘legal prop for an illegal land grab’



The new minister of Justice in Montenegro, Vladimir Leposavic, this month referred to the utterly controversial law on religious institutions, passed by the previous government in the small Adriatic country.

That law generated stern opposition by the Orthodox Church in Montenegro, with almost weekly protests and rallies held around the country.

Leposavic referred to a brazen plan that was plain for all to see, as he said, namely, a statute that would offer a legal prop for an illegal land grab.

The Serbian Patriarchate's Metropolitanate of Montenegro and the Littoral, as well as reposed Metropolitan Amphilochios, had repeatedly warned that the law aimed to seize church assets and relics, and to downgrade the Orthodox Church's stature.

In a written statement, Leposavic stated «...Today, these powers are gone. The new “Law on Freedom of Religion or Beliefs” has been written ... to align the

nation's statute book with the constitution of Montenegro and international fundamental freedoms. Normal recourse to the courts for any property dispute now reassures faith communities that their places of worship are safe.»