



## Representative of the Russian Orthodox Church takes part in concluding events to mark the 1100-year anniversary of the conversion to Islam of the peoples of the Volga region.



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On the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of December there took place in Moscow events marking the celebrations of the 1100 anniversary of the conversion to Islam of the peoples of the kingdom of Bulgaria on the Volga.

Taking place at the same time in Moscow was the XVIII International Muslim Forum for justice and moderation as the divine principles for the ordering to the world. The events' organizers were the International Muslim Forum and the Spiritual Directorate for Russian Muslims. The joint organizers were the Directorate for Religious Affairs of Turkey, the Organization for Culture and Islamic Links of Iran and the World Council of Muslim Communities. Taking part in the forum were eminent representatives of the Islamic world, including the chairman of the Directorate for Muslims of the Caucasus sheik ul Islam Allahshukyur Pashazadeh, who met on 7<sup>th</sup> December with His Holiness Patriarch Kirill, the minister for religious affairs of Turkey Ali Erbash, the chief judge of Palestine and advisor to the president of

Palestine for religious affairs Doctor Mahmoud Al-Habbas, the secretary general of the World Assembly for the Integration of Madhhab Doctor Hamid Sahriyari and others.

As part of the forum on 8<sup>th</sup> December there was the V International scientific and practical conference entitled the Gasprinsky readings on the topic of religious dialogue as an essential factor of development in interreligious and intercultural accord. Joining the conference by long distance link was the chairman of the council of experts under the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia for interaction with the Islamic world hieromonk Gregory (Matrusov). There was also a presentation from the head of the department of the Federation of Russian Jewish Communities for Interaction with the Law Enforcement Agencies rabbi Aaron Gurevich. There were several hundred participants of the session and workshops of the forum.

On the concluding day of the forum there was held for the guests and participants a festive concert in the Hall of Columns at the House of Unions, as well as a festive reception, which was attended by diplomats, representatives of the authorities and public organizations and religious leaders from dozens of countries from around the world. With the blessing of the chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate the event was attended by the DECR secretary for interreligious relations Father Dimitry Safonov.

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