

Bulgarian Holy Synod distances itself from Met. Daniil's letter to Greek hierarchs, Met. Daniil responds



In a letter dated May 17, His Eminence Metropolitan Daniil of Vidin of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church addressed himself to the metropolitans of the Greek Orthodox Church and other Local Churches concerning the ongoing Ukrainian Church crisis, urging them not to support the actions of the Patriarchate of Constantinople there. The Greek Church is among those that has not to date formulated an official position on the matter.

In response, at its session yesterday, the [Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Church stated](#) that the letters were sent on behalf of Met. Daniil alone, not the entire Bulgarian Church, and that the Synod “categorically distances itself” from the views expressed therein.

“The Holy Synod has made no decisions on the issues raised by Met. Daniil,” the Synod’s statement reads.

His Eminence Metropolitan Nicholas of Plovdiv traveled to Istanbul earlier in the month, where he met with Patriarch Bartholomew to relay to him that Met. Daniil’s letters do not represent the position of the Bulgarian Synod, reports the Ukrainian site [Cerkvarium](#). He explained that the Synod had created a commission to examine the Ukrainian matter and all the relevant documents in detail, and that its work was continuing and the Synod has formulated no official position yet.

A statement from His Eminence Metropolitan Gabriel of Lovech was published later in the day yesterday on the [official website of the Bulgarian Church](#) that sought to clarify the “meaning and spirit” of the Synodal statement, given the “misunderstandings and ambiguities” surrounding it.

“On the question of the new ‘church’ structure in Ukraine and the content of the tomos issued by the Ecumenical Patriarch for this structure, the Holy Synod is distinguished from the personal opinion of Met. Daniil in so far as they have not yet been the subject of a decision and have not been considered in depth,” Met. Gabriel writes.

This morning, Met. Daniil’s response to the Synodal statement was published on the [Bulgarian Patriarchate’s site](#) as well, in which he notes that he initially sent the letter in question to His Holiness Patriarch Neofit of Bulgaria and all the members of the Bulgarian Holy Synod on March 7, expressing his view on the actions of the Constantinople in Ukraine and how they “directly affect and threaten the autocephalous Bulgarian Orthodox Church-Bulgarian Patriarchate, and the Orthodox Church as a whole.”

The letter was then translated into Greek and sent in personal correspondences to the primates and metropolitans of several Local Churches, including the Patriarchates of Alexandria and Jerusalem and the Churches of Cyprus, Greece, and Albania. The letter was also sent in English to hierarchs of the Romanian Orthodox Church.

Met. Daniil also notes that at yesterday’s Holy Synod meeting, he had respectfully asked how the Synod’s opinion differs from his, though he received no answer. He then asked concrete questions: whether the Holy Synod’s opinion differs from that expressed in his letter, that the Bulgarian Church recognizes its own Patriarch as its head, and not the Patriarch of Constantinople as is claimed in the tomos given to the “Orthodox Church of Ukraine” on January 6; and whether the Synod’s opinion

differs from that expressed in his letter, that the highest instance for Church courts in the Bulgarian Church is precisely the Bulgarian Synod, and not that of the Patriarchate of Constantinople as is again claimed in the OCU tomos.

Met. Daniil further recalls that in his letter sent to hierarchs around the world, he also objected to the unilateral entry of the Patriarchate of Constantinople into the territory of another Local Church, to the claim that Constantinople has the canonical right to solve all Church issues and has the right to jurisdiction in the canonical territories of other Local Churches (as Patriarch Bartholomew wrote to Pat. Neofit in a letter dated December 24), and to the claim that Constantinople has exclusive right of jurisdiction in the diaspora.

“As the above-mentioned issues are of paramount importance for the entire Orthodox Church and directly affect the BOC-BP, we believe that it is unacceptable for the Holy Synod, by its decision of June 12 of this year, to leave its spiritual flock in bewilderment about its position on these matters,” Met. Daniil writes.

“Our conscience as an Orthodox bishop obliges us not to participate in the collective silence on these crucial issues for the Orthodox world,” he continues.

Along with his statement published today, the Bulgarian Church’s site has published Met. Daniil’s letter in [Bulgarian](#), [English](#), and [Greek](#).

– Source: [OrthoChristian](#)