



## **DECR representative attends conference dedicated to Catholicos Nerses Shnorali**



**DECR Communication Service, 24.12.2023.**

On December 21, an academic conference was held at the Armenian church complex under the chairmanship of Archbishop Ezras Nersissian, head of the Armenian Apostolic Church Diocese of Russia and New Nakhichevan. The conference was dedicated to the personality and heritage of His Holiness Nerses IV Shnorhali the Gracious (c. 1100 - 1173), Catholicos of the Armenian Church, a prominent theologian, philosopher, hymnographer, poet and chronicler, a saint of the Armenian Apostolic Church and a strong advocate of its rapprochement with the Orthodox Church. The year 2023 marks the 850<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his blessed death.

The conference, which was organized by the Center for Armenian Studies of the Diocese of Russia and New Nakhichevan, has brought together theologians, philologists, art historians, and historians from Russia and Armenia. Protoarchimandrite Shahe Ananian, doctor of theology, head of the department for international relations and rector of the Gevorgian Theological Academy and Seminary of the Mother

See of Holy Etchmiadzin, and hierodeacon Georgy (Ramazian), candidate of theology, lecturer at the department of church history of the Moscow Theological Academy, were the key speakers.

Taking part in the conference with the blessing of Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR) and at the invitation of the leadership of the Diocese of Russia and New Nakhichevan, was Mr. Sergei Alferov, a DECR staff member and a senior lecturer at the department of church practical disciplines of the Ss Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute of Postgraduate Studies. In his address, he noted the considerable part played by Catholicos Nerses Shnorhali in fostering contacts between Armenian Christians and the Greek Orthodox world, which largely determined the particularly close relationship of trust that has taken shape in after years between the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin and the Moscow Patriarchate.

At the end of the conference, a concert was performed at the Armenian church complex by students of the Religious Educational Center and soloists of the choir of the Holy Transfiguration Cathedral of the Diocese of Russia and New Nakhichevan.

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Source: <https://mospat.ru/en/news/91169/>