



APPEAL of the heads of churches
and religious organizations to the
participants in the UN Security Council
meeting on January 17, 2023



Dear ladies and gentlemen,

We, representatives of religious organizations of Ukraine, appeal to you on behalf of millions of our faithful who, under Russian missiles and shells, pray, work and protect the most valuable gift of God – life on our land, people's rights and their dignity.

The war has brought enormous suffering to these people, with the people's freedom, their religious beliefs having effectively become the initial target of the Russian occupiers. In eleven months, they destroyed or ransacked more than 270 churches and sacred buildings, killed and tortured to death dozens of clergymen. Wherever Russia comes, religious freedom ends. Where Russia is, they torture "wrong" Orthodox Christians, mock Catholics, imprison Muslims for religious beliefs for the terms unthinkable even in Soviet times, force Protestants to flee abroad from inevitable repressions, and persecute Jehovah's Witnesses.

That is why our faithful are fighting at the front, among other things, to ensure that Ukraine continues to be a country where not a single house of worship has been closed in the entire history of its independent existence, where everyone has the right to believe in what he or she considers worthy of belief, where religious minorities feel as comfortable as the Churches that unite millions of believers. Where, after all, religiously persecuted people from many countries have always found refuge, and Ukraine's achievements in the field of freedom of conscience are recognized all over the world.

We take this opportunity to appeal to the international community to hear our call: the most that peoples can do for the sake of establishing freedom of conscience in Ukraine is to help Ukrainians resist the Russian invasion, which brings death, slavery, darkness and religious oppression.

Signed by:

His Beatitude Epiphanius – Primate of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine,

His Beatitude Sviatoslav – Head of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Supreme Archbishop of Kyiv-Halych,

Valerii Antoniuk – Head of the All-Ukrainian Union of the Churches of Evangelical Christians-Baptists,

Ayder Rustemov – Mufti of the Spiritual Administration of the Muslims of Crimea,

Murat Suleymanov – Mufti of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Ukraine “Ummah,”

Vitalii Kryvytskyi – Ruling Bishop of the Diocese of Kyiv-Zhytomyr of the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine,

Stanislav Nosov – President of the Ukrainian Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Ukraine

Yaakov Dov Bleich – President of the Union of Jewish Religious Organizations of Ukraine, Chief Rabbi of Kyiv and Ukraine