Russian Orthodox Church representative attends interreligious conference in Sofia

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The international interreligious conference on Religion for People took place on August 3-4, 2011, in the Bulgarian capital city.

The opening of the forum was attended by bishops and clergy from the Orthodox Churches of Constantinople, Russia, Georgia, Romania, Bulgaria, Cyprus and Greece as well as from the Armenian Apostolic Church. There were also representatives of the Muslim communities in Bulgaria, Turkey and Macedonia and Jewish communities in Israel and Bulgaria.

Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople delivered a speech of greetings.

A message of greetings from Patriarch Maxim of Bulgaria was brought by Metropolitan Cyril of Varna and Veliko Pereslavl, one of the organizers of the conference in Sofia.

Deacon Dimitry Safonov of the DECR secretariat for the far-abroad countries, read out a message from Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations.

Brief messages of greetings were brought by Bulgaria's Supreme Mufti Alis Hadji and Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv Yisrael Meir Lau.

In his speech during the second day of the conference, Metropolitan Cyril of Varna, Bulgarian Church, underscored among other things the need to teach religious culture in Bulgarian schools for maintaining a religious and inter-ethnic peace in the country.

Deacon Dimitry Safonov, in his address, spoke about the importance that the Russian Orthodox Church gives to interreligious dialogue and about prospects for its development.

The final document adopted at the conclusion of the meeting states in particular, 'Together we would like to appeal to all people to show patience, mutual understanding, respect and peace'.

It was agreed to hold the second interreligious conference in the beginning of October 2012 in Varna,

Bulgaria.

DECR Communication Service

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/55325/