



Archbishop Hilarion of Volokolamsk: Mass Media ignore the genocide of Serbs in Kosovo

On 5 December 2009, Archbishop Hilarion of Volokolamsk told the viewers of "The Church and the World" TV programme about the difficulties experienced by Orthodox Serbs in Kosovo.

He underscored the Western mass media intentional or unintentional neglect of the Kosovarians's problems, saying that the Serbs are living "like in a ghetto surrounded by sometimes hostile Muslim population."

The DECR chairman believes that while covering the sufferings of the Albanians in Kosovo under Milosevic the Western mass media completely ignored the fact of "actual genocide of the Serbs in Kosovo."

Archbishop Hilarion spoke about his recent visit to Kosovo where he was introduced to the real life of the Serbs whose security is guaranteed by the authorities only in case of their staying within the enclave.

"The ancient Serbian monasteries, such as Gračanica or Decani, are the enclaves surrounded by hostile people. While the UN troops protecting the residents stay there, one may not worry for their safety, but what will happen when the troops withdraw?", archbishop Hilarion asked.

He emphasized that the background of the Kosovo tragedy can be found in demography. 'Kosovo gives a vivid example of a gradual ousting of the Orthodox Serbs by the Muslims, as there are many children in their families, while the Orthodox families have only one or two children, and once an Orthodox land has become mostly Muslim," archbishop Hilarion explained.

He expressed his concern for the situation to be repeated in the areas where Christians and Muslims live, as Christians are not willing to fulfill the Gospel commandments and the Bible notion of family to bring as many children into the world as God gives. "We should think about this on the sad example of Kosovo."

Archbishop Hilarion shared his impressions on the deplorable state of the Orthodox churches on the territories abandoned by the Serbs, saying that Albanian children playing by the defiled Orthodox churches should be brought up in respect for the history of their land even if this history has not been a Muslim one."

Talking about the tasks facing Russia and world community, the DECR chairman noted the necessity to organize "pilgrimages to the holy places in Kosovo, including pilgrimages from Russia, so that the Serbs could feel our support, and the world sees our attention to these holy places."

"The main thing to do for the world community at present is to create conditions under which the Serbs could return to their home, irrespective of the recognition of Kosovo as a state," archbishop Hilarion said in conclusion.

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