



Bishops' Conference approves of the work of Department for External Church Relations

The Bishops' Conference took place in the Hall of Church Councils at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour on 2 February 2010. Taking part in it were hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church who have arrived in Moscow to celebrate the anniversary of the enthronement of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia.

His Holiness presented a report that was following by a discussion of issues took up by the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church. Resolutions on various aspects of church life were adopted.

The participants in the Bishops' Conference thanked His Holiness the Patriarch and members of the Holy Synod for their efforts aimed at the strengthening of Orthodox unity and approved of the work done in this field by the Department for external church relations.

Satisfaction was expressed with the position of the Russian Church taken in the process of preparation for the Pan-Orthodox Council, with the results of the Patriarch's visit to the Church of Constantinople, and with successful development of bilateral relations between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Local Orthodox Churches.

The Bishops' Conference recognized the work of the Department for external church relations in the field of inter-Christian relations as expedient. It should further serve to the witness about the undamaged apostolic faith and to common defence of traditional Christian values in the life of society at present.

The participants acknowledged the significance of the dialogue of the Russian Orthodox Church with the authorities and public circles of foreign countries maintained in the spirit of mutual respect. They appreciated the experience of the Church's cooperation with international institutions in discussing topical problems of our times and supported an initiative to set up a consultative group of religious leaders of high level at the UNESCO Director General as an effective mechanism of bringing the believers' voice to the notice of the world community.

The resolutions of the Bishops' Conference consider it helpful to develop interreligious dialogue in the canonical territory of the Russian Orthodox Churches as well as beyond it for the sake of maintaining social stability, preventing conflicts on religious grounds, common holding out against the challenges of aggressive secularism, and attaining good-neighborly relations and peaceful coexistence among nations of different religious traditions and cultures.

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