His Holiness Patriarch Kirill expresses hope that the dialogue between the Church and Turkmenistan's leadership will help resolve current difficulties

As His Holiness Patriarch Kirill noted in his address at the Bishops' Council of 2017, the situation of the Church in the Republic of Turkmenistan is regulated by the Law on the Freedom of Religion and Religious Organizations that took effect in 2016. According to this law, clergymen may carry out their pastoral ministry in prisons and social institutions. Moreover, the administration of the institutions must help those who request that their religious needs be satisfied.

Regrettably, there are still some restrictions concerning the teaching of religious subjects at educational institutions, His Holiness pointed out. In this context, the establishment of religious and educational centres at the parishes of the Patriarchal deanery in Turkmenistan is an important achievement.

"Despite the steady development of church-state relationships in the country, certain difficulties remain. These are, for instance, the issues pertaining to the opening of new churches and transfer of worship places, as well as the difficulties that sometimes arise with granting visas to the clergymen who are not citizens of Turkmenistan," the Primate of the Russian Church added.

"I hope that these issues will be settled in the course of dialogue between the state authorities and the Patriarchal deanery," His Holiness Patriarch Kirill said.

According to His Holiness, there are still certain problems concerning the importation of religious literature from abroad. At the same time, the precedent that allows to hope for improvements in this matter, was the presentation in Turkmenistan in 2017 of the Book of Proverbs in the Turkmen language, translated and published in Russia.

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