



Conference takes place in Moscow to mark the tenth anniversary of the Russian Association for Religious Freedom.



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On 27th May 2024 the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation hosted a scholarly and practical conference on the topic of religious freedom and traditional values in the first quarter of the twenty-first century and their directions and challenges. The event was dedicated to the tenth anniversary of the creation of the Russian Association for Religious Freedom (RARF). The organizers of the event, along with the RARF, were the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation, the Synodal Department for Public Relations and the Media, and the Institute for Ethnology and Anthropology under the Russian Academy of Sciences.

At the forum religious leaders and representatives of communities, state and public figures, experts and

journalists from Russia and abroad exchanged opinions on the fruits of the ten-years work of the RARF, discussed issues of freedom of religion, inter-nationalities and inter-religious relations in Russia and the world and the problems that arise in state-religious relations and within society.

Among the participants were: the metropolitan of Moscow and All Russia of the Russian Old Believer Church Cornelius, the chairman of the Commission of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation for inter-nationalities, inter-religious relations and migration V.Yu. Zorin; the deputy director of the Institute for Ethnology and chairman of the RARF S.A. Melnikov; ambassador and professor of the Finance University under the Russian government R.G. Abdulatipov; special representative of the Russian foreign ministry for cooperation in the field of human rights and freedom of religion and ambassador G.I. Askaldovich; senior bishop of the Russian Union of Evangelical Christians S.V. Ryakhovsky; deputy chairman of the Synodal Department for Public Relations and the Media V.V. Kipshidze; first deputy chairman of the Euro-Asian division of the general conference of Seventh Day Adventist Christians O.Yu. Goncharov; chairman of the State Duma committee for the development of civic society and issues concerning religious and public associations O.V. Timofeyeva; chairman of the expert council under the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia for interaction with the Islamic world hieromonk Grigory (Matrusov); head of education and catechism in the western vicariate of the city of Moscow and cleric of the Church of Saint Alexander Nevsky at the Moscow State Institute for International Relations Father Alexander Kuznetsov; director for the sub-department for cooperation with state structures under the Synodal Department for Public Relations and the Media P.V. Lebedev; chairman of the Moscow the Legacy of Islam Muslim community under the Spiritual Assembly of Russian Muslims M.M. Bagdalov; and deputy chairman of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society Ye. A. Agapova and others.

With the blessing of the chairman of the Department for External Church Relations the metropolitan of Volokolamsk Anthony the conference was attended by the secretary of the DECR for inter-religious relations and executive secretary of the Inte-religious Council of Russia Father Ilya Kashitsyn. He conveyed to the leadership of the RARF congratulations from the chairman of the DECR and remarked upon the high quality of expertise and materials of the RARF and the many-years constructive interaction between the Association and the Department for External Church Relations in both the theoretical and practical areas, expressing his hope that cooperation would continue further.

Father Ilya Kashitsyn also became part of the new council of the Russian Association for Religious Freedom, as was announced by the chairman of the RARF during the forum.