Patriarch Kirill's message of greetings to the Fifth Plenary Session of the Christian Inter-Confessional Consultative Committee

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia has sent a message of greetings to the participants in the CICC Fifth Plenary Session, which has begun its work on April 26, 2017, in St. Petersburg. The message was read out by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations.

Your Eminences and Graces

Venerable Fathers,

Brothers and Sisters:

I cordially greet the participants in the Fifth Plenary Session of the Christian Inter-confessional Consultative Committee, which has become a major platform for dialogue and cooperation between Christian confessions in the Eurasian space.

The present forum is devoted to the theme: 'Faith and the Overcoming of Civic Confrontation: Lessons of the Century'. You are to reflect on the causes and consequences of the tragic events which shook the foundations of the life of our people in the beginning of the 20th century and the consequences of which are felt to this day.

The attempts to build a happy future with justice without God turned out to be terrible trials for people. Churches and monasteries were destroyed; millions of our compatriots endured hanger and impoverishment and had to leave their Motherland and to end their days in exile. At that time, a feat was performed by new martyrs and confessors who now stand at the throne of the Heavenly King, lifting up prayers to Him for their earthly Motherland.

With the turn of historical eras, which took place in the end of the 20th century, it became possible to confess one's faith in Christ freely. At the same time, Christian confessions came to face new challenges. Responding to them, we have re-asserted out unshakable commitment to traditional moral values and principles of good inter-confessional cooperation.

Reflecting on the lessons of the 20th century, we called today to make our contribution to the building of peace and accord in society. I am confident that it will make possible for us to avoid in the future many mistakes that can lead to new divisions.

I wish the participants in the plenary session fruitful work. May the blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ will always be with you.

+Kirill

Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

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