St. Petersburg Dialogue forum's working group on Churches in Europe meet in Berlin

On September 8, 2015, the Churches in Europe working group of the St. Petersburg Dialogue forum met in Berlin for an organizational meeting.

From the Russian Orthodox Church it was attended by Archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov), vice-chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations (DECR) and leader of the working group from the Russian side, Archpriest Sergiy Zvonarev, DECR secretary for the far abroad, and S. Ochkanov, of the DECR secretariat for the far abroad.

There were also Dr. Johannes Eldemann, director of the Institute of Ecumenical Theology and leader of the working group from the German side, Propst Siegfried T. Kasparick, Evangelical Church in Germany, Dr. Frank Ronge, Conference of Catholic Bishops in Germany, and Dr. Jennifer Wasmuth, Humboldt University of Berlin department of theology.

The working group discussed the present situation in the work of the St. Petersburg Dialogue and expressed a common assurance of the need to develop contacts between Russia and Germany on the level of civil society, of which Christian Churches are an integral part. Having considered the results of the work carried out by the group in 2015, the participants pointed to the high productivity of the issue conferences, the student exchange program and the study of experience in theological education in the two countries. This October, there will be a visit of representatives of various theological schools of the Russian Orthodox Church to Germany at the invitation of German higher education schools of theology.

The Churches in Europe working group – as part of the 14th St. Petersburg Dialogue forum to take place, as was agreed by the two countries, on October 22-24, 2015 in Potsdam – will deal with the theme 'Churches' Response to Serious Challenges Facing Europe Today'.

The Churches in Europe working group plans to discuss in 2016 such important problems as the mass immigration in Europe and the situation in the Middle East, in which the very survival of Christian communities is under a series threat.

After the official part of the meeting, the participants visited the St. George Monastery of the ROC Diocese of Germany in Goetschendorf, where they were welcomed by the abbot, Hegumen Daniel (Irbits), and the monastic community. They said a prayer at the church of St. George the Victorious under construction. Then the father superior introduced the guests in detail to the everyday liturgical life of the brethren, the progress of the construction work and the live farming.

DECR Communication Service

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/50184/