DECR representative takes part in International Interreligious Youth Forum



August 23-25, the 4th International Interreligious Youth Forum took place in Makhachkala. It was organized by the government of the Republic of Dagestan, the Russian Orthodox Church diocese of Makhachkala, the Muftiate of the Republic of Dagestan, the Council of Jewish Communities in Dagestan, the Freedom of Conscience Committee for cooperation with religious organizations in Dagestan, the Caucasus – A House of Peace, an autonomous non-commercial organizations, with the support of the Russian Federation Presidential Administration, Russian Federal Agency for Nationalities in Russia, and the Foundation for Support of Islamic Culture, Science and Education, a non-commercial charity.

The message of greetings were brought by Bishop Varlaam of Makhachkala, Bishop Serafim of Lyubertsy, head of the ROC youth department; Mr. R. Abdulatipov, head of the Republic of Dagestan; Dagestan Mufti Ahmad Afandi Abdulaev, Islamic theologian Mustafa Dib al-Bugha (Syria), as well as representatives of the Russian Presidential Directorate for Domestic Policy, the Presidential Envoy for

the North Caucasus, the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society and others.

The Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations was represented by S. Melnik of the DECR secretariat for interreligious relations. In his remarks made at the panel discussion on Traditional Religions and the Echo of Middle East Conflicts, he spoke about various opportunities for interreligious dialogue existing in the work of the Interreligious Council in Russia and the problem of persecution against Christians in the Middle East and North Africa.

The forum also worked in sections on the topics ‘Good Behavior and Wise Deeds: Ways towards Spiritual Perfection’ and ‘North Caucasus – a Place of Encounter of World Religions. Addresses at the forum were made by religious leaders and academics, particularly from the Ss Cyril and Methodius Institute of Post-Graduate Studies, Kazan Orthodox Seminary, Moscow State University and higher education institutions in Dagestan and Chechnya.

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