Primate of Russian Orthodox Church meets with President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev



On 14th November 2019, in Baku, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia met with the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ilham Aliyev. The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church had arrived in the capital of Azerbaijan to attend the 2nd Summit of World Religious Leaders in Baku.

Taking part in the meeting held on the sidelines of the summit were also Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations; Archbishop Alexander of Baku and Azerbaijan; Archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov), DECR vice-chairman; Mr. Mikhail Bocharnikov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Azerbaijan; as well as Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva, spouse of the President; Ms. Leyla Aliyeva, Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation; and Mr. Polad Bülbüloğlu, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Russian Federation.

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan expressed solidarity with the ideas put forward by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia in his address at the opening of the 2nd Summit

of World Religious Leaders. His Holiness reminded the participants in the summit of the necessity for representatives of different religions to combine efforts in order to uphold the traditional values, instead of which various misconceptions about the world, family and human life are being imposed on a human being nowadays.

“Much depends on the words of representatives of the world religions: a word can heal; a word can wound; a word can kill,” Mr. Aliyev said, “Therefore, today’s consensus raises optimism and hope that through the joint efforts we will promote the values of humanism, cooperation, peace, and mutual understanding.”

The head of the state also focused on the efforts undertaken by Azerbaijan to develop the intercultural and interfaith dialogue, noting the importance of the 2nd Summit of World Religious Leaders in Baku that gathered together some two hundred leaders of different traditional religions, as well as experts, diplomats, statesmen and public figures from many countries. Mr. Aliyev thanked His Holiness Patriarch Kirill for taking part in the forum.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church expressed his gratitude to the President of Azerbaijan for the warm hospitality, saying: “When asking ourselves a question of why we like or dislike a particular place, we often arrive at the following answer: it all depends on what we experience while visiting it. I used to come to Baku in the Soviet times, and I remember this city well. What I see here now is entirely different from those times. It is an indication of the major development which has taken place and still continues under your leadership. Of course, Azerbaijan is not a poor country, yet we know of the examples when money does not foster development. And here we see that money is being used to make people’s life better.”

His Holiness noted that the summit gave him an opportunity to meet with representatives of various world religions. “It seems to me that the most important thing we can get from such meetings is this: there can be no global consensus either at the political or at the philosophical level; there is only one basis for the global consensus – morality, because it is universal and the notions of good and evil are the same for all the humanity. It testifies, first and foremost, to the existence of God, for from the materialistic point of view it would be impossible to have common morality with such colossal variety of human cultures. However, the fact that morality exists provides us an opportunity to interact, build up a community and achieve goals,” His Holiness also said and noted that the state leaders who realize the importance of moral and religious factor in the life of society deserve deep respect.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill wished to the head of the Republic of Azerbaijan God’s help in his work. “May you be successful in all your endeavours aimed at bringing prosperity to the people, to the country. And may, with God’s help, the relationships between Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation develop for

the common good," His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia added.

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