



## **DECR representative attends International Meeting on Migration Challenges and Opportunities**



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On April 5, an International Meeting on “Migration Challenges and Opportunities - the International Organization for Migration and Orthodox Partners” took place in Athens, Greece. The meeting was sponsored by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) under the auspices of the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum.

Taking part in the meeting, including online participants, were Mr. Antonio Vitorino, IOM Director General; leadership of the Ministry of Migration and Asylum; public and political persons; Mr. Margaritis Schinas, vice-president of the European Commission; hierarchs, clergymen and lay persons who represented several Local Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and organizations of these Churches working with refugees and migrants; representatives of the World Council of Churches

and the Middle East Council of Churches.

Attending the meeting was also Mr. Oleg Kalimullin of the DECR, who delivered a report on the aid rendered by the Russian Orthodox Church to civilians affected by military confrontation in Ukraine. He explained that this work began in 2014 when over one million refugees from the east of Ukraine entered Russia. At present the Russian Orthodox Church is one of the major aid organizers. Mr. Kalimullin also told the participants in the meeting about decades of the DECR experience of providing assistance to victims in emergencies and about the problems of migration.

The IOM plans to draw up recommendations on opportunities and forms of its support of the work of Orthodox Churches and organizations in the field of migration and refugee aid.

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