The 11th General Assembly of the World Council of Church has completed its work



DECR Communication Service, 08.09.2022.

The 11th General Assembly of the World Council of Church was held from August 31 to September 8 in Karlsruhe, Germany.

The delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church was headed at the assembly by the Chairman of the External Church Relations Department of the Moscow Patriarchate and Patriarchal Exarch for Western Europe, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk.

The delegation included Metropolitan Sergiy of Singapore and South-East Asia, Patriarchal Exarch for South-East Asia; Metropolitan Leonid, Patriarchal Exarch for Africa; Bishop Gennady of Kaskelen, vicar of the Diocese of Astana; Archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov), vice-chairman of the Department for External Church Relations; Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, DECR acting vice-chairman; Archpriest Nikolay Gundyaev, representative of the Russian Orthodox church to the World Council of Churches and

international organizations in Geneva; Archpriest Valentin Vasechko, vice-chairman of the Education Committee, associate professor at the St. Tikhon Orthodox University of the Humanities; Archpriest Vladimir Khulap, pro-rector for training, St. Petersburg Theological Academy; Hieromonk Stephen (Igumnov), DECR secretary for inter-Christian relations; Rev. Iliya Kosykh, head of the DECR communication service; Rev. Vyacheslav Zavalny, reviewer, DECR branch in St. Petersburg; Rev. Alexander Ershov, adviser to the DECR chairman; Hierodeacon Petr (Akhmatkhanov), a staff member of the DECR secretariat for inter-Christian relations; V.V. Kipshidze, vice-chairman of the Synodal Department for Church-Society Relations and Mass Media; Ms. M. B. Nelyubova and P. V. Champion, staff members of the DECR secretariat for inter-Christian relations; Ye. V. Bartosh, a methodologist of the training methodology department of the Ss Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute of the Byelorussian State University.

The closing ceremony took place on 31 August at the Congress Center in Karlsruhe.

Among the topics dealt with by the Assembly were Christian solidarity and mutual aid in face of persecutions against Christians in various parts of the world, the situation of Christians in the Holy Land and peaceful co-existence in Europe. On the agenda were also problems of economic and social injustice in modern society, racism and xenophobia, violations of human right and issues concerning ecology and consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In total, the forum was attended by over two thousand delegates from various countries and continents.

After the first day of the assembly, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk held a conference with members of the Russian Orthodox Church delegation. His Eminence conveyed to them best wishes from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and called upon the delegates to take an active part in the work of committee and to keep the firm expression of the Russian Orthodox Church’s position on all the issues raised at the Assembly.

He also made comments on the statement of President of Germany F.-W. Steinmeier, who, speaking at the opening of the forum, questioned the relevance of the participation of a delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church in the assembly.

On September 1, a meeting was held between the World Council of Churches leaders and a delegation of the Moscow Patriarchate. It was stressed that the WCC should remain an open platform for dialogue for all Christians and any isolation of the Russian Orthodox Church’s delegation at the General Assembly is out of question.

On the side-lines of the Assembly the DECR chairman had meetings with His Holiness John X,

Patriarch of Great Antioch and All the East, head of the Church of England Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, a delegation of the Coptic Church, General Secretary of the World Evangelical Alliance T, Schirrmacher, and Archbishop of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Estonia Urmas Viilma. In addition, he had talks with hierarchs of the Russian Church Outside of Russia Metropolitan Mark of Berlin and Germany and Bishop Job of Stuttgart, as well as Administrator of the Diocese of Berlin and Germany Archbishop Tikhon of Ruza.

On September 8, the plenary session of the 11th WCC General Assembly adopted several final documents on the WCC internal structure, the theological understanding of the challenges facing Christendom, as well as situations in various parts of the world, namely, the Middle East, Africa, the Korean Peninsula, Nagorny Karabakh, Oceania and Europe. Pointing to the main theme of the 11th General Assembly 'Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity', the delegates acknowledged theological, canonical and other differences existing between the WCC member, but expressed a wish to continue working together for the development of inter-Christian cooperation and witness to the Gospel's teaching.

The head of the Russian Orthodox Church delegation commented on the document 'The war in Ukraine, peace and justice in the European region' adopted by the Assembly.

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/89614/