



Moscow Patriarchate representatives take part in Religious Leaders' Summit on Safeguarding the Planet



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The Global Summit of Religious Leaders on the problems of safeguarding the environment "Confluence of Conscience: Uniting for Planetary Resurgence" took place in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates, on November 6-7. The event was timed to coincide with the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) scheduled to be held in the UAE in early December. The forum was organized by the Council of Muslim Elders in partnership with the UN and the UAE state leadership.

With the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus', the summit was attended by hieromonk Grigoriy (Matrusov), chairman of the Patriarchal Expert Council on Cooperation with the

Islamic World, and deacon Iliya Kashitsyn, acting DECR secretary for interreligious relations.

Taking part in the forum were delegations of the Local Orthodox Churches, the Roman Catholic Church, the Armenian, Syro-Jacobite, Coptic and Ethiopian Churches, Protestant communities, Sunni and Shiite Muslim communities, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu and Sikh communities, representatives of indigenous people of several countries, political and public figures, and representatives of professional circles.

Deacon Iliya read out greetings to the participants from Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Department for External Church Relations. With reference to the 'Position of the Russian Orthodox Church on topical environmental problems', he wrote that the world around us is changing in alignment with the inner world of man, that current environmental problems result from consumer attitude to nature and its gifts, and that anthropocentrism is the cause of current global economic, food and political crisis. The archpastor stated that traditional religions foster chastity and temperance in human beings, helping them to be custodians of the God-given world rather than irresponsible consumers of natural resources. At the end of his message, Metropolitan Anthony expressed support for consolidated appeal of religious leaders to safeguarding and careful attitude to the environment.

By the close of the first working day, the participants in the summit held a tree-planting ceremony and signed a common Interfaith Statement.

On the second day, sections took place on common actions and consolidated approach to environmental problems and solutions, and youth and female interfaith initiatives.

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