



## **DECR Chairman addressed the XV General Assembly of the Christian Conference of Asia**



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On the 30th of September, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, who is on a visit to India with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus', spoke at the XV General Assembly of the Christian Conference of Asia, held in Kottayam (Kerala, India).

In **his address**, Vladyka Anthony emphasised the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in spreading Christianity over a large area of the Asian continent, stating that "through the efforts of Russian missionaries, Christianity first came to the territory of Northern Asia: Siberia and the Far East", and today there are "dozens of dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church".

Metropolitan Anthony also spoke about the growing presence of the Moscow Patriarchate in Southeast Asia, noting that "communities of the Russian Orthodox Church are actively developing in Thailand, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Cambodia and the Philippines," which became part of the Patriarchal Exarchate of Southeast Asia established several years ago.

On a separate note, the DECR Chairman dwelt on the historically established fraternal relations between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Christian churches of the region.

Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk also addressed the theme of the current General Assembly, "God, Renew Us in Your Spirit, and Restore the Creation", dedicated to environmental issues.

The Asian Christian Conference was founded in 1957 and is the oldest regional Christian organisation. Its purpose is to promote co-operation among Christians in the region and to foster inter-church relations. The Conference unites the majority of Christian churches in Asia and serves as the largest inter-Christian dialogue platform in this part of the world.

The current XV General Assembly takes place from 28 September to 4 October 2023. A delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church, headed by Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, is attending the Assembly as guests of honour.

The delegation also includes Hieromonk Stefan (Igumnov), Secretary of the DECR for Inter-Christian Relations, and Priest Alexander Ershov, Assistant to the DECR Chairman.

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