



## **His Holiness Patriarch Kirill had phone conversation with Metropolitan Ioann of Belgorod and Stary Oskol**



### **DECR Communication Service, 02/01/2024**

On 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' spoke on the phone with Metropolitan Ioann of Belgorod and Stary Oskol, Patriarchal Press Service reports.

The head of the Belgorod Metropolia gave a detailed account to the Primate of the Russian Church of the situation in Belgorod following a shelling attack on the city centre which had occurred on 30<sup>th</sup> December 2023, killing and injuring civilians. As of 1<sup>st</sup> January, twenty-five people were reported killed, including several children; more than a hundred people were wounded.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church gave his blessing to the clergy of the Belgorod Metropolia to spare no effort in taking pastoral care of the people affected by the tragedy and in providing every

possible kind of assistance, support and consolation to the families of the victims.

Every kind of spiritual and material support must be offered to those who have lost their loved ones in the attack, His Holiness emphasized.

The Primate gave instructions to perform funeral services and burials of the victims out of the funds of the Belgorod Diocese, if necessary.

Despite the tragedy, Orthodox Christians in Belgorod have presence of mind and do not lose heart, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill noted with satisfaction.

As His Holiness also said, it is gratifying that the citizens of Belgorod demonstrate courage and fortitude in the face of the current hardships.

In conclusion, the Primate of the Russian Church invoked God's blessing upon secular authorities of the region, local archpastors and pastors, and all citizens of the Belgorod region, wishing the soonest recovery to the injured.

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