



DECR chairman addresses Kirchentag participants

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On 3 June 2011, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR), took part in the panel discussion on a just peace at the 33rd Deutscher Evangelischer Kirchentag held in Dresden.

In his presentation, Metropolitan Hilarion said that peacemaking began in human soul and in the family. In reply to the question why a just war is mentioned in the Bases of the Social Concept of the Russian Orthodox Church, the DECR chairman expressed his confidence in that the concepts of just war and just peace are not mutually exclusive, but rather supplement each other.

Speaking about the nature of the present-day peacemaking, Metropolitan Hilarion said that the declared good intentions often run counter to the methods of achievement and final results and reminded the listeners that the two thirds of the Iraqi Christians have fled the country since the beginning of military operations.

The DECR chairman underscored that Christians throughout the world were called to demonstrate solidarity with their discriminated and persecuted fellow believers in certain regions of the world, while the followers of other religions should join the process in order to overcome xenophobia, Islamophobia and other negative phenomena based on misconceptions and artificially stirred misunderstanding. Metropolitan Hilarion also spoke of pacifism. He said that radical pacifism was uncharacteristic of Christian tradition, illustrating this by the views of Leo Tolstoy who actually put himself out of the Church. Inherent in Orthodox tradition are anthropological views according to which evil abides inside rather than outside the human person. People can serve justice even fighting the enemy with weapons, in which case the motivation and objectives of each concrete person are extremely important, the DECR chairman emphasized.

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