
RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH THREATENS TOUGH RESPONSE OVER ISTANBUL BACKING OF UKRAINE SPLIT

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The Russian Orthodox Church said on Saturday it would respond "in kind and toughly" to the Istanbul-based Ecumenical Patriarchate over Moscow's row with Ukraine's Orthodox Church.

On Thursday a Synod meeting in Istanbul backed Ukraine's request for "autocephalous" – or self-governing – status and reversed the excommunication of Patriarch Filaret, who hopes to lead the newly independent church based in Kiev.

Alexander Volkov, a spokesman for Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill, said the Holy Synod of the Church would "express its position" on Sunday during a meeting in Minsk, without elaborating on what measures it might take.

Arriving in Minsk, Kirill told reporters: "I hope the Orthodox Church will find the strength to overcome hardships... to stay united."

Kaynak/Source: