

Table of Contents

- ***Sebastopol Catholics ask for church to be returned***
 - ***Islamic militants and Ukraine***
 - ***Soviet-era documents shed light on suppression of Ukrainian Catholic church***
 - ***Patriarch of Moscow visits Ukraine where the Orthodox Church is divided***
 - ***Intolerance and hate crimes against Jehovah's Witnesses***
 - ***Catholics in Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk get their church back***
 - ***Government passes two Kyiv Cathedrals to churches for daily use***
 - ***Legislation on foreign missionaries***
 - ***Conflict between Orthodox and Greek Catholics***
 - ***The Cabinet of Ministers has appointed Yuriy Reshetnikov head of the State Committee of Nationalities and Religions***
 - ***Ukraine police charge Nigerian pastor of evangelical church***
 - ***Orthodox fight over church building in Ukraine: St Nicholas battle in Kiev***
-

Sebastopol Catholics ask for church to be returned

RISU (25.12.2009) / HRWF Int. (26.11.2009) - Website: <http://www.hrwf.net> - Email: info@hrwf.net - The Roman Catholic parish of St. Clement in Sebastopol made another address to the city council with the request to have a church returned where a cinema has been located since the war. On 24 December, 2009, the senior priest of the church, Fr. Yurii held a press conference on the problem.

The essence of our request to the authorities to return the church is simply to restore justice, both social and civic, for if there are successors, parishioners and the church, a religious building, a holy place for part of the Sebastopol community, why not return it?" According to the priest, "an idea was voiced a few times that there was no church, that only ruins were left and the cinema was built on the foundations thereof after the war. But this is not true," said the priest.

According to Fr. Yurii, the issue is "being settled" for 12 years now. "First of all, there was the following manipulation: before the mid 1990s the church was owned by the state and the state administration had the prerogative in the question of returning it," noted the priest. But the "officials did not have the guts to use their powers and return the church to the Sebastopol Catholics. They did transfer it, but in a very strange, still not completely understood way: allegedly to communal ownership, the settlement of the issue having been entrusted in the deputies of the city council," added the priest.

According to [UNIAN](#), the minister stressed "The question was not even included in the agenda of the city council session of October 2009 and we received a response that our request was not supported by the deputies and that it remains expedient to use the Friendship Cinema, meaning that our church is still like a cinema."

Islamic militants and Ukraine

Jamestown Foundation (2-6.11.2009) / HRWF Int. (08.11.2009) - Website: <http://www.hrwf.net> - Email: info@hrwf.net - On October 3, units of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) and Internal Ministry troops apprehended 3 men suspected of membership in an unnamed Islamic militant group in a mountainous region in the Crimea. The security forces discovered two caches of weapons, explosives and literature. A gunfight broke out and one of the militants was wounded.

Then, on October 26, Ukrainian Special Forces units detained 5 more Ukrainian citizens suspected of belonging to an international Islamic militant group operating in the Crimea. The arrests came after the authorities uncovered another cache of explosive materials, detonators, a Kalashnikov rifle, firearms manuals and propaganda materials.

According to Ukrainian authorities the men were linked to two Islamic extremist groups - al-Takfir wal-Hijra, which originated in Egypt and is active in North Africa and Hizb-ut-Tahrir which operates in Central Asia.

Ukrainian Interior Minister Yuriy Lutsenko stated:

"A network of the extreme Islamic movement al-Takfir wal-Hijra, which is banned by many countries in the world, is spreading in the Crimean territory of Ukraine."

Lutsenko also pointed out that supporters of these organizations are seeking refuge in other countries, including Ukraine and have begun publishing a newsletter linked to Hizb-ut-Tahrir, "Revival", in the Crimea.

Lutsenko also said that searches had been conducted in seven residences of the extremists. TNT blocks with detonators, daggers and a large amount of extremist literature were seized at one address in Simferopol.

The militant groups appear to be targeting the Crimean Tartars, a large Muslim Turkic ethnic minority in the strategically important Crimean peninsula which is largely populated by Russians and where the headquarters of the Russian Black Fleet is located.

Over the past few years a movement to unite the Crimea with Russia has been fostered by Russian nationalists with the support of Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov and some members of the Russian state Duma.

Relations between the Crimean Tartars and the Russian population have been tense with the leadership of the Tartar community firmly advocating that the Crimea remain part of Ukraine.

According to Ukrainian media reports, "the extremists planned to pass death sentences on the leader of the Mejlis (assembly) of the Crimean Tatar People, MP Mustafa Dzemilev, and his supporters, and plotted a number of terrorist attacks in Ukraine."

Soviet-era documents shed light on suppression of Ukrainian Catholic church

By Brian Whitmore

RFE/RL (07.08.2009) / HRWF Int. (08.08.2009) - Website: <http://www.hrwf.net> - Email: info@hrwf.net - Patriarch Kirill's recent high-profile visit to Ukraine was interrupted by an unwanted visitor from the past: Josef Stalin's ghost

A five-decade-old letter from the Soviet Communist Party archives, made available to RFE/RL's Russian Service this week as Kirill was wrapping up his 10-day visit to Ukraine, illustrates the extent to which the patriarch's predecessors were involved in Stalin's efforts to wipe out the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in the 1940s.

The letter, from then-Russian Orthodox Patriarch Aleksy I to the head of the Soviet Council on Religious Affairs, Georgy Karpov, was dated December 7, 1945, when the Kremlin was consolidating control over territories in heavily Catholic western Ukraine after World War II. Karpov was a colonel in the NKVD, a predecessor to the Soviet KGB.

In the letter, Aleksy informs Karpov of an "initiative group" that was being formed in Greek-Catholic dioceses in western Ukraine that would pressure clergy to agree to disband their church and convert to Orthodoxy.

"More than 800 priests have already joined the initiative group, and it is expected that by the New Year the entire clergy will have done so with the exception of a small number of diehards," Aleksy wrote.

At the time of the letter, all of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church's bishops had been either imprisoned or exiled, making the clergy especially vulnerable to pressure as Stalin sought to eradicate the Vatican's influence.

"What strikes me most about that letter is that, within the context of the particular power relationships that were in place, [Patriarch Aleksei I] really sounds like he was trying to give a semblance of ecclesiastical credibility to what was otherwise clearly a blatant act of state intervention in Church affairs," says Andrii Krawchuk, the former president of the University of Sudbury in Ontario, Canada and the author of the book "Christian Social Ethics in Ukraine."

In another letter, published this week by the Austrian Catholic news agency Kathpress, Nikita Khrushchev, then a member of the Soviet Politburo and a high-ranking Ukrainian Communist Party official, informed Stalin of "work undertaken to dismember the [Ukrainian Greek-Catholic] church and transfer the...clergy to the Orthodox Church." That letter was dated December 17, 1945, just 10 days after Aleksy's correspondence.

Father Ihor Yatsyv, press secretary for the head of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, Lubomyr Huzar, tells RFE/RL's Russian Service that the documents shed important light on efforts by Soviet authorities to liquidate Catholicism in western Ukraine.

"The most important thing this letter illustrates is that these initiative groups were not established by the Greek-Catholic dioceses themselves, as had been previously claimed, but rather that they were inspired by the Soviet authorities," Yatsyv says.

Echoes Of The Past

Stalin allowed the Russian Orthodox Church, which had been suppressed following the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, to operate officially again from 1943 -- albeit under tight Soviet supervision -- in an effort to intensify patriotic support for the authorities during World War II and after.

"In Stalin's regime the idea was to subsume everything into one centralized aegis, namely the Russian Orthodox Church, which itself was subject to strict controls and even repression by the state," Krawchuk says.

The letters came to light as Patriarch Kirill was completing a visit to Ukraine amid criticism that the Russian Orthodox leader was carrying out the Kremlin's political agenda to bring Russia's southern neighbor back under Moscow's control.

In controversial remarks on Ukrainian television on July 28, Kirill said Russians and Ukrainians were one and the same people. He also called on Ukrainians not to forsake their values in the pursuit of closer ties with Europe.

Yatsyv was critical of Kirill's conduct during his visit, which took place from July 12-August 5, which he said "was more political than religious," and suggested that he saw echoes of Moscow's past attempts to dominate Ukraine.

"One would expect a politician from Russia or some other country that wants to establish a sphere of influence in Ukraine to use such a tone. If it is a spiritual person, the head of a church, he should be addressing spiritual and moral issues," Yatsyv says.

Yatsyv says the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church had no role in leaking the Stalin-Khrushchev letter to Kathpress. He says, however, that after the publication the church discovered that it had a copy of the letter, which it has since posted on its website.

In a meeting with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev upon returning to Moscow, Kirill called his visit to Ukraine "one of the most striking memories of my patriarchal service" and appealed for closer ties between Moscow and Kyiv.

"We must do everything we can to ensure that our people always feel a mutual closeness, while respecting the sovereignty of nations and taking into account the reality of modern politics," Kirill said.

"The people of Russia and Ukraine should feel comfortable in this common spiritual space, being a part of different nations and being the citizens of different states, but still being the sons and daughters of the Russian Orthodox Church."

Medvedev responded that "in spite of what has happened and in spite of our division into separate states, the special brotherly relations between our peoples must remain, regardless of who is in power."

Underground Seminaries

The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, which was formed by the Union of Brest in 1596, is under the authority of the Vatican but observes Byzantine rites similar to those of the Eastern Orthodox Church. It is considered an important component of national identity in western Ukraine.

According to documents from Ukrainian archives, obtained by RFE/RL's Russian Service, Stalin's security chief Lavrentiy Beria, the head of the NKVD, approved the decision to liquidate the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in January 1941.

Those plans, however, were delayed when Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941. The Soviet Union regained control over western Ukraine in the summer of 1944.

Initially, Ukrainian Greek-Catholic bishops were asked by Soviet authorities to endorse a union with the Russian Orthodox Church, but all of them refused -- and were subsequently arrested and sent into internal exile.

Under the supervision of Soviet authorities, new, more pliant, Ukrainian Greek-Catholic bishops were ordained, but this was never recognized by the Vatican.

In March 1946, just three months after the Aleksy-Karpov and Khrushchev-Stalin letters, the clergy who had joined the initiative group convened in the Western Ukrainian city of Lviv to annul the Union of Brest, dissolve the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, merge its clergy with the Russian Orthodox Church, and turn its property over to the Moscow Patriarchate.

Some clergy, however, went underground to keep the faith alive, conducting services in forests and in homes.

"The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church ceased to [officially] function in the Soviet Union, but it continued illegally, in the catacombs as we say," Yatsyv says. "There were new bishops and underground seminaries."

The Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church remained underground until for more than four decades until December 1989, during Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's liberalization, when it was allowed again to function officially.

RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service and Vladimir Tolz of RFE/RL's Russian Service contributed to this report

Patriarch of Moscow visits Ukraine where the Orthodox Church is divided

AsiaNews (27.07.2009) / HRWF Int. (01.07.2009) - Website: <http://www.hrwf.net> - Email: info@hrwf.net - The Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, Kirill arrived in Kiev today for a long pastoral visit to Ukraine until August 5. It is Kirill's first visit to Ukraine as patriarch and his second trip abroad, after his July visit to Constantinople. As was the case in his visit to the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, this journey too has very sensitive aspects to it, in view of the complex links between the various Orthodox Churches.

The successor to Alexei II arrives, in fact, in a country marked by serious divisions within the local Orthodox community. Since the 90s, there are three different churches: the Ukraine-Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP), the Ukraine-Kiev Patriarchate (UOC-KP) and the Ukrainian Autocephalous (UAOC). They are in stark contrast with one another, staunchly oppose to the rebirth of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and only the UOC-MP is recognised by Moscow and in full canonical communion with the Patriarchate.

Kirill's visit was preceded by contrasting comments. For some, the trip is a political one with the aim of helping calm the waters between the Government of Russia and Ukraine. Supporters of this theory emphasise today's meeting with the Ukrainian president, Viktor Yushchenko, the visit to the monument to the Unknown Soldier and to the victims of Holodomor, the Stalinist era famine in the 1930s that killed millions of Ukrainians.

But the program for the 10 day journey will also see Kirill visit many cities throughout Ukraine. After Kiev, the patriarch will visit Donetsk, Horlivka, Simferopol and Sevastopol, in the west of the country, and from August 2, he will travel to the center of Ukraine stopping in Rivne, Korets, Horodok, Lutsk, Volodymyr-Volynsky and Pochayiv.

For some commentators the fact that Kirill is not limiting his travel to the capital, but has decided to visit various locations in the country, is proof of the Patriarch's intention to

both reiterate the importance of Moscow and re-launch relations with the unrecognised Orthodox Churches. In this regard, the session of the Holy Synod, to be held today in Kiev has heightened expectations. This is the first time in the modern history of Ukraine that the city has hosted the meeting of the highest hierarchies of Russian Orthodoxy and Kirill has repeatedly stressed the symbolic value of the event that reaffirms Kiev as "the Southern capital of the Russian Orthodox faith."

Despite fear of demonstrations protesting against Kirill by the faithful of the UOC-KP and UAOC, Metropolitan Mefodi, head of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church, has expressed the hope that the visit of Patriarch of Moscow can be "a starting point for a new primacy of the Russian Church that - freed from ideological stereotypes - will develop a new awareness within the Moscow Patriarchate towards the problems of the Ukrainian church". For Mefodi however, "the only real way to overcome the divisions [between the churches] is a full and inter-jurisdictional dialogue to create a unified Ukrainian Orthodox Church".

Intolerance and hate crimes against Jehovah's Witnesses

HRWF Int. (01.07.2009) - Website: <http://www.hrwf.net> - Email: info@hrwf.net - Despite the liberal legislation protecting freedom of religion, members of new religious movements are victims of hate crimes committed by various actors. This is revealed by a recent report of the European Association of Christian Jehovah's Witnesses.

More than 275,000 persons are said to attend the regular Bible-study meetings organized by the 1,552 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in Ukraine. Their Religious Center was registered as a religious organization on March 30, 1992; a revised charter was reregistered on April 27, 1999, and on September 27, 2006.

However, in spite of this solid legal foundation, Jehovah's Witnesses are experiencing growing problems.

Physical violence and passivity of law enforcement forces

Violence in the village of Novi Mlyny, Brozna District, Chernigiv Region On April 20, 2009, two Jehovah's Witnesses, Tetyana Sergiyivna Zagubna, and Maria Ivanivna Tabachkova, were walking on the central street in the village of Novi Mlyny. The local Orthodox priest, Mr. Mykola Anatoliiovych Lysenko, deliberately blocked their way with his bus, then got out, took a one-meter long stick and started to fiercely hit Zagubna more than 10 times on her head, back and hands. She was then able to run away but Tabachkova, who has been an invalid from childhood, was caught up with by the priest who fiercely hit her on her back and other parts of the body, in particular, in area of the kidneys.

Lack of action of the authorities: On the same day the local inspector of the Borzna District Police Department was called to the scene of the incident. He questioned M.A. Lysenko who explained that he did not consider Jehovah's Witnesses humans. The Borzna District Police Department refused to institute criminal prosecution, saying that there was no *corpus delicti*. Neither the victims nor their representatives have received a written decision.

Violence in the Village of Kotlovyna, Renisky District, Odessa Region On June 21, 2008, in the village of Kotlovyna, Mr. Andrei Georgiovich Kapsamun, a Russian Orthodox priest, punched two Jehovah's Witnesses. He broke the jaw of Vitaliy Turko and punched Hryhoriy Petrovich Briukl a few times in his face.

Lack of action of the authorities: Investigators first refused to open a criminal case against A. G. Kapsamun. A pre-court investigation has been in process for more than 10 months but A.G. Kapsamun has not even been considered as a suspect yet. The victims have appealed many times against the decision of the Reni Prosecutor's Office, Odessa Region without any result. They also appealed six times at the General Prosecutor's Office of Ukraine but in vain.

Violence in the city of Kremenchuk, Poltava Region

On March 4, 2008, M. P. Korobko and O.L. Kalinina, two Jehovah's Witnesses, were having Bible based conversations with other inhabitants of their city, Kremenchuk. V. G. Lytvynenko started shouting at them and insulting them. When the two Witnesses tried to leave, Mr. Lytvynenko punched Kalinina on the back of her head and then hit Korobko in her face, fracturing her nose and displacing it.

Lack of action of the authorities: The Police of the Avtozavodskiy District in Kremenchuk refused to open a criminal case. That decision was appealed and the Prosecutor of the city of Kremenchuk finally accepted to open a criminal case. However, the case was transferred to the Avtozavodskiy District Court where Judge V. M. Hafiak proved to be prejudiced with regard to the victims, violating different procedural norms. The accused was finally sentenced to one year on probation on the ground of hooliganism. He never acknowledged his guilt and refused to compensate the victims.

Shot at in the village of Berezivka, Kharkiv Region

On November 10, 2008, two Jehovah's Witnesses, O. G. Polovinkin and I.V. Shestakova, were engaging in their religious activity in Berezivka. Viktor Nykyforovych Vetko insulted them and fired two shots from a revolver, but missed. He stopped only when his neighbors ran out into the street.

Lack of action of the authorities: In spite of repeated applications to the Security Service of Ukraine in the Kharkiv Region, the police department and the Prosecutor's office in the Kharkiv District, the victims never had the possibility to have a criminal case opened. The victims appealed again to the Prosecutor's office of Kharkiv Region and were told that a preliminary investigation had been carried out. They never received a copy of the procedural Decision and have therefore not had the opportunity to know the basis for the decision and to appeal against it.

Other violent attacks around the country

Similar cases happened in the city of Voznesensk, Mykolayiv District, the village of Mykulyntsi in the Ternopil Region, the village of Berezivka in the Kharkiv Region, the village of Shchelkino in the republic of Crimea, the cities of Myrgorod and Kremenchuk in the Poltava Region, Odessa, the city of Stryy in the Lviv Region, Lugansk, Sevastopol and other cities of Ukraine.

Vandalism of places of worship

Place of worship out of use in the city of Ordjonikidze, Dnipropetrovsk Region

On January 26, 2008, I.A. Kostenko threw pieces of bricks and concrete, on the religious building of Jehovah's Witnesses, in the city of Ordjonikidze, causing damage officially registered to the amount of UAH 658.40 (*). Similar attacks were made on the same religious building on 7th and 8th December, 2007. Damages in the amount of UAH 1500 were incurred by religious community of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Lack of action of the authorities: Although I.A. Kostenko fully acknowledged his guilt at the Ordjonikidze District Police Department. The police first refused to institute criminal proceedings but the city prosecutor's office finally imposed an action. However, the same city prosecutor's office refused to acknowledge the conclusions of the court technical expert according to which the damages inflicted made the building unsafe.

Other attacks to places of worship around the country

Similar acts of vandalism have happened all over Ukraine, particularly, in the city of Kryviy Rih, Dnipropetrovsk Region, the city of Zbarazh, Ternopil Region, the cities of Kramatorsk and Makeevka, Donetsk Region, the cities of Simferopil and Krasnoperekopsk, the village of Shchelkino, Republik Crimea, the cities of Kharkiv and Mykolaiv, the city of Severodonetsk, Lugansk Region, the city of Kirovograd and other cities of Ukraine.

Incitement to violence by the media

Article in the Borzna District State Administration newspaper inciting to violence

After an Orthodox priest severely beat two female Jehovah's Witnesses among which one is invalid (see case in Novi Mlyny, Brozna District, Chernigiv Region mentioned above), the Borzna District State Administration newspaper published an article that lauded the accused. This article was written in an aggressive provocative style and incited the willful use of violence against Jehovah's Witnesses, for instance trying to electrocute them by "220 volt fences."

Lack of action of the authorities: The local community of Jehovah's Witnesses submitted complaints and applications concerning the article to the local authorities, prosecutor's offices and the President's administration.

(*) At the time of the incident, 5-6 Hryvna were worth 1 EUR (In 2009, the rate is 10-11 Hryvna for 1 EUR)

Source: European Association of Jehovah's Christian Witnesses

Contact address:

Rue d'Argile 60 – 1950 Kraainem – Belgium

Tel.: ++32-2-782.00.15 - Fax ++32-2-782.05.92

jwitnesses@skynet.be

Catholics in Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk get their church back

RFE/RL (27.06.2009) / HRWF Int. (30.06.2009) - Website: <http://www.hrwf.net> - Email: info@hrwf.net - (RFE/RL) -- The Economic Court of Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk Oblast ruled on June 26 that the disputed building of the local Catholic Church should be returned to the Roman Catholic parish, RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service reports.

Regional Judiciary head Volodimir Yurchenko told journalists the court's decision will take effect in 10 days.

The saga has been brewing for over 10 years now. The building was raised as a church in 1887-90 by local Roman Catholics.

During the Soviet-era, the building was nationalized and used for various purposes. In 1998, it was privatized by a company registered in the United States.

Roman Catholics in Dnipropetrovsk have been fighting to get their church back since that time.

Government passes two Kyiv Cathedrals to churches for daily use

RISU (11.06.2009) / HRWF Int. (12.06.2009) - Website: <http://www.hrwf.net> - Email: info@hrwf.net - At its session on 10 June, 2009, the government resolved to pass St. Michael's Golden Dome Cathedral to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyivan Patriarchate and the Cathedral of the Holy Assumption of the Kyivan Cave Monastery to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Moscow Patriarchate for their daily use.

RISU was told by representatives of the Department of External Relations of the Christian Democratic Union that respective alterations in this regard were made in Resolution 1005 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 9 August, 2001: "On the use of religious buildings, outstanding monuments of architecture, which are not subject to pass to religious organizations for permanent use."

The issue was raised in an appeal by Ukrainian deputies, members of the Christian Democratic Union, Volodymyr Stretovych and Volodymyr Marushchenko.

Legislation on foreign missionaries

HRWF Int. (03.06.2009) - Website: <http://www.hrwf.net> - Email: info@hrwf.net - INSTRUCTION

To the leaders and administrative personnel of religious communities which invite foreign priests;

To the foreign citizens which enter Ukraine with a religious visa;

To the workers of state governmental bodies which are engaged in the issues of entrance and departure of foreign priests, their registration and employment in relation to the order of entrance, temporary living, employment and residence of foreign clergymen in the territory of Ukraine.

According to article 24 of the Law of Ukraine "On the freedom of conscience and religious organizations," priests, religious preachers, tutors, other representatives of foreign organizations, who are foreign citizens and temporally reside in Ukraine, can be engaged in the propagation of religious doctrines, the implementation of religious ceremonies or in other canonical activities only in those religious organizations on the invitation of which they come to Ukraine, and on an official agreement with the public body which has carried out the registration of the statute (set of rules) of said religious organization.

Entrance to Ukraine on a religious visa. Diplomatic representative offices and consular establishments issue clergymen visas in accordance with their invitation from a religious

organization, registered in the territory of Ukraine. A document which certifies the petition made by a religious organization is issued by the State Committee on Nationalities and Religions of Ukraine, or by an appropriate regional department of religious affairs. If a foreign clergyman is invited by a registered territorial religious community, visa support is offered by a regional department of religious affairs in agreement with the State Committee on Nationalities and Religions. Foreign citizens pay a consular fee for the obtainment of a visa, in accordance with ratified tariffs of consular payment. The validity of a religious visa is up to one year. The prolongation of a visa is carried out in the same manner as the issuing of a visa, with the obligatory concordance of the State Committee on Nationalities and Religions. The religious organization must confirm the necessity of extending the validity of a visa.

The visa-free mode of entrance of citizens on mutual basis operates with the Azerbaijani Republic, the Republic of Byelorussia, Georgia, the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Korean People's Democratic Republic and Mongolia. For citizens of the European Union, USA, Canada, Japan, Norway, Iceland, Switzerland, the Vatican, Liechtenstein, Monaco, San-Marino, Andorra and South Korea the visa-free mode of entrance operates in a one-sided order to Ukraine for the period of stay up to 90 days. If no other order of entrance is established by Ukrainian legislation, foreign clergymen enter Ukraine through points of admission on the state border with their national passport and a visa. Employees of the State Border Service register passport documents according to international agreements and the legislation of Ukraine. Information is given on the rules and order of the entrance of foreigners into Ukraine and on the terms of registration of their passport documents. The mark of registration in a foreign passport document is actual on all the territory of the state, regardless of place of residency.

Important! The registration of passport documents is valid for the period of a short-term stay in Ukraine, specifically: foreigners from the states with the visa order of entrance for the period of validity of the visa, but no more than for 90 days, if another term is not defined by international agreements; foreigners from the states with the visa-free order of entrance – for the term of no more than 90 days during 180 days, if another term is not defined by international agreements; foreigners from the member-states of the World Trade Organization for the term of no more than 180 days during a year, if another term is not defined by international agreements.

Foreign clergymen are not a singled out category among other foreign citizens. The general demands of legislation on the issues of basic rights, freedoms and duties concern them, as well as others. The realization of the rights and freedoms of foreigners and persons without citizenship must not harm the national interests of Ukraine, nor the rights, freedoms and legal interests of its citizens and other persons who live in Ukraine.

A prolongation of the term of stay for a foreign clergyman may be carried out by the Department for Citizenship, Immigration, and Registration of Physical Persons (DCIRPP), subordinate to the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine. For this purpose, an appeal should be made to the nearest office of the DCIRPP no later than three working days prior to the end of the registration term. According to the legal norms of Ukraine, the following documents should be submitted:

- a written application of the receiving religious organization. If the apartment where the foreigner or the person without citizenship will reside for the subsequent period does not belong to the receiving party, the application must be agreed upon at the place of residence. For the prolongation of the stay on an "R" type visa, the application of religious organizations must be certified by the State Committee on Nationalities and Religions, or by its local bodies;

- a written application of the clergyman on the prolongation of his stay in Ukraine, which may be submitted personally, by the receiving religious organization (on the condition of its certification by a notary), by the head of the accommodation body, or the town or village council of the settlement where the individual who receives the visitor resides;
- the passport document of the clergyman and his immigration card (in the case of its presence);
- two photo cards sized 3.5 x 4.5 centimetres;
- the receipt for the payment of state duties for the prolongation of the stay;
- receipts for the payment for the services, which can be provided by the DCIRPP;
- in the case of necessity, an employee of the DCIRPP may request other documents which confirm the necessity of a prolongation and the absence of obstacles for the subsequent stay in Ukraine;
- the foreigner or person without citizenship must have a valid insurance policy for rendering urgent medical care. This is obligatory according to the decision of the Cabinet of Ukraine 17.11.1997 No. 1021 "On the perfection of the order of rendering Medicare to foreign citizens which temporarily reside in the territory of Ukraine," if not otherwise established by international agreements;
- the foreigner or person without citizenship must have enough money to cover the charges related to his stay in Ukraine, or a confirmation of the guarantees declared in the application of the receiving party.

Each prolongation of the term of stay may be for the period of time stated in the application, but not longer than the term of the corresponding type of visa action.

The eventual date of the prolonged term of stay may not exceed a minimal term of one month before the expiration date of the passport document, except in cases when such prolongation is carried out for a specified term in which the foreigner or person without citizenship will necessarily depart from Ukraine.

The employment of foreign citizens in Ukraine is regulated by the Law of Ukraine "On the employment of the population" and is carried out in accordance with the order on granting permission for the employment of foreigners and persons without citizenship in Ukraine, established by the decision of the Cabinet of Ukraine of 01.11.1999 No. 2028. Permission for the employment of foreigners is drawn up and given to an employer — a legal entity with the intention of using the labour of foreigners — by the State Employment Centre of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of Ukraine, or the Centre of Employment of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, or the Kiev and Sevastopol city centres of employment on the condition that sufficient grounds are given for the necessity of foreign specialist labour, if not otherwise established by international agreements of Ukraine.

The prolongation of the validity of permission for employment is a foundation for appealing to the body of internal affairs for the prolongation of the stay in Ukraine. The employer (religious organization) is charged the sum of ten untaxed wages of the citizens' profits for the consideration of the application on granting the permission for employment and prolonging its validity.

If the foreigner does not begin work within three days of the term established by the contract for reasons which, in compliance with current legislation, appear to be unimportant, the employer must report this to the proper centre of employment, the

Administration of the State Border Service of Ukraine and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In this case, as well as in the case of permission for employment not being granted, the foreigner is subject to deportation from Ukraine. A foreigner which was employed without permission for employment is also subject to deportation from Ukraine. In cases of employing foreigner persons without permission, the enterprises, institutions and organizations, regardless of their form of ownership, shall be fined fifty untaxed wages of citizens' profits for each such person.

Important! Persons, who enter Ukraine in religious affairs or to work at religious organizations, who possess a visa of a type which is given to the representatives of religious missions (visa R), do not need any permission for employment from the Government Service of Employment.

Additional information. The text of this Instruction is based on the norms of current legislation, which concern the vast majority of foreign clergymen which come to Ukraine. The detailed information is expounded in the following normative acts: the Constitution of Ukraine (in particular Articles 26 and 92.); the Law of Ukraine "On the freedom of conscience and religious organizations"; the Law of Ukraine "On the legal status of foreigners and persons without citizenship"; the Law of Ukraine "On the freedom of movement and free choice of residence"; the Decision of the Cabinet of Ukraine of 29.12.95 No 1074 (with changes) on approving the rules on the entrance of foreigners and persons without citizenship to Ukraine, their departure from Ukraine and their transition through its territory; the Decision of the Cabinet of Ukraine of 01.11.99 No 2028 on approving the order of granting permission for employment in Ukraine to foreigners and persons without citizenship; the Decision of the Cabinet of Ukraine of 26.12.02 No 1983 on approving the order of forming a quota of immigration, the order of proceedings on the applications for granting permission for immigration and applications for its abolition and the implementation of the accepted decisions, the order of drafting and delivering permanent residence permits.

Information on the jurisdiction of the state bodies responsible for the specified field of work may be obtained from the following contacts:

- 1 The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine (tel. 279-99-03, web site www.mfa.gov.ua)
- 2 The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine (the State department in the affairs of citizenship, immigration and registration of physical persons), tel. 254-77-79;
- 3 The Ministry of Labour and Social policy of Ukraine (Inspection on the control over the observation of laws on the work of the State Centre of employment), tel. 289-51-01;
- 4 The State Committee of Ukraine in the Affairs of Nationalities and Religions (tel. 256-00-67, 279-37-97);
- 5 The Administration of the State Boundary Service of Ukraine (tel. 271-87-42, web site www.pvu.gov.ua)

The official text of the Instruction was published on the web site of the State Committee on Nationalities and Religions www.scnm.gov.ua

The Instruction was prepared by the State Committee of Ukraine on the Affairs of Nationalities and Religions.

Conflict between Orthodox and Greek Catholics

Greek Catholics seize Orthodox Church in West Ukraine with support of local authorities

Interfax (28.05.2009) / HRWF Int. (03.06.2009) - Website: <http://www.hrwf.net> - Email: info@hrwf.net - A Greek Catholic community led by a priest made an attempt at "violent seizure" of an Orthodox church in the city of Kolomyia in Ivano-Frankovsk province of Ukraine, the press service of the Ukrainian Orthodox church reported on Thursday.

Soon after this the city council adopted a resolution concerning the closing of the church of the Annunciation for restoration and the subsequent transfer of the church to a Greek Catholic parish.

In its turn, the Orthodox parish filed a judicial suit requesting that the decisions of the local authorities be found illegal.

Bishop of Ivano-Frankovsk and Kolomyia Panteleimon sent letters on this matter to Patriarch of Moscow and all-Rus Kirill, Metropolitan of Kiev and all-Ukraine Vladimir, the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic church Cardinal Liubomir Guzar, and Greek Catholic Bishop of Kolomyia Nikolai Simkailo.

The press service of the Ukrainian Orthodox church concluded: "In light of the foregoing the claim of the head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic church, Liubomir Guzar, of his desire to meet with His Holiness Patriarch of Moscow and all-Rus Kirill during his visit to Ukraine 'for a private conversation' seems extremely puzzling. One wishes to believe that the cardinal is hoping to repent."

The Cabinet of Ministers has appointed Yuriy Reshetnikov head of the State Committee of Nationalities and Religions

IRS/ Institute for Religious Freedoms (17.05.2009) / HRWF Int. (18.05.2009) - Website: <http://www.hrwf.net> - Email: info@hrwf.net - The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine at the meeting on May 13, 2009, appointed Yuriy Reshetnikov head of the State Committee of Ukraine in Matters of Nationalities and Religions. He has replaced in this position Oleksandr Sagan, who headed the committee since December 29, 2007. The Institute of Religious Freedom reported about this.

Minister of the Cabinet of Ukraine Petro Krupko reported for journalists about the change in the leadership of the State Committee of Ukraine in Matters of Nationalities and Religions on Wednesday after a session of the government, whose words UNIAN shared.

At the time of his appointment Yuriy Reshetnikov worked as director of the Department in Matters of Church-State Relations and Ensuring Freedom of Conscience of the State Committee of Ukraine in Matters of Nationalities and Religions. He was born on May 26, 1968, in the city of Zaporizhzhya, holds a candidate's degree in philosophy, graduated from the Ukrainian Academy of Law (now called the Yaroslav the Wise National Academy of Law) and the Odessa Theological Seminary, and holds the position of assistant head of the Christian-Democratic Union Party.

As IRS reported earlier, the new leader of the committee is already a specialist in questions of the harmonization of church-state relations and ensuring freedom of conscience and religion. Yuriy Reshetnikov took part in the development of a number of

bills relating to improving the conditions of activity of religious organizations, has conducted analytical research, and has spoken at many international scholarly-practical conferences as an expert.

In his previous position in this committee Yuriy Reshetnikov also directed the activity of the working group at the State Committee of Ukraine in Matters of Nationalities and Religions to develop a new version of the law of Ukraine «On freedom of conscience and religious organizations.»

The systematic Islamization of Coptic girls has been going on for more than 30 years, Coptic Pope Shenouda protested during a conference held in Alexandria on December 17th, 1976 that "there is pressure being practiced to convert Coptic girls to embrace Islam and marry them under terror to Muslim husbands" and demanded that the abducted girls be brought back to their families.

Ukraine police charge Nigerian pastor of evangelical church

EarthTimes (17.03.2009) / HRWF Int. (18.03.2009) - Website: <http://www.hrwf.net> - Email: info@hrwf.net - Ukrainian law enforcers on Tuesday formally charged the ethnic Nigerian leader of a hugely popular evangelical Christian church of complicity in bilking his congregation of millions, the Interfax news agency reported. Pastor Sunday Adelaja, senior pastor of Embassy of God in Kiev, Ukraine, was among the ringleaders in an international scheme to attract funds from Ukrainian churchgoers into questionable Nigerian businesses run by friends and relatives, the accusation read in part.

The main beneficiary of investment money funneled from Embassy of God accounts to Nigeria was the Lagos-headquartered Kings Capital investment company, a firm according to Ukrainian prosecutors without real business activity.

Ukrainian police last week arrested the head of the Kiev branch of King Capital, an Adelaja associate and Embassy of God member, on similar charges. The firm despite promises of high returns in November stopped paying dividends.

Adelaja, a former university student turned charismatic preacher, frequently suggested to churchgoers they invest their money in King's Capital, as he knew its management were "Godly men."

Adelaja has denied the prosecutor's charges and claimed the Ukrainian government is targeting him because of the Embassy of God's growing popularity, and on racial grounds.

Ukrainian police have served Adelaja with an order to remain in Ukraine until the charges are dropped.

Adelaja faces the formal charge of "financial machinations in especially large volume," a crime carrying a sentence of 5 to 12 years in prison.

Starting as a weekend prayer meeting in Adelaja's apartment in the early 1990s, the Embassy of God church has ballooned into according to media reports East Europe's largest evangelical church, with more than 25,000 active members in Kiev alone, and branch churches in fifteen more Ukrainian cities, according to the church web site.

The Embassy of God and its leadership have done nothing wrong, and any formal charges will be faced and defeated in court, Adelaja said last week.

Orthodox fight over church building in Ukraine: St Nicholas battle in Kiev

Prelude to "militant visit" by Patriarch Kirill to Ukrainian capital

by Kseniia Doroshenko, Kiev

Portal-credo.ru (26.02.2009) / HRWF Int. (03.03.2009) - Website: <http://www.hrwf.net> - Email: info@hrwf.net - It is widely known that in various regions of Ukraine, primarily western ones, from time to time "battles for a church" with local significance break out. To be sure, in recent years such "battles" have become rare, but back at the beginning of the 90s, on the eve of and immediately after the restoration of Ukrainian independence, they had an epidemic character. The redistribution of churches in western Ukraine was the result of the "twists" of soviet theomachistic policy manifested in the formal "suppression" of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic church, which in fact went into the underground and with which the whole west Ukrainian clergy, nominally compelled to submit to RPTsMP, sympathized to one degree or another. When the pressure of the struggle against God weakened, the old hurts came to the surface: Greek Catholics began returning to their churches. In some cases the RPTsMP found a certain number of supporters to repulse them. The young Ukrainian state tried to remove the legal basis from under the conflicts, issuing a law for the shared use of the "disputed" churches by congregations of various confessions. Gradually the situation normalized and ecclesiastical crime news from west Ukraine ceased arriving.

However it began coming from dioceses of central Ukraine, where the interests of the two Ukrainian Orthodox churches, of the Moscow and Kievan patriarchates, collided. Although during the prolonged presidency of Leonid Kuchma, who openly favored UPTsMP, there were practically no incidents. But the victory in the subsequent Orange Revolution in 2004 of the "nationally oriented" government substantially strengthened the position of UPTsKP, which began more boldly to declare their claims to buildings that had not been turned over to the church. The greatest publicity was given to the dispute over the historic St. Catherine's church in Chernigov, at whose walls there were both fights and sieges and a tent camp and, it seems, legal proceedings. In the Ukrainian capital a confessional balance was established at the end of the 1990s and churches were allotted more or less equally among all churches laying claim to them and the situation quickly approached superficially apparent interconfessional harmony. And suddenly, on the eve of the announced visit to Kiev of the new patriarch of Moscow, Kirill, conflict has broken out which immediately acquired an international character and acutely strained relations of UPTsMP and UPTsKP.

Since there are no religious confessions with a status that vaguely resembles that of a state church in Ukraine, and certainly not in Kiev, and the existing Orthodox parishes compete freely with one another, new churches have been being built in the Ukrainian capital for a rather long time. With rare exceptions, the state and city hall have not given substantial help to the parishes and contributions from business and simple parishioners have not been large. But now comes our current hero, the church of St. Nicholas in Shevchenko region of Kiev on the corner of Nagornaia and Smorodinovo streets, which has been under construction for almost 15 years. The ceremonies of its cornerstone and consecration of crosses erected on the church cupola were conducted by Patriarch of Kiev and all-Rus Ukraine Filaret, since the church was built by a parish of the Kievan patriarchate. No other parishes made claims to the building being built.

What appears to be more strange is not simply the statement of such claims but even vigorous actions for seizure of the property using pro-Moscow oriented militarized

"Cossacks" immediately after the newly elected Patriarch Kirill announced an imminent arrival in Kiev. One can spend time puzzling about which of the sides, and for what purposes, this "battle for the church" in the center of Kiev on the eve of the arrival of the Moscow patriarch benefits, but the connection of these two events becomes obvious.

The start of the armed clash was brought about by the abrupt decision by the administration of the Shevchenko region of Kiev to transfer the church, which suddenly became "contested," to a parish of UPTsMP. The church has been built in memory of victims of the Chernobyl nuclear accident and the worship services for all these long years have been conducted by a priest of the Kievan patriarchate in the temporary chapel right next to the church building, which also was consecrated by Patriarch Filaret. The priest and parishioners did not know that a couple of autumns ago "rivals" from the Moscow patriarchate, supported by a certain charitable foundation of St. Elizabeth Romanova (I. Baranovsky, president) approached the Shevchenko administration with the request to transfer the church to them. The main argument produced by the "rivals," was that they had, in contrast to the Kievan patriarchate, sufficient financial resources not only to complete construction of the church quickly, giving it an architectural appearance that would recall the damaged Chernobyl reactor, but also to reconstruct the child care center on Saliutnaia street. The applicants provided documents confirming their ability to donate to the church and child care center a million US dollars.

The Shevchenko regional council, which previously had not encountered such offers, willingly accepted the charitable aid, and the head of the administration quickly signed an agreement with the applicants accepting the "charitable aid" in exchange for the "unfinished building" of the Kievan patriarchate. It soon became clear that the deputies did not know about the claims to the church by parishes of the two different churches, since the administration, in proposing to accept the "charitable aid" reported only that the offer came from some foundation and was silent about the UPTsMP parish. The parishioners and leadership of UPTsKP learned about these back-door conversations only much later and through unofficial channels. This special operation was turned over to the UPTsMP parish of the Icon of the "Joy of all those Sorrowing" Mother of God, whose address was a private apartment. The agreement between the Shevchenko administration and the "donors" unequivocally provided for the sale of the church, which was considered the property of the administration until completion of construction.

The problem is complicated by the circumstance that the head of the "rival" UPTsMP parish, which still exists only as an apartment, is a former priest of UPTsKP, Roman Baranovsky (brother of the head of the Elizabeth Romanova foundation, I. Baranovsky), who was forced to leave the Kievan patriarchate because of his vigorous political activity aimed for the "regeneration of the Russian monarchy," and the creation of a sisterhood, which is considered by the patriarchate to be "suspicious and sectarian." It is yet more characteristic that the UPTsMP church next to the October Hospital, whose designated rector is the former "Filaretite," Fr Roman Baranovsky, remains under construction. Considering this condition, the Kievan patriarchate proposed to the Shevchenko administration an "easy way out" of the complicated situation of interconfessional conflict over the church of St. Nicholas: credit the "charitable aid" of the Baranovsky brothers for completion of the church near the October Hospital which, in contrast to the St. Nicholas church, already is under their immediate responsibility.

Priest Roman Baranovsky blames the Shevchenko administration for the complicated situation, which, in his words, had itself appealed to his brother's foundation requesting that the charitable aid be given for completion of the construction of the church and for the child care center that has nothing to do with the church. Representatives of the administration supposedly warned him that the UPTsKP parish had previously "laid claim" to the church, "although later it refused to donate charitable aid and refused to complete construction of the church." It seems that the Kievan patriarchate categorically denies this information. The press center of UPTsKP distributed an official statement that the

Shevchenko administration never made such suggestions to the patriarchate and, consequently, UPTsKP did not refuse to complete construction of the church.

Meanwhile, the Kiev metropolia of UPTsMP named its own rector for the disputed church of St. Nicholas. He is, not surprisingly, not Fr Roman Baranovsky, whose brother donated a million dollars for the church, but a certain Fr Sergii Temnik. On 1 February, the day of the enthronement of Patriarch Kirill, he planned a liturgy in the disputed church for whose "protection" he invited a group of pro-Moscow Cossacks. The Kievan patriarchate's rector of this church, Fr Ioann, who called for the liturgy not to be performed, was ushered out of the premises by the Cossacks. Fr Ioann tried to respond to this: on the Sunday of the publican and Pharisee, 8 February, representatives of Ukrainian nationalistic organizations approached the church, although they were not about to be drawn into scuffles with the Cossacks. Beginning on 15 February, the "Cossack security" of representatives of UPTsMP, based in the church, was substantially strengthened and turned into a round-the-clock operation. However on 21 February representatives of Ukrainian organizations of UPTsKP managed to enter the church through a fire door, after which the Cossacks began a brawl with representatives of UPTsKP, which police officers arrived to separate. In the course of the brawl, police officers removed the altar, icons, and sacred objects from the church, which representatives of UPTsKP had managed to bring there for performing a liturgy in the morning of the next day. The Kievan patriarchate considered such action as sacrilege and desecration of sacred objects.

Early in the morning of the next Sunday, 22 February, 60 cossacks had already been stationed at the church along with a mass of police officers, who removed by force representatives of UPTsKP from the building and "protected the conduct of the liturgy" by a priest of UPTsMP. And the rector of the disputed church from the latter, Fr Sergii Temnik, threatened believers of UPTsKP that if they "were insolent," then their chapel, located several dozen meters from the church, would soon be no more. Despite this, police officers sealed the church upon completion of the liturgy, declaring that nobody would be permitted to enter it until the authorities made a final decision about its fate.

Meanwhile, in the Russian news media a genuine informational war against UPTsKP has flared up, from which the gullible reader, listener, or observer could think that some "bandits" have come practically straight from Georgia in order to expel the believers of the Moscow patriarchate from its churches in Kiev and to protect churches from bullets of nationalists with their own bodies at sites Patriarch Kirill will soon visit. "Again you will not understand what goes on in Ukraine and they will not even let you pray at peace if you are not a nationalist," the gullible and good-intentioned Russian will conclude.

The head of the press center of the Kievan patriarchate, Bishop of Vasilkov Evstraty, gave this comment on events in the Shevchenko region of Kiev: "Today one may state precisely, events surrounding the so-called 'seizure' of the St. Nicholas church in Kiev are part of an informational provocation, planned in Russia, against Ukraine as a whole and the Kievan patriarchate in particular." On the morning of 22 February, several Russian informational web sites published simultaneously "information" that militant nationalists tried to seize a UPTsMP church in Kiev and in the evening this information had already been broadcast on Russian television. In the morning of 23 February a group of young residents of suburbs of Moscow, united in the pro-Kremlin "second level" movement "Mestnye," with the blessing of Deacon Andrei Kuraev and Kirill Frolov assembled at the embassy of Ukraine in Moscow for "a protest demonstration against those who seized buildings of the canonical church."

Of course, it is possible to understand the unsuccessful "PR makers" of the Moscow patriarchate who in the absence of real "heroism" in life of their more than privileged confession try to turn into a "confessor" someone who was once summoned to the prosecutor's office, and to see "persecution" where only simple corruption in their own interest occurs. The clear lack of correspondence of such militant rhetoric to the real

well-being and earthly prosperity of RPTsMP will not turn for it into a quick "missionary breakthrough." And so they have to rely, as earlier since 1927, "on princes and on the sons of men," who can transfer to them property in this world and provide security by force. (tr. by PDS, posted 27 February 2009).
