Representatives of Russian Orthodox Church attend sessions of Secretariat of the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions



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Meetings of the Working Group and Secretariat of the Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions took place in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, on October 10-11, 2023. They were organized by the government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Nursultan Nazarbayev Centre for Development of Interfaith and Intercivilzation dialogue and timed for the 20th anniversary of the First Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions.

On October 10, the meeting of the Secretariat was held taking part in which on the part of the Russian Orthodox Church with the blessing of Metropolitan Anthony, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR), was deacon Ilya Kashitsyn, DECR secretary for

interreligious relations.

Participants exchanged opinions on the Seventh Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions that took place in September 2022 and discussed the draft concept of the Congress. This document is a kind of roadmap for the development and promotion of the ideas of interfaith dialogue till 2033. In his address, the DECR representative noted the topical and correct idea of the concept to build a strong, happy and prospering society on the basis of moral principles inherent in all world religions.

In the evening, the 'Khabar' TV channel showed a program "Itogi" (Results) about sessions of the working bodies of the Congress with participation of Bishop Gennady of Kaskelen and Mr. Bulat Sarsenbayev, chair of the Board of the Nazarbayev Centre.

On October 11, the 21st session of the Congress began its work at the Palace of Peace and Accord under the chairmanship of Maulen Ashimbayev, head of the Secretariat and chair of the Senate of Kazakhstan.

Reports were presented on such topics as the relevance of interfaith dialogue as an answer to modern challenges and the work of the Congress. The participants discussed proposals as well as additions to the concept and adopted a communiqué. Mr. Ashimbayev gave a ceremonial reception.

All the participants were given postage stamps commemorating the 20th anniversary of the First Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions.

In the evening, the Central Asian branch of the Muslim Council of Elders was solemnly opened. Taking part in the ceremony on the part of the Russian Orthodox Church were Bishop Gennady of Kaskelen and deacon Ilya Kashitsyn.

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