



DECR delegation takes part in Regional Conference of Russian Compatriots Residing in Africa and the Middle East



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On 22nd November 2025, the 17th Regional Conference of the Russian Compatriots Residing in Africa and the Middle East took place in Dubai, the UAE. Taking part in the conference was a delegation of the Moscow Patriarchate led by Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Department for External Church Relations. The forum gathered together representatives of the Russian compatriots' associations from Africa and the Middle East.

Among those who spoke at the conference opening were Mr Timur Zabirov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the United Arab Emirates; Mr Gennady Ovechko, director of the Department for Relations with Compatriots Abroad of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and Mr. Mikhail Drozdov, chairman of the World Coordination Council of Russian Compatriots Living Abroad. Mr Yevgeny Primakov, head of the Rossotrudnichestvo Federal Agency, delivered a video address. Mr Igor Tkach, deputy head of the Department of Foreign Economic and International Relations of the City of Moscow, read out a message of greetings from the head of the Department, Mr

Sergei Cheremin.

The DECR chairman conveyed to all those present blessings from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus'. In his address, Metropolitan Anthony dwelt on the work of a **round table meeting titled 'The Russian Orthodox Church and Compatriots: Experience of Cooperation in the Countries of Africa and the Middle East,'** which had taken place the day before in Sharjah. The hierarch emphasized an important role of the World Coordination Council of Russian Compatriots Living Abroad in promoting relations between associations of compatriots and the Russian Orthodox Church in various regions of the world. Metropolitan Anthony also expressed his hope that the relationships between the Russian Church's parishes abroad and associations of compatriots would be actively developing, fostered by the conference delegates' personal involvement.

The conference panel sessions focused on such topics as preservation of historical memory, the 80th anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War, consolidation of the Russian community abroad, protection of compatriots' rights, outreach to the younger generation of compatriots and efforts to promote the Russian language and culture.

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