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Russian Orthodox Church announces decision to recognize Archdiocese of Ohrid



Hierarchs of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church on Thursday announced a decision to recognize the Archdiocese of Ohrid as a "…autocephalous Sister Church," while nevertheless also using the name "Macedonian Orthodox Church".

With the decision, the Russian Church said it further inscribed the name of the previously schematic Church's Primate, His Beatitude Archbishop Stefanos, in its sacred diptychs.

Additionally, hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church expressed a hope that "…the youngest in the family of autocephalous Orthodox Churches, the Macedonian Orthodox Church- Archdiocese of Ohrid, will firmly preserve the holy Orthodox faith in purity and integrity, and keep loyalty to the Orthodox canonical tradition."

In a statement, the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, His Holiness Kirill, welcomed the granting of autocephaly to the Archdiocese of Ohrid during the

session.

Nevertheless, the decision by the Moscow Patriarchate’s Holy Synod ignored the landmark decision last May by the Sacred and Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople to resume Eucharistic communion with the Archdiocese of Ohrid, and its exclusive right to grant the Tomos of Autocephaly. At the same time, the Ecumenical Patriarchate excluded the use of the term “Macedonian” and its derivatives for the now canonical Church in the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia.

The latter is a land-locked country in the southern Balkans that lies due north of the northern Greek province of Macedonia, which approximates to historical Macedonia of antiquity and occupies more than half of geographical Macedonia.