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MONTENEGRIN PRESIDENT'S UNLEARNED STATEMENTS DIVIDE THE COUNTRY—CHURCH STATEMENT



Ignorant statements from the President that insult Orthodox Christians only contribute to societal divisions and instability, says the Montenegrin Metropolis of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

The Church issued a press release yesterday emphasizing that as Milo Đukanović is not merely a citizen but is head of state, the Church is thus "obliged to speak out when he publicly insults and humiliates the sacred actions celebrated at our spiritual gatherings."

His political and ideological differences with the Prime Minster and other politicians is of no concern to the Church, but his abusive statements on Church topics and

figures “deeply offends the sensibilities of many Montenegrin citizens” and “in no way contribute to the stability and progress of the state.”

Moreover, President Đukanović showed his lack of knowledge of the Montenegrin Constitution when he “intended to regulate the internal life of the Serbian Orthodox Church and its dioceses in Montenegro” last year, the Church states.

Can the President not see that his interference in Church matters fail and cause him to lose the trust of the people, the Church wonders. Recall that Đukanović’s party lost for the first time in 30 years after they abused the law to attempt to seize sacred sites from the Orthodox Church.

The President is meant to guarantee peace and stability, but Đukanović “clearly abuses this function to persecute and divide citizens.”

It is especially distasteful that the President mocks other politicians for participating in Orthodox worship and mocks Orthodox rites themselves, referring to them as “licking a spoon” and “groveling on the floor,” the Church statement continues.

Such phraseology is not suitable for serious people, the Church affirms.

And even if the President has no personal respect for things he clearly knows nothing about, he should at least have “the slightest respect for Montenegrin history, in which the rites he speaks so rudely about inspired generations of our ancestors.”

“Such obscene expressions” are offensive to all Montenegrin citizens of whatever faith, the statement concludes.

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