07/06/2021

Envoys from USA and EU visited Serbian Patriarch



His Holiness Porfirije, Serbian Patriarch, along with Their Graces Bishops: Jefrem of Banja Luka, Irinej of Backa and Teodosije of Raska-Prizren, received Mr. Miroslav Lajcak, the EU Special Representative for the dialog between Belgrade and Mr. Matthew Palmer, the US Special Envoy for Western Balkans at the Patriarchal palace in Belgrade on 4 June 2021

In a long and open discussion representatives of the EU and US informed the Patriarch and the Bishops with activities they have been undertaking in the dialog between representatives of Belgrade and Pristina. They emphasized that they are engaged in resolving problems on the lower municipal level, such as the issue of the land property of Visoki Decani Monastery; the issue of the Pristina's request to UNESCO to remove monasteries of Pec Patriarchate, Visoki Decani, Gracanica and the church of the Holy Virgin of Ljevish from the list of the World Heritage in Danger; the freedom of movement and other issues of vital importance for the everyday life of the Serbian Orthodox Church and her people in Kosovo and Metohija.

They particularly said that the ancient monasteries like Visoki Decani, Gracanica and others are for them living sites and not just cultural monuments and that it should remain so. They stressed that they are not bringing any finished or previously prepared solutions or pressures but are eager to discuss with His Holiness and the Bishops with a wish to find a fair and just solution.

His Holiness Patriarch Porfirije and the Bishops thanked to the representatives of the EU and US for their engagement which significantly may ease the life of the

clergy, monastics and the Serbian Orthodox people in Kosovo and Metohija. “Their mission” as it is based on dialog we see as based on Gospel, because being Christians we see every human being as our brother and our neighbor and are therefore always ready for a dialog. For us Kosovo and Metohija, Republic of Srpska and Montenegro are of vital importance”, said the Patriarch adding that it is not unknown that the Government in Pristina is not essentially interested in dialog, which is clearly seen from their dealing with the problems of Visoki Decani Monastery, their request addressed to UNESCO as well as everyday difficulties our Church and people throughout the southern Serbia’s province have been facing.

The highest representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church supported the dialog but only under the condition that it in no way should endanger or bring under question the interests of the Church, our people and the state of Serbia. The position of the Serbian Orthodox Church is well known – we are facing the illegal secession of the part of (Serbia’s) territory and there is no way to impose a solution which will imply the recognition of an illegal secession. Patriarch Porfirije expressed his position that through dialog we should strive towards a European solution, which is in the spirit of the European Union, where borders become softer and less important. Serbian Bishops emphasized their concern because of the behaviour of Pristina authorities towards the Serbian Orthodox Church which duly respects the local laws: “We expect the institutions to respect our Church, not to contest our name, our identity and the history of our holy sites”, said the Patriarch, adding especially that the Church does not consist only of the parish or monastery churches, clergy and monastics but also of her faithful people which were expelled from their homes and do not have the possibility to enjoy their property rights, especially in the situation when this is not possible for the world renowned monastery of Visoki Decani, despite the legally binding rulings of the Courts. For Serbs, Kosovo and Metohija is the same what Jerusalem is for Jews, and Pec Patriarchate is for the Serbian Orthodox Church that what the Vatican is for the Catholic Church.



spc.rs


Saint Joseph the Hesychast
Documentary
Click here
to watch