



Archbishop Hilarion of Volokolamsk: Lithuania and Russia are leaders in the number of suicides. The scale of this tragedy is a reason to think and begin speaking about the causes of such shameful 'leadership'

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The secretariat of the Christian Inter-confessional Consultative Committee of the CIS and Baltic Counties (CICCC) met on 15 October, 2009, at the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations in Moscow.

In his address, Archbishop Hilarion of Volokolamsk, DECR chairman, pointed to the importance of developing cooperation with the CCCIC, saying, 'The Committee provides a convenient platform for dialogue and cooperation, making it possible to elaborate a common position of Christian Churches on key issues posed by modern times. The CCCIC instrument itself is unique as it is a model of 'the greater Europe' because it unites representatives of Christian Churches in a whole number of member states of various political associations and both the European Union and the Commonwealth of the Independent States.

Archbishop Hilarion noted that those present at the meetings had no differences on such vital issues as the immutability of the norms of Christian morality and the significance of Christian values in the history of European culture. 'In face of militant secularism and growing Christianophobia, we must speak in one voice as we are responsible indeed to the destiny of Christianity in Eastern Europe and in the European continent as a whole', DECR chairman stressed, adding that 'in spite of the fact that we live in different states – members of different economic and political associations, we are obliged to find a common language in our witness to eternal and immutable truths of the gospel of Christ'.

His Eminence made a proposal to begin joint work in socio-political area, 'bearing witness in one voice before governmental, parliamentary and public bodies to the need to combat the phenomena which are often described as 'social evil', that is, drug addiction, alcoholism, propagation of pornography, the cult of consumerism and violence – all that threatens the peace and sustainable development of our societies'.

'Abortions – and Russia unfortunately is a world leader in their number – have acquired for us the nature of social disaster aggravated by invariably low demographics, Archbishop Hilarion reminded the

meeting. 'Lithuania and Russia are also leaders in the number of suicides. The scale of this tragedy is a reason to think and begin speaking about the causes of this shameful 'leadership'", he said.

DECR chairman also drew the attention of the meeting to the fact that some phenomena, such as proselytism, continued to impede the development of mutual understanding between some Churches and communities. 'It is in the first place the phenomenon of proselytism, which is often accompanied by rude and usually false attacks on one of the Churches. In training missionaries, it is necessary to take these problems into account so that mission may not degenerate into proselytism', His Eminence said.

DECR Communication Service

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