

## **Filaret at Menorah Center: Unity of Ukrainian and Jewish peoples is the biggest blow to the aggressor**

### **Culture**

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**“Participants of the meeting, regardless of national and religious affiliation, were grateful for God's blessing of good deeds,” said the Director of the Ukrainian Institute for the Study of the Holocaust “Tkuma”.**

From RISU, Nov 6, 2017 Patriarch of the UOC-KP Filaret visited the Center “Menorah” on Sunday, November 5, where he met with representatives of the Jewish community and the chief rabbi of Dnipro city and region Shmuel Kaminetsky. Director of the Ukrainian Institute for the Study of the Holocaust “Tkuma”, historian Igor Shchupak called the visit of the Primate of the UOC-KP to Menorah a historic one and the evidence of the unique changes in Ukrainian society, the formation of a modern Ukrainian political nation and interethnic and interreligious understanding. The historian wrote it on his page on Facebook. “Patriarch Filaret of Kyiv and All Russia-Ukraine, Primate of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate, made a historic visit to the Center Menorah, where he met with representatives of the Jewish and Ukrainian communities of the city, leaders of the Jewish national-cultural revival. After celebrations in “Sinai” hall and reception for the main rabbi of the Dnipro and the region of Shmuel Kaminetsky, the Patriarch closely examined the exposition of the Museum “Memory of the Jewish People and the Holocaust in Ukraine”, and had a conversation on complex issues of the history of the Jewish and Ukrainian peoples. Special attention was paid to the exposition of our Museum dedicated to the spiritual sources of Judaism and Christianity; the tragedy of the Holodomor and the “Great Terror”; the Holocaust and the dramatic events of the history of the Ukrainian, Armenian, Crimean Tatar, and Polish peoples. In the Hall of the “Righteous Among the Peoples of the World”, His Holiness was pleased to see a picture of the historic visit of the leaders of churches and religious denominations to Canada (on the initiative of the UJE), associated with the commemoration of the spiritual feat of saving the Jews from the Holocaust by the head of the Greek Catholic Church Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky,” said Igor Shchupak. According to him, Patriarch Filaret is a sincere patriot of Ukraine, therefore, it was with excitement that he watched an exposition devoted to the war in the East of Ukraine. “The opinions expressed there coincided with the words of Rabin Shmuel Kaminetsky on the unity of Jews and Ukrainians during the difficult trials of Ukraine, and the words of Patriarch Filaret, who noted that the unity of Ukrainian society, the unity of the Ukrainian and Jewish peoples is the greatest blow to the aggressor. “If Ukrainians and Jews unite, this makes a great force!” underlined the Primate of the UOC-KP. “Communication with the Patriarch was especially interesting for me as a historian. His Holiness Filaret served God and the people of Ukraine for decades, having survived, according to him, Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko, Gorbachev, and headed the Orthodox Church under all the Presidents of Ukraine. The patriarch remembered the times of the dictatorship of the Communist Party and the KGB and the moral choice that faced every spiritual leader and public figure. The patriarch also recalled the times of the Revolution of Dignity and the Maidan, when the Synod of the UOC decided not to pray for Yanukovich's criminal power. Interestingly, exactly in two days after that Yanukovich fled. Someone

from the audience joked: you see, without the prayer of the Patriarch, the president cannot remain in office for more than two days. In fact, the visit of the leader of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to Dnipro Jewish community, one of the most influential in Ukraine and Europe testifies to unique changes in the Ukrainian society, the formation of a modern Ukrainian political nation and interethnic and interreligious understanding, which is possible only under conditions of democracy. Participants of the meeting, regardless of national and religious affiliation, were grateful for God's blessing of good deeds," said the Director of the Ukrainian Institute for the Study of the Holocaust "Tkuma".

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\*The article above appears through courtesy of the Religious Information Service of Ukraine. Access RISU at <http://risu.org.ua/en/index>