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Bulletin No. 5
of Rights Violations of Ukrainian Orthodox Church
parishioners and clergy
for the period from 17.07.2019 to 20.08.2019.

Starting from January 6, 2019, after the creation of the so-called Orthodox Church of Ukraine ("OCU") and the granting of the Tomos of Autocephaly by the Ecumenical (Constantinopolitan) Patriarchate to its Primate, an unprecedented campaign was launched in Ukraine against the parishioners and clergy Local Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC).

As part of this campaign, representatives of the Ukrainian state authorities are conducting undisguised agitation for the so-called "transfer" of religious communities of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to the so-called "OCU". They are exerting administrative and military pressure against the clergy and parishioners of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church help, and are assisting the radical militarised groups, the so-called "activists" to seize churches and itemise its property which legally belongs to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. They also help to initiate the adoption of changes to national legislation that violate the Constitution of Ukraine and the fundamental rights of believers.

The main goal of this Bulletin is to inform: the clergymen and parishioners from other Local Orthodox Churches, the representatives of stateforeign governments, the mass media, human rights and expert organisations **about the most blatant violations of**

the rights of parishioners and clergymen of the UOC in Ukraine and cases of direct interference of the Ukrainian government into the affairs of the Church.

During the period from July 17, 2019 to August 20, 2019, dozens of cases of gross violations of the rights of parishioners and clergy of the UOC in Ukraine were recorded and confirmed:

1. Factual information about the seizure of churches and other cases of the use of physical force and pressure on UOC parishioners in order to forcefully transfer churches and religious communities to the jurisdiction of the "OCU":

- On July 28, during the Liturgy, unidentified men, some of whom were heavily intoxicated, illegally entered the church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the village of Susval, Volodymyr-Volynskyi Raion. Brought in from various places and led by several so-called "priests" of the newly formed "OCU" organisation, they had a specific task in mind - to disrupt the festal service and to provoke another seizure of a UOC church. They were joined by locals who have nothing to do with church life in the village. The "OCU" supporters blocked the entrance to the church, essentially taking hostage - the church rector Father Bohdan Hnatiuk, choristers, and worshipers who were present at the service, and prevented anyone from either entering or leaving the church or even passing on food to the hostages inside.

Read more: <https://епархия.укр/v-den-sviatoho-kniaza-volodymyra-zamist-radosti-nenavyst-zloba-pohrozy/>

- On Sunday, August 4, 2019, in the village of Boblyn, Turiyskyi Raion of Volyn Oblast', "OCU" supporters together with a so-called "priest" of this structure staged another provocation in the Holy Protection Church, in order to disrupt the Liturgy for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church worshippers. "OCU" supporters led by the out of town "priest" went to the church, and referring to the Protocol/Minutes of the Meeting of the Territorial Community of the village, began to demand that the UOC church be handed over to them.

In response to the failure of the UOC parishioners to recognise the legitimacy of the Protocol/Minutes that was brought by the supporters of the newly created "OCU" organisation, the latter staged a provocation by blocking the entrance to the church for UOC worshippers. But the Ukrainian Orthodox parishioners somehow managed to gain access to their church and participate in the Sunday service. According to journalists, that same so-called "priest" had participated in the provocation, which a week ago, on July 28, was arranged by "OCU" supporters in the village of Susval.

Read more: <https://news.church.ua/2019/08/08/u-pcu-nevdalo-namagayutsyazavaditi-pravoslavnim-ukrajincyam-molitisya/>

- On Sunday, August 11, 2019, in the village of Bobly, Turiyskyi Raion, Volyn Oblast', "OCU" supporters accompanied by three so-called " OCU priests " , staged another provocation at the Holy Trinity Church of the UOC - by cutting the locks to the church, and illegally entered the church, where they staged a fight.

When "OCU " representatives had already seized the church, the Vicar added, and UOC community members were starting to arrive for the service, the provocateurs began to violently grab their hands and inflict injuries right there inside the church. As a result of the provocation against the UOC community, a statement was lodged with the local police with regards to the forced illegal entry into their church building and deliberate injuries inflicted upon parishioners.

Read more: <https://news.church.ua/2019/08/11/na-volini-pid-spiv-representativeivpcu-zlovmisniki-zlamali-dveri-xramu-a-potim-pobili-viryany-upc-video/>

- On 11 August 2019, a group of radicals attacked an Orthodox priest as well as local police in an attempt to forcibly seize the local church in the village of Haluzyntsi, Derazhnyanskyi Raion, Khmelnytskyi Oblast'. The formal reason for the seizure was the unlawful re-registration of the UOC church to "OCU" jurisdiction. As early as February 11, 2019, the congregation of the UOC church's 80-strong religious community, that was chaired by the church's rector Oleksandr Honcharuk, made the decision to remain with the canonical UOC Church. At the same time, the "territorial" community, which held its meeting at the club between February 23 and 27, 2019, decided to transfer jurisdiction to the so-called "OCU". The main initiators of this "transfer" were two Catholic women, who have nothing to do with the Orthodox Church.

Read more: <https://news.church.ua/2019/08/12/u-galuzinci-na-xmelnichchini-pidchas-shturmu-xramu-upc-radikali-pobili-svyashhennika-i-policejskix/>

- On August 10, an attempt was made by "OCU" supporters to seize the church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the village of Dorotyshche, Kovel'skyi Raion. The church raiders decided to break into the church using crowbars and an angle grinder, and even called the police themselves on their way to the church, stating that there was a bomb planted in the church during the evening service.

The initiators of these highly controversial actions were Kovelskyi Raion head Mr. Andriy Broyilo - an ardent supporter of the newly created "OCU". UOC believers from Kovel and neighbouring villages called the police to come to the aid of the Orthodox community. Seeing that there was a majority on the side of the UOC faithful, the "OCU" activists held back their aggression and the police began to resolve the matter. After thoroughly examining the documents of the supporters of the conflict situation, the police found that the UOC community had all the rights to the church, while the representatives of the newly created structure were in possession of documents that were complete forgeries. The provocateurs subsequently drove away on buses, and the Orthodox believers were forced to organise a regular guard at their church.

Read more: <https://news.church.ua/2019/08/13/pravoslavni-volyniani-vchergovevidstoyali-svij-xram-vid-zaxoplennya-pravim-sector-ta-klirikami-pcu-video/>

- On August 20, 2019, representatives of the Volyn Regional State Administration(RSA) law enforcement agencies, and "OCU" supporters, attempted to seize the UOC Holy Transfiguration Church in the village of Chetvertnya, Manevytskyi Raion. A commission came from the RSA, whose job it was to "transfer" the church to the local supporters of "OCU", who illegally re-registered the UOC community and, without breaking the agreement with the old owners, concluded a new one with the regional authorities. In the presence of the RSA and the police, "OCU" supporters proceeded to cut the church door locks. When UOC believers requested that police to counteract what was happening, law enforcement officers suggested that they write a statement.

For more detailed information, see: https://strana.ua/news/217933-na-volyni-storonniki-ptsu-pytalyszakhvatit-pravoslavnyj-khram.html?fbclid=IwAR0PJ0MmTJ3C_Z2RtL0u0Kz8vmpSEFBzCfBtKbrXSrwMg0IDL_CgERTlZ9g

Also: <https://www.facebook.com/oleg.tochinsky/posts/2467211023509557>
<https://youtu.be/U8N9j2r6rEQ>

- On August 18, prior to the commencement of prayer services in the Holy Protection church in the village of the Ryasnyky, Hoshchanskyi Raion of the UOC Rivne Eparchy. "OCU" supporters armed with an order prepared by Acting Chairman of the Rivne Regional State Administration, Mr. Ihor Tymoshenko, and accompanied by their "priest" as well as radicals from neighbouring villages attempted to hold a prayer service of their own in the UOC church.

The religious community of the UOC in the village of Ryasnyky, which is much larger than the community of the UOC, is in possession of all the necessary documents that confirm that the faithful of the UOC are the sole legitimate owners of the temple. Therefore, all claims and demands of any other community are not legitimate.

On August 18, the religious community of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the village of Kalnivtsi in the Kitsman Raion of Chernivtsi Oblast' held their first prayer service in a private house after being expelled from their own church by "OCU supporters.

Read more: <https://news.church.ua/2019/08/20/pobittya-zaxoplennya-pidrobkadokumentiv-xronologiya-religijnogo-zhittya-v-ukrajini-za-ostannij-tizhden-foto-video/>

2. Cases of direct administrative and forcible pressure exerted on UOC clergy by Ukrainian state authorities .

- Archpriest Victor Zemlyanoy, the Head of the UOC Department for the Settlement of Inter-Confessional Conflicts at the Rivne Eparchy of the UOC was issued with yet another notice of suspicion by the State Security Service of Ukraine (SBU). The relevant authorities initiated criminal proceedings against the priest two years ago, and he was due to come to the Security Service of Ukraine in Rivne region on August 5, 2019 "for the announcement of changes to the previously reported notice of suspicion in the criminal proceedings, "- states the notice of suspicion. Now, the cleric from the Rivne Eparchy of the UOC will be charged under Article 161 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine "Violation of citizens' equality based on their race, nationality or religious belief" .

Read more: <https://news.church.ua/2019/08/03/rivnenske-sbu-znovu-viklikajeprotoijereya-viktora-zemlyanogo-namagatimutsya-inkriminuvati-novu-stattyu/>

Also: <https://news.church.ua/2019/08/08/this-is-completely-absurd-says-archpriest-victor-zemlyanoy-after-receiving-a-notice-of-suspicion-at-a-regional-sbu-branch-video/?lang=en>

- Another unlawful re-registration of a UOC religious community in the Rivne Regional State Administration in the favour of the so-called "OCU" . Outraged Archpriest Andriy Bezdomov and parishioners of the John the Theologian church in the village of Zabolottya, Volodymyrets'kyi Raion in Rivne Oblast', learned about this from a publication on the Internet! Members of the

Polisko-Sarnenskyi Eparchy, have noticed an alarming signal with regards to bureaucrats - that being, a return to the policy of inciting inter-confessional enmity in Ukraine during the presidency of Petro Poroshenko.

More: <https://news.church.ua/2019/08/01/chorni-rejestratori-z-rivnenskoji-oda-prodovzhuyut-bezzakonnya-poperednikiv-pererejestrovano-shhe-odnu-parafiyu-upc/>

3. The protection of the rights of UOC clergy and parishioners in the judicial field.

- On July 22, 2019, at the Sixth Administrative Court of Appeal a court hearing was held on the appeal of the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine against the decision of the District Administrative Court of Kyiv on securing the claim dated April 22, 2019 in the case No. 640/4748/19, pursuant to which the statement of the Kyiv Metropolis, Ukrainian Orthodox Church was upheld, and it is forbidden for the subjects of state registration to carry out any registration actions concerning the information contained in the Unified State Register of Legal Entities, Natural Persons, businesses and communities, in relation to the UOC Kyiv Metropolis including: monasteries, theological seminaries, and eparchies that are members of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

Read more: <https://law.church.ua/2019/07/23/shostim-apelyacijnim-administrativnim-sudom-uxvalu-sudu-pershoji-instanciji-pro-zabezpechennya-pozovu-u-spravi-pro-oskarzhennya-religijeznavchoji-ekspertizi-zalisheno-bez-zmin/>

Brief information about the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC).

The UOC is the Local Orthodox Church of the people of Ukraine, which is officially recognised by all the Orthodox Churches of the world and is in spiritual communion with them. Spiritual and prayerful unity with the entire Orthodox world is witnessed by the Patriarchs and Primate of all the Local Churches, who repeatedly come to Kyiv to concelebrate Divine services with the Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine.

The UOC is completely independent and self-governing in its administration and structure. The Administrative Centre of the UOC is located in Kyiv, Ukraine. According to the UOC Charter, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church independently elects the Primate and Bishops, ordains priests, conducts administrative and economic activities. The highest authority in the UOC belongs to the Church Council, which is made up of the bishops, ministers and parishioners of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church.

The UOC is the largest Church in Ukraine, uniting millions of believers in 12,092 territorial church communities. The UOC has 258 monasteries, 4,500 monks and 90 bishops. During the time of Ukraine's independence, thousands of churches and hundreds of monasteries have been erected and restored with donations from believers of the UOC.

The UOC has consistently advocated the unity, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine and unites the Orthodox citizens of Ukraine, regardless of their nationality, political convictions or place of residence. In all its sermons, the UOC blesses Ukraine, the Ukrainian people and the Ukrainian state.