

your Excellency,

It is with great joy that we received and read your letter to us expressing wholehearted sentiments of esteem and gratitude for the attention, concern, and solidarity we demonstrate always for the well-being and spiritual prosperity of the dearly beloved Ukrainian Nation. We, and the Ecumenical Patriarchate, truly appreciate your recognition of the historic and spiritual role that the Mother Church of Constantinople assumed for the Christianization of the Kievan-Rus. Indeed, as you rightly acknowledge, it is through the wise and pastoral initiatives of our saintly predecessors that the sanctified baptismal waters of the Great Church of Christ were united with the waters of the Dnieper, thus, transforming them into the living waters of regeneration and redemption in Christ.

As we have just celebrated the glorious Resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ from the dead, we wish to convey to you and the entire Christ-loving Ukrainian Nation our wholehearted prayers and blessings this Eastertide. May the Light which is never overtaken by night, lead the hearts and minds of all Ukrainians to real peace and lasting unity, which can only come through Him.

During this Paschal Season we reassure the dearly beloved People of Ukraine of our continued prayers for them and for an overcoming of the hostilities between peoples and nations, consequences of which are the cause of today's sad events.

The Resurrected Christ affirms in us faith that all evil may be conquered with God's will. That which appears to our human considerations to be impossible, God makes possible, the primary example being the Resurrection of the crucified, dead, and buried in the grave Christ. We also call upon you to firmly believe that truth, goodness, and peace will triumph in Ukraine, and further request that you do everything possible to achieve this peace through dialogue and good will.

It is with special pain that we, as the Mother Church, witness the continued division of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine. Orthodoxy is the confession of the majority of the Ukrainian people, but division of the Church weakens faith, and is the reason behind arguments and strife. Therefore, taking advantage of this opportunity, we once again call upon all who profess the Orthodox Faith, especially those who are leaders of their communities and carry special obligations, to overcome the current divisions and in sincere dialogue as brothers discover the desire to unite.

From our side, we as the Mother Church, remain open in the service of peace, mediation, and support. For it is our desire, as it is for most of you, that the Orthodox Church in Ukraine be united, and in all of its entirety consummate its services through the evangelical witness to the Ukrainian people to the same extent and adherence as all Orthodox. If, with God's help, you do all in your power concerning all that depends on you in this matter, we, as the Mother Church of Constantinople, will perform that which we are obliged to do by the holy canons and ecclesiastical order of the Orthodox Church, which grant the First and Ecumenical Throne a special ministry of particular

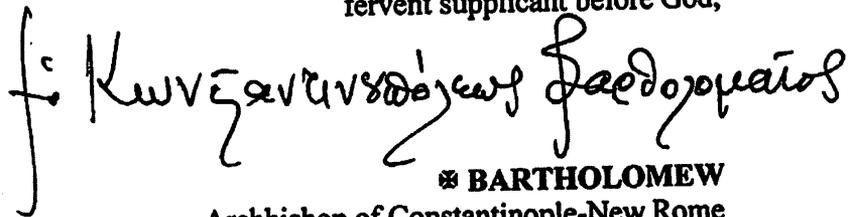
responsibilities, rights, and privileges assuring the protection, strengthening, and promotion of Orthodox unity.

We believe that the unity of the Church will strengthen the unity of your people and will facilitate and expedite the achievement of peace and healing of the wounds both in the souls of people as well as in the relations between nations.

With these words of Patriarchal exhortation and paternal affection, we embrace Your Excellency and in your person, the entire Ukraine Nation, remaining with much love and honor.

At the Ecumenical Patriarchate, Holy Pascha, 2015

Your Excellency's  
fervent supplicant before God,



✠ BARTHOLOMEW  
Archbishop of Constantinople-New Rome  
and Ecumenical Patriarch

His Excellency Arseniy Yatsenyuk  
Prime Minister of Ukraine  
In Kiev.