



Written by [Angeline Tan](#) on March 19, 2023

Zelensky Persecutes Christian Churches Linked to Russia; America Turns a Blind Eye

SINGAPORE — Globalist Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has justified the removal of his country's most famous monastery from its Moscow-linked Orthodox Church (UOC) prior to a proposed ban of the UOC's communities under a new law.

"Moves are under way to strengthen our spiritual independence — society sees this, and I see that Ukrainians approve of these steps, which are quite legitimate," Zelensky declared in a national message.

Based on reports from Reuters, Zelensky, who has constantly demanded Western nations send military aid to fend off Russia, claimed that his government's suppression would prevent Russia from weakening Ukraine from within. "We will never allow anyone to build an empire inside the Ukrainian soul. We will continue these moves, and not allow a terrorist state any opportunity to manipulate our people's spirituality or destroy our Ukrainian shrines."



James Hills/Pixabay
Kiev's Pechersk Lavra Monastery

Previously, Zelensky had said in a nightly address that Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council instructed the Ukraine government to "draft [a] law on making it impossible for religious organizations affiliated with centers of influence in the Russian Federation to operate in Ukraine."

Ukraine's Culture Ministry also confirmed that it had terminated the UOC's lease on Pechersk Lavra, or Monastery of the Caves, an 11th-century monastery in Kyiv, and would assume full state control over the complex beginning March 29. Authorities ordered the UOC last Friday to evacuate its base in the 980-year-old monastery complex.

The leader of the UOC, Metropolitan Onufriy (Berezovsky), opposed the eviction order. Berezovsky said that his church had rebuilt the monastery from a "pile of ruins" after the end of Communist rule, and called for Orthodox Christians to pray for continued access to the site, which was one of many raided by Ukrainian security officials last autumn.

Patriarch Kirill of Moscow said that Pechersk Lavra had been a "cradle of civilization and national culture" for Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians. He urged Roman Catholic Pope Francis and other church leaders to take actions against a "months-long slanderous information campaign" against the monastery by "radical politicians, religious and public figures."

In a weekend message to the United Nations (UN) secretary-general, António Guterres, and heads of



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other international organizations, Patriarch Kirill said:

The repressive goal — complete expulsion of monastics from the monastery — was not hidden by government officials and representatives of other religious organizations in Ukraine under the influence of secular authorities. When Ukraine's state leadership declares its commitment to democratic norms, the European path of development, observance of human rights and freedoms, it is regrettable that these are trampled today in the most blatant way.

The UOC said that Ukraine's Culture Ministry had not provided a "legal basis" for ending its lease on the Pechersk Lavra, hinting that the decision to remove the monks and novices, approximately 200 of them, showcased the "whim of officials."

The monastery's father superior, Metropolitan Pavlo (Dmitrievich), one of several UOC leaders criticized by Ukraine for allegedly collaborating with Russia in the Ukraine conflict, pledged in a website message that his followers would resist evacuation.

In turn, Ukraine's culture minister, Oleksandr Tkachenko, defended Zelensky's crackdown on the monastery, stating that the UOC had "violated regulations" by erecting unauthorized buildings on the 23-hectare site, a UNESCO World Heritage monument.

Tkachenko elaborated that some monks might be permitted to remain at the Pechersk Lavra, which would remain open to worship, and cautioned Metropolitan Pavlo not to remove valuable objects, including the relics of saints, from the state-owned complex.

Notably, the leader of Ukraine's independent Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Epiphany (Dumenko), also justified the repossession order during a Sunday liturgy in the monastery's Dormition Cathedral, and dismissed claims that it reflected an "act of persecution and eviction."

The Paris-based head of Orthodox Churches of the Russian Tradition in Western Europe, Metropolitan Jean (Renneteau) of Dubna, criticized Kirill's "major strategic, political and ecclesiastical mistakes" during the Ukraine conflict, stating in a weekend statement that it was not befitting for Russia "to teach moral lessons to others."

However, during his speech at an international meeting in Moscow, Kirill insisted: "Faced with serious challenges facing modern society, such as militant secularism, moral relativism, a sense of national superiority, and outright Russophobia, the defenders of traditional values should feel support of like-minded people more than ever. This is necessary for jointly defending the truth, which consists in the right of a person to remain himself, preserving the faith and traditions of his ancestors."

In a separate letter this week to Guterres and Helga Maria Schmid, the secretary-general of the 57-country Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov, slammed the Ukrainian government for trying to ruin the UOC, and urged foreign leaders to insist on a stop to Kyiv's "arbitrariness and repression against the canonical Orthodox Church."

Pope Francis of the Roman Catholic Church urged "respect" of religious sites in Ukraine as he highlighted the monastery from which the Russian-aligned UOC is facing eviction. The pope made the comments during his weekly address to crowds in St Peter's Square this week. In an apparent slip-up, the pontiff alluded to the "nuns" of the monastery, which is actually home to male Orthodox priests.

Since October, the Security Service of Ukraine has regularly conducted raids at UOC churches,



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enforced sanctions on its bishops and financial backers, and opened criminal cases against dozens of its clergymen.

Authorities claim they had found pro-Russian literature on church premises that housed Russian citizens, accusations which the UOC rejected.

Fox News' Tucker Carlson denounced globalist Western leaders and Christian members of Congress, stating that they failed to inform Zelensky that in a democracy, one does not simply prohibit an entire religion simply because the government disagrees with it — a truly democratic government would not deploy its military to churches to arrest priests for refusing to align with the president.

Nevertheless, Carlson pointed out, this is exactly what Zelensky has been doing and intends to continue. He also stated that the Zelensky administration is presently devising egregious means to penalize Ukrainian Christians for practicing their religion in a way not authorized by the government.

Elaborating, Carlson accused Christian leaders of not defending fellow Ukrainian Christians and of bankrolling the crackdown on Christianity. "The Ukrainian Orthodox Church is more than 1,000 years old. With the full backing of the Biden administration and the U.S. Congress, Zelensky has decided to ban it. Western politicians have said nothing against it."

Carlson even singled out former President George W. Bush:

Bush, the great defender of Christianity, has called Zelensky the "Churchill of our time" and the "great defender of liberty." Where is Bush now on this question where his friend has banned a form of Christianity in that country? He is silent, and so are Christian members of Congress. They are backing Zelensky no matter how many Christians he arrests, no matter how many churches he seizes. They have campaigned in Christian churches. Would a single Christian leader say anything about this — that they are funding the destruction of Christianity in Ukraine?

In retrospect, the same globalist leaders who backed Ukraine's efforts against Russia also backed the U.S. invasion of Iraq, the latter a disaster that eventually morphed into persecution of the country's Christians.

During the upheaval and sectarian clashes following the U.S. invasion, Iraq's Christians were persecuted. However, neither the military nor the State Department implemented significant responsive measures.

Similarly, when the U.S.-backed Syrian rebels tried to destabilize President Bashar al-Assad, Syrian Christians faced bloody crackdowns as a result, based on several reports by [International Christian Concern](#).

Arguably, wherever the globalist U.S. government and its allies have campaigned for democracy and liberty, Christians seemingly have been persecuted and even killed.

Despite *Time* [magazine nominating Zelensky as](#) its 2022 "Person of the Year" and praising him for "proving that courage can be as contagious as fear, for stirring people and nations to come together in defense of freedom, for reminding the world of the fragility of democracy — and of peace," a closer scrutiny of Zelensky's Ukraine reveals otherwise.

Ukraine is not the beacon of freedom and democracy that the mainstream media has touted. Rather, as



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The American Conservative asserted, Ukraine is [a corrupt country](#), with Zelensky silencing [his political opposition](#) and closing [down all media](#) not controlled by his increasingly dictatorial regime. Undeniably, Zelensky's approach toward the UOC blatantly contradicts those keen to describe the Ukraine conflict as a clear-cut clash between an oppressor and a democratic underdog.

Yet Zelensky's Western apologists and sycophants have said that those mentioning Zelensky's crackdown on religion and freedom in Ukraine align with conservatives like [Tucker Carlson](#), whom they regard as a pro-Russian sympathizer.



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