



## His Holiness Patriarch Kirill takes part in a talk of Russian President Vladimir Putin with leaders of religious associations in Russia



On November 4, the National Unity Day, President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin had a traditional talk with His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and leaders of the religious associations in Russia. This year the meeting was held in videoconference mode.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church took part in the talk from the Patriarchal Chamber of the Many-Faceted Chamber of the Moscow Kremlin.

The visual communication also connected the Presidential study in the Kremlin with the Central Muslim Board in Russia located in Ufa, Moscow Cathedral Mosque, North Caucasus Coordination Center in Cherkessk, Ivolginsky Datsan, Lutheran Cathedral of Ss Peter and Paul in Moscow and other establishments.

Greeting the assembly Mr. Putin noted in particular, 'The traditions of kind, respectful relationship between people of different ethnicities and religious beliefs have been left to us by our ancestors. But it is not enough to be simply proud of this living spiritual heritage and the experience of creating a unique civilization. Of course, we have the right to be proud and we should be. But this is not enough. These values need to be protected, strengthened and nurtured. This is our common duty to this generation and future generations as well'.

'Interethnic and interreligious peace is the keystone for our huge country. It needs constant attention from the authorities, from civil society and from the media. The work here should be delicate, meticulous and comprehensive. And we are trying to act so – in the most delicate and constructive manner', the President stated.

After that, the participants in the meeting were addressed by His Holiness Kirill. 'The true power of our people is in unity', the Primate of the Russian Church underscored. 'It seems to me that representatives of religious communities are playing an important role in forming this unity today because religions themselves can draw lines of both opposition and even confrontation, and this did happen in history. But by God's mercy, our people, having gone through internal civil confrontations, are clearly aware today of the need for unity'.

According to His Holiness, it is remarkable that leaders of religious organizations in Russia can get together and meet with the head of the state in order to talk with each other and to underscore by the very fact of such meetings their 'commitment to the unity of our people and, certainly, to re-affirm their readiness for interreligious interaction and cooperation'.

His Holiness was followed by other religious leaders. Participating in the videoconference with the President of Russia were:

- Chairman of the Central Muslim Board in Russia Talgat Tadzhuddin,
- Chairman of the Muslim Board in Russia, Chairman of the Council of Muftis in Russia Ravil Gaynutdin,
- Chairman of the North Caucasus Muslim Coordinating Centre Ismail Berdiyev,
- Chief Rabbi of Russia Berel Lazar,
- Head of the Buddhist Traditional Sangha of Russia Pandito Khambo Lama Damba Ayusheev,
- Head of the Russian and Novo-Nakhichevan Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church Archbishop Ezras Nersisian,
- Metropolitan Kornily of Moscow and All Russia of the Old-Rite Russian Orthodox Church.
- Archbishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Russia Dietrich Brauer,
- Chief Bishop of Russia's Union of Evangelical Faith Christians (Pentecostals) Sergei Ryakhovsky,
- First Deputy Chairman of the Euro-Asian Division of the General Conference of the Church of Christians of Seventh Day Adventists Oleg Goncharov,

The online conference was also attended by A. Vaino, head of the Presidential Administration, and S. Kiriyyenko, first deputy head of the Presidential Administration.

**Stenogram of the meeting of Russian President Vladimir Putin with His Holiness Kirill and leaders of religious associations in Russia.**

*Patriarchal Press Service*

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