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Russia to assign 2 million dollars to restore damaged Orthodox Serb shrines in Kosovo

KosovoCompromise Staff

Russia will assign 2 million dollars to restore Orthodox Serb churches and monasteries in Kosovo, 150 of which have been destroyed or severely damaged by Kosovo Albanian extremists since the end of the NATO bombings in 1999.

"A leading team of officials from specialized ministries will be sent to Kosovo. They will define what sites Russia is to restore," executive secretary of the National Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO Grigory Orjonikidze said.

"Then Russian architects, engineers and fine art experts will visit Kosovo. We will act in frames of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention and UN mission in Kosovo.," Orjonikidze said.

Deputy head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations Archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin commented on the Russian initiative and said that "it is the matter of honor to help suffering Orthodox Christians in Kosovo."

"No doubt, several thousands of Russian churches also should be restored. But Kosovo churches are a different matter. We all remember how radicals in Kosovo defiantly destroyed crosses and cupolas, shot at the icons, burnt and blew up the churches only to wipe out the memory of Serb spiritual heritage," the priest noted.