The 25th General Assembly of the Inter-parliamentary Assembly of Orthodoxy completed its work in the Greek capital city

The 25th Jubilee General Assembly of the Inter-parliamentary Assembly of Orthodoxy (IAO) has completed its work in Athens.

Commenting on the final declaration of the IAO meeting, the IAO president S. Gavrilov, chairman of the State Duma committee for developing the civil society and for the affairs of public of religious associations, said, 'In adopting the declaration, the opinions of all the IAO members were taken into account, including proposals of the Russian parliament'.

In the document, the parliamentarians expressed support for the provisions of the St. Petersburg Declaration of the 137th Assembly of the Inter-parliamentary Union 'On Promoting Cultural Pluralism through Interreligious and Inter-ethnic Dialogue'. They also supported the Declaration of the Moscow International Forum on the Development of Parliamentarism concerning the need to open channels of international cooperation with the aim to de-escalate the confrontation, decrease conflicts and strengthen cooperation with the aim to remove threats to international peace.

'The declaration pointed out a considerable progress of the role of the Orthodox Christian Tradition in solving international problems and recognized the need for a more substantial and dynamic participation of the Inter-parliamentary Assembly of Orthodoxy in international socio-political developments', Mr. Gavrilov said.

'In its final declaration, the IAO supported the efforts of Churches to achieve unity and condemned any schisms and persecutions of Orthodox Churches in the canonical territory of their ministry', Mr. Gavrilov stressed. He recalled, in particular, that His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia pointed to the religious situation in Ukraine in his message to the assembly, stating that the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church is subjected to an unprecedented pressure and discrimination, but despite all her hardships, she selflessly fulfils her service of God and people. 'The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church sees as our common task the prevention of a possible increase in this pressuremade, among other things, under the influence of external forces', Mr. Gavrilov continued.

He also said that the IAO rejects any expression of fanaticism and extreme dogmatism in connection with a religious faith and makes its own contribution to the liberation of critical thinking so essential for

the modern man subjected to bombardment by uncontrolled and unverified information.

‘Certainly, the Orthodox parliament members intend to take an even more active part in international events and promote international cooperation, taking into account the significant role of Christian values, especially those of Orthodoxy, in asserting democracy and peace on the globe’, he concluded.

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The Inter-parliamentary Assembly of Orthodoxy (IAO) is an international organization representing an inter-parliamentary entity uniting Orthodox parliament members in countries of various religious traditions, which, on the political and legislative level, coordinates the work to protect the interests of Orthodoxy in countries in which there is a considerable part of Orthodox citizens and there are Local Orthodox Churches.

Today, the IAO unites over 20 states. Russia joined the organization in 1994. The delegation of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly participates in the work of the IAO on a regular basis.

Press Service of the chairman of the State Duma committee
for developing the civil society and for the affairs of pubic and religious associations
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