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# The All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations

Informal union

All actors • Ukraine

[The All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations](#); the chair changes annually.

## ***Official position/functions regarding the conflict***

The AUCCRO is the interreligious advisory body created for the development of a common vision and common position on social and political issues by the Ukrainian religious organizations that cover approximately 95% of religious organizations in Ukraine.

Since the beginning of the protests on the Maidan, the Council tried to quickly respond to social and political challenges; it called for an end to any manifestation of violence. Regarding peacebuilding, it issued several statements: a statement in support of the [overall Peacebuilding Strategy](#), [appeals to Vladimir Putin to release prisoners of conscience and political prisoners](#), [a statement in support of the President's peace initiatives in 2014](#), and [a statement on providing aid to protect the Ukrainian state](#), among others. The Peacebuilding Strategy proposed general prescriptions, calling on religious organizations to contribute to peacebuilding through cultural work and service.

## ***Interests in the region of the conflict***

Since its formation, one of the main directions of the Council's work has been lobbying for the interests of the Ukrainian religious circles before the highest levels of government of Ukraine. In particular, this concerns direct contact with different parliamentary groups, as well as attempts to block or promote legislative initiatives that reflect the vision of the Council.

The AUCCRO representatives are interested in maintaining the unique role of this organization, expanding their influence both domestically and internationally; often they publicly support the general policy of the state and respond to the key events from a religious point of view.

## ***Activity regarding the conflict***

In addition to issuing public statements in different periods of the conflict, the AUCCRO has actively represented the interests of religious organizations in Ukraine at the level of deliberative meetings of the OSCE in Vienna (except those religious communities that have not been included in its composition); [there it has stated the need to monitor religious persecution in Crimea and Donbas](#). Often its role consists in lobbying for the interests of Ukrainian influence groups under the circumstances of their public confrontation with the representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church, which claims that its believers are being persecuted in Ukraine; the AUCCRO often searches for counterarguments against such statements. Representatives of the UOC (MP) often support the rhetoric of the ROC, however, and [thus sometimes they contradict their colleagues from the AUCCRO](#).

Together with the [Institute of Religious Freedom](#), representatives of the AUCCRO continue to document the facts of persecution, violence, or any violation of human rights on the religious grounds in the conflict zone. Those cases can later be used by human rights defenders while preparing for claims to the courts of various instances.

As mentioned earlier, on behalf of the Council the initiative group managed to create and adopt the Peacebuilding Strategy, which was presented in the regions and recommended for practical use in peacebuilding work.