

10 January 2011

A position of the "Bulgarian Cultural Club" - Skopje on the scandalous non-Christian statement of the Macedonian Orthodox Church's head that the anguished Bulgarian mother and human rights activist Spaska Mitrova is "garbage, traitor and freak"

The "Bulgarian Cultural Club" - Skopje (BCCS) is deeply shocked and appalled by the statement of the head of the Macedonian Orthodox Church (MOC), Archbishop Stefan, who, in a Christmas interview for the media, stated that the long suffering Bulgarian mother Spaska Mitrova belongs to the "trebs of society, traitors and freaks". As is well known, during the last couple of years Spaska Mitrova became a symbol of courage and human dignity in the fight against ethnic discrimination suffered by the Bulgarians in the Republic of Macedonia. In particular, Archbishop Stefan arrogantly said:

"... He [Bishop Jovan Vranishkovski] has long been in his own way Spaska for MOC and what the Sofia Appellate Court decided only confirms that garbage, traitors and freaks always receive support..."

Since the times of the Inquisition, such vile, unchristian words have never been uttered by a priest, and still less by a head of church and spiritual shepherd. The outrageous inhumane speech of Archbishop Stefan is another vivid proof that the Republic of Macedonia continues to be dominated by a post-Yugoslav totalitarian socio-political system where dissenting opinions are punished by imprisonment, dismissal from work, public anathema, physical and psychological abuse.

The scandalous behavior of Archbishop Stefan comes after he unceremoniously appropriated the blessed name and historical heritage of the Bulgarian Patriarchate and Archbishopric of Ohrid to the canonically unrecognized MOC and personally usurped the sacred title of the *Archbishops of Ohrid*, conveniently omitting the last part of the true title "and of Bulgaria".

We strongly appeal to the European and international community to condemn these medieval discriminatory practices and to support by all possible means the desired democratic changes in our beloved homeland – the Republic of Macedonia.

Lazar Mladenov
President of BCCS



Enclosure:

1. Website publication of TV Kanal 5, from 8 January 2011
2. Video-file with Archbishop Stefan's statement