



## **His Holiness Patriarch Kirill extends condolences over the passing away of Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II of All Georgia**



**DECR Communication Service, 18/03/2026**

*His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' expressed condolences over the death of the Primate of the Georgian Orthodox Church, His Holiness and Beatitude Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia II of All Georgia. The text of the letter is given below.*

**His Eminence Shio, Metropolitan of Senaki and Chkhorotsku, Locum Tenens of the Patriarchal Throne**

**The Holy Synod of the Georgian Orthodox Church**

Your Eminence, dear Vladyka,  
Beloved in the Lord brothers the archpastors,

I was deeply grieved to learn of the passing away of my dear Brother and Concelebrant – His Holiness and Beatitude Ilia II, Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia.

On behalf of the plenitude of the Russian Orthodox Church and on my own behalf, I extend the most sincere condolences over this great loss for the sisterly Georgian Orthodox Church.

Our Almighty Lord granted to the ancient Iberia a Patriarch who devoted his whole long life to tireless labours for the sake of its welfare. Almost fifty years of Primatial ministry of His Holiness and Beatitude Ilia marked a whole era in the life of the Georgian Church and the entire Orthodoxy. The zeal with which he performed his service and his special gift of discernment earned the later Patriarch an exceptionally high standing and profound respect in the church community and society in Georgia. A godparent for great many children, he became the true spiritual father for all the pious Georgian people who *saw the wisdom of God in him* (1 Kings 3:28).

Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia maintained traditionally good relations with our Church. Having studied at the Moscow theological schools, he had lifelong love for the Venerable Sergius and his abode, deeming it necessary to protect our peoples' spiritual unity in Christ from the elemental spirits of this world. He visited the Russian Orthodox Church on repeated occasions and always received the most cordial welcome and deep respect from our archpastors, clergy and numerous believers.

Through his wise words, vast experience, profound churchliness and high authority, His Holiness and Beatitude Ilia, the oldest among the Orthodox Primate, made a significant contribution to maintaining peace and welfare of the Holy Churches of God. We believe that his spiritual legacy will remain a guiding beacon for our Orthodox family, helping us all to *keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace* (Eph 4:3).

Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia and I had very good trust-based relations, which allowed us to exchange opinions and speak objectively about the church-state relations in the Soviet Union. Those confidential relations united us and helped us in our joint efforts aimed at reducing the burden of pressure from the atheistic authorities and improving the plight of Orthodox churches in the country, which was unified at the time.

May our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is *the resurrection, and the life* (Jn 11:25), grant rest to the soul of His faithful servant in the heavenly mansions *wh ere there is neither sickness nor sorrow, nor sighing, but life everlasting.*

Eternal and prayerful memory be to the departed Catholicos-Patriarch Ilia.

With deep condolences and love in Christ,

**+KIRILL  
PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUS'**

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