His Holiness Patriarch Kirill meets with Syria's Minister of Awqaf



On 7 March 2017, at the Patriarchal residence in St Daniel's Monastery, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia met with Dr. Mohammed Abdul Sattar al-Sayeed, Minister of Awqaf of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Dr. al-Sayeed was accompanied by Sheikh Ahmad Samir al-Kabbani, Director General of Awqaf in the city of Damascus, and Sheikh Abdullah al-Sayyed, Director of Religious Youth Movement of Syria. Among those present at the meeting were also H.E. Mr. Riyad Haddad, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Syrian Arab Republic to the Russian Federation; Metropolitan Niphon of Philipopolis, representative of the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia; Archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov), vice-chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate; and Rev. Dimitry Safonov, DECR Secretary for Interreligious Relations and Executive Secretary of the Interreligious Council of Russia.

Greeting the guest, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill reminded him about their meeting in Damascus in November 2011, that took place during the visit of the Primate of the Russian Church to the Patriarchate of Antioch.

As His Holiness noted, since the beginning of the crisis in Syria, the Russian Church has been speaking at various international levels, emphasizing the right of peoples to live independently and to determine their future without any outside interference. “I personally, as well as our representatives to various international organization have been actively raising our voice in defense of the legal rights of the Syrian people who are suffering from the manifestations of global terrorism inspired by the forces outside of Syria,” Patriarch Kirill said.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church repeatedly raised the Syrian issue during his meetings with heads of foreign states and with the Russian authorities. For instance, in 2013 the Primates and representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches who had come to Moscow for the celebrations of the 1025th anniversary of the Baptism of Russia, met with the President of the Russian Federation at the Kremlin to discuss, first of all, the Syrian crisis and the situation of Christians in the Middle East. “Representatives of all Local Orthodox Churches applied to the President of our country, asking Russia to exert every effort to stop the unjust war in the Middle East,” His Holiness noted.

“We felt deep satisfaction when, some time later, as you know, Russia deemed it necessary to take an active part in the anti-terrorist campaign in the territory of your country, as was agreed with the legitimate authorities of Syria,” Patriarch Kirill continued, “We are happy to see its success: it is absolutely clear that the global terrorism sustains heavy losses; the door has been opened to the peaceful settlement that could lead to the re-establishment of the lasting and just peace in your country. It is our great hope that the negotiations that are under way in Astana and Geneva will result in the restoration of the long-awaited peace and justice.”

His Holiness thanked Dr. Mohammed Abdul Sattar al-Sayeed, Minister of Awqaf of the Syrian Arab Republic, for his position with regard to the Christian minority in Syria. “We know that you show solidarity with the suffering Christian minority and devote much attention to this part of the Syrian population,” he said.

Dr. al-Sayeed conveyed to the Primate of the Russian Church greetings from Patriarch John X of Antioch and emphasized that Muslims in Syria had very close relationships with the faithful of the Orthodox Church of Antioch. He also told about the activities of his ministry whose task is to promote cooperation between the state and the religious communities in Syria and, among other things, to address the needs of Christians.

DECR Communication Service

Photo by the Patriarchal Press Service

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/48661/