

## Metropolitan Hilarion: Western human rights lawyers prefer to remain silent on the seizure of church buildings in Ukraine



Recently the European parliament called upon Ukraine to ban the Peacemaker (Mirotvorets) website, which has become a means of scaring and intimidating politicians, journalists, public and church figures and in general all those whose position differs from that of Ukrainian radicals. Can we expect the European Union to give a just evaluation also on the seizure of church buildings belonging to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, the host of the Church and the World TV programme Yekaterina Gracheva asked the Metropolitan of Volokolamsk Hilarion.

As Metropolitan Hilarion noted, the site with the deceptive name of Peacemaker is in fact aimed at inflaming hatred and enmity: “On this site are posted personal data not only of Ukrainian citizens, but also of Russian citizens and citizens of other countries. This is done in order to make them a target not only for online attacks but also for attacks in real space. Hence the call to ban this site is quite appropriate.”

However, noted the Metropolitan, the response by the Ukrainian authorities cannot but be a cause for

alarm as it was stated that the Supreme Rada is unable to ban this site. “The Ukrainian authorities are quite capable of banning certain TV channels, but cannot ban this site. I think that if there was the desire to do so, they could ban this site as well,” said Metropolitan Hilarion, expressing the hope that this site will soon cease to exist as it is “a means of inflaming hatred and enmity.”

The Metropolitan also pointed towards the need for an adequate response from those who fight for human rights with regard towards the seizure of church buildings belonging to the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church. He believes that during the presidency of Petro Poroshenko persecution was enacted against Orthodox Christians in Ukraine “who were thrown out of their churches onto the street along with priests with many mouths to feed.”

“All of this has been documented and is common knowledge. These facts were published in the media. But western human rights lawyers, with rare exceptions, prefer to remain silent about this. This is very sad because it testifies to double standards in the sphere of information policy,” Metropolitan Hilarion concluded.

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