



Delegation of Russian Orthodox Church takes part in CROCEU meeting on the Role of the Church at the Time of Crisis



On 1-3 May 2015, members of the Committee of the Representatives of Orthodox Churches to the European Union (CROCEU) gathered in Athens at the invitation of the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church of Greece to hold an annual meeting which this year was dedicated to “The Role of the Churches at the Time of Crisis”.

Representing the Moscow Patriarchate at the meeting were archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov), vice-chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, and archpriest Dimitry Sizonenko, acting representative of the Russian Orthodox Church at the European international institutions in Brussels.

Among the participants in the meeting were also *Metropolitan Athenagoras of Belgium (Patriarchate of Constantinople)*, *Metropolitan Nifon of Târgoviște (Patriarchate of Romania)*, *Bishop Porphyrios of Naples (Church of Cyprus)*, *Metropolitan Athanasios of Achaia (Church of Greece)*, and other representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches.

Opening the meeting, Metropolitan Athanasios of Achaia warmly greeted all those present on behalf of the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece. In his address, he told about the social assistance programme implemented by the Church of Greece in the crisis-hit country and focused on the role of the Church in tackling serious humanitarian problems pertaining to the increasing inflow of migrants, first of all, to the coast of the Aegean Sea.

Bishop Porphyrios of Naples informed the participants in the meeting of the work of the Church of Cyprus aimed at providing emergency assistance to the needy and noted that despite the economic crisis the Church was trying to give people hope and confidence in the future.

In his address, Metropolitan Nifon of *Târgoviște* dwelt on the crisis of religious education in Romania.

Archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov), vice-chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, spoke on the critical situation of Christians in the Middle East.

The address by Metropolitan Athenagoras of Belgium was dedicated to moral and spiritual aspects of the current crisis.

The participants in the meeting discussed various aspects pertaining to the work of the Representations of the Local Orthodox Churches to the EU and mapped out a number of events for promoting brotherly cooperation.

At the invitation of His Beatitude Archbishop Chrysostomos of New Justiniana and All Cyprus, the CROCEU members will gather in Nicosia in 2016 to hold the Committee's next annual meeting.

DECR Communication Service

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