



THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Department for External Church Relations

Address by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' to the participants of the World Conference of Compatriots Living Abroad



DECR Communication Service, 01.11.2023.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' sent his greetings to the participants of the World Conference of Compatriots Living Abroad (1st of November 2023, Moscow).

Dear compatriots, brothers and sisters!

Greetings to all participants of the World Conference of Compatriots Living Abroad.

It is a pleasure to address you today and I believe such meetings are important for strengthening the unity of our nation.

Today we are all living in very difficult times - the fratricidal conflict in Ukraine, which is hurting people's hearts and affecting their daily lives. Our enemies are making great efforts to ensure that this confrontation lasts as long as possible and inflicts the deepest possible wounds on peoples bound by common faith and blood ties.

The Church, aware of the desire of external forces to sow division and hatred and to obliterate our true history and culture, does everything possible to preserve a space of peace, prayer and consolation under the vaults of churches. At every Divine service, we offer supplications to the Lord for the speedy overcoming of enmity and the restoration of mutual understanding in the countries of historical Rus'.

As a result of the conflict, many people have been forced to leave their homes and have become refugees in their own countries and abroad. They need not only food, shelter and work, but also spiritual support and active human participation. It is very important not to stand aside from the misfortune of others and to help those in need to the best of our ability, if only with a kind word and sincere attention.

You are well aware that the spirit of enmity and division is being tried today even in those spheres that have remained outside politics since ancient times and served peace and creation, such as art, science and sport. In such a situation, compatriots abroad need courage to defend their culture, to protect it from the so-called cancellation. Our common task is to preserve our identity, our authenticity and spiritual reference points, not to lose our way and not to distort historical facts, not to fall into despondency and find the strength of spirit for creative work for the benefit of our neighbours. Our nation has gone through hard periods many times, but despite all the trials it has always tried to withstand difficulties and preserve unity. I hope that it will also be like that now.

I wish you strength of body and soul, generous help of God and success in all good deeds and endeavours.

**+KIRILL,
PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUS'**

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