



Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs draws United Nations' attention to the statement of Patriarch Kirill and Pope Francis on the defense of Christians

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov expressed concern for the fate of Christians in the Middle East in his address delivered at a high-profile event during the 31st session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) on March 1, 2016.

He drew attention of the audience to the joint statement recently signed by the heads of the Russian Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches and underscored that it contained a call on the international community to act immediately in order to stop the mass exodus of Christians from the Middle East countries.

"We expect that this call will receive a practical response, particularly in the activities of the UNHRC. We will work towards this," he said.

Minister Lavrov also mentioned a high-level event on issues of protecting the rights of Christians held in Geneva on 2 March 2015 attending which were Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Lebanon and Syria. Archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov), vice-chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, delivered a report at the conference.

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