



Patriarch Kirill sends greetings to participants in the 11th meeting of Joint Russian-Iranian Commission for Dialogue 'Orthodox-Islam'

The 11th meeting of the Joint Russian-Iranian Commission for Dialogue 'Orthodoxy-Islam' took place on May 5-6, 2018, in Teheran. His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia sent a message of greeting to the participants in the meeting. The message states:

Esteemed participants in the meeting,

I cordially greet you as you have gathered for the 11th meeting of the Joint Commission for Dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Islamic community in Iran.

In the course of your meeting, you will discuss the protection of the environment. The importance of this topic is difficult to overestimate. In 2015, the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church established a day of special prayer for God's creation, which is held on the first Sunday in September.

It is clear that environmental problems stem from the manifestation of human egoism. Seeking to live as comfortably as possible, to consume as much as possible, people exhaust natural resources without thinking about consequences. In pursuit of momentary profit, human beings make their planet ever less suitable for life and trample upon God's creation – nature, thus distorting the design of the Heavenly Creator for the world and ever more strongly enslaving their spirit to flesh. Such a rapacious attitude to nature today dooms the generations to come to deprivations. Therefore, the principal cause of the ecological crisis is precisely the crisis of people's moral responsibility.

As the Bibles tell us, *God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it* (Gen. 2:15). We are called to cherish the environment in the awareness of our responsibility for it before the Creator. Let the voices of our communities help us in this endeavor and may the present work of the Joint Commission serve the cause of the common witness of Christians and Muslims to the importance of preserving our home, the Earth, safe and intact.

I wish the participants in the meeting success in their work.

+ Kirill

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