

Alternative report of the World Russian People's Council, Expert Center to the National Report of the Ukraine under the Universal Periodic Report of the Human Rights Council.

On monitoring the data which is included in the book by V.Rogatin "The Persecution of Orthodoxy in Ukraine in 2014-2016", the facts of persecution of clergy and believers of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate have been systematized. In this regard, the World Russian People's Council, Expert Center would like to draw the attention of the Commissioner for the Human Rights to the following types of human rights violation in Ukraine.

Approximately 600 cases of such persecution were registered in Ukraine from 2014 to 2016. Those were: destruction of temples, killing the clergy in the zone of the so called ATO, seizure of the churches of the canonical Church in the Western Ukraine, burning of religious buildings, an active anti-church campaign in the Ukrainian media, with the aim to discredit the higher clergy, administrative and political pressure on the hierarchy of the UOC -MP, interference of the state into church life.

According to the received data, the following violations were recorded:

1. Violation of the rights of the canonical UOC-MP in the form of a state interference in the activities of religious organizations. Politicians of Ukraine regularly make statements in which the largest religious organization of Ukraine is presented as disloyal and dangerous for the state. These statements are not being criticized and opposed by the Ukrainian officials.
2. The Ukrainian officials declare their aim which is the foundation of the Ukrainian National Local Church. In particular, on July, 8, 2016, the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine A. Parubiy registered the draft resolution "On the appeal of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to Patriarch Bartholomew to grant autocephaly to the Orthodox Church in Ukraine". This decision was made despite the fact that it is against the constitutional norms, which regulate the separation of the state from the Church.
3. Violation of the rights of believers (categories: "Violation of the rights to equality and non-discrimination", "Violation of the rights to life freedom and personal inviolability", "Violation of the right to freedom of religion and belief, expression, association and the right to participate in social and political life"). Religious activists, priests are persecuted. Obstacles for implementation of religious practices and assemblies are created. Raider temptations of temples and committed.

People are attacked because of religious reasons. As for the cases of capturing temples, deliberately unjust judgments are made in favor of other religious groups that damage the UOC-MP.

4. Actions are taken against the UOC-MP, its parishioners and clergy by some nationalist and paramilitary organizations of Ukraine, including such organizations as “Right Sector”, ”Civil Corps “Azov” and others. Extremists use violence, attack the above specified categories of citizens of Ukraine, extremists commit acts of vandalism and arson against the temples, buildings and structures under the authority of the UOC-MP. At the same time, the Ukrainian state does not take any sufficient measures and administrative efforts to protect the rights of believers from extremists’ actions.

The International Public Organization World Russian People’s Council suggests the following recommendations in order to correct the situation:

1. To comply with the Constitution of Ukraine and to ensure the implementation of international norms, which guarantee the rights of religious organizations, in the territory of Ukraine. To recognize, at the state level, the inadmissibility of interfering into the activities of religious associations.
2. To stop the practice of persecuting citizens for their beliefs. In particular, it is illegal and unacceptable to prosecute and accuse citizens of separatism or encroachment on territorial integrity because of their interest in cultural concept “Russian World” and public statements, which support this concept that does not call for a change in the state system, state borders, is not a political program.
3. To take all measures against extremist and ultra-nationalist organizations and their members to prevent the violence against believers, clergy and parishioners of the UOC-MP. To raise the issue of prohibiting in court those public organizations and groups, which are involved into persecution of believers.
4. To investigate and to bring to justice those who are guilty of persecution, violence, killing priests and believers, capturing temples and desecration of places of religious worship.