



## **DECR representative takes part in annual expert meeting at Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs**



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On December 21, an annual expert meeting took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation under the chairmanship of Mr Sergey Vershinin, Deputy Foreign Minister. Among its participants were representatives of non-governmental and religious organisations that take active part in various events held by the human rights bodies of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

The meeting organised by the Department for Humanitarian Cooperation and Human Rights brought together diplomats, human rights activists, religious figures and journalists. Among those in attendance was Archpriest Sergy Zvonarev, Secretary for Far Abroad Countries of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate.

In his speech, Mr Sergey Vershinin highlighted the current political situation in international affairs. The invited experts, who had participated in different human rights forums in 2023, shared their experience. In his address, Archpriest Sergy Zvonarev dwelt on the efforts of the Supreme Authority of the Russian

Orthodox Church to defend the rights of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. As he pointed out, the issue of religious rights and freedoms in Ukraine has become highly politicized.

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