



THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
Department for External Church Relations

Representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church take part in II International Religious Summit in St. Petersburg



DECR Communication Service, 05/09/2026

On 3rd – 4th September 2026, the II International Religious Summit took place in St. Petersburg, bringing together leaders and representatives of Orthodox and other Christian communities, Islam and Judaism, as well as statespersons, scholars, public figures and students of the St. Petersburg higher education institutions.

The conference was organized by the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of St. Petersburg and the Northwestern Region of Russia in collaboration with the Fund for the Support of Islamic Culture, Science and Education, the St. Petersburg State University, the Scientific and Educational Theological

Association and the Regional Government. The forum delegates came to St. Petersburg from various Russian regions, as well as from Belarus, the UAE, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Morocco, Egypt, Bahrain, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, India, Italy, Germany and other countries.

Among those who addressed the participants in the conference were Mr A.D. Beglov, Governor of St. Petersburg; Mufti Ravil Pancheyev of St. Petersburg and the Northwestern Region of Russia; Mr N.M. Kropachev, Rector of the St. Petersburg State University; Mr Ye.V. Yeremin, Head of the Department for Interaction with Religious Organizations of the Presidential Domestic Policy Directorate; Mr M.A. Gryaznov, Director of the Fund for the Support of Islamic Culture, Science and Education; Ayatollah Hamid Shahriari, Secretary-General of the World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought; Mufti Albir Krganov, Head of the Spiritual Assembly of Muslims of Russia; Mufti Kamil Samigullin, Chairman of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Tatarstan; Mr Afra Al Sabri, Director-General of the UAE Ministry of Tolerance and Coexistence; Mr Kazem Jalali, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Russian Federation; and Mufti Abu-Bekir Shabanovich, Chairman of the Muslim Religious Association in the Republic of Belarus.

Bishop Veniamin of Kronstadt, Vicar of the St. Petersburg Diocese, Abbot of the Holy Trinity and St. Alexander Nevsky Lavra, read out a message of greetings from Metropolitan Varsonofy of St. Petersburg and Ladoga. Taking part in the summit with the blessing of the Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations were Priest Iliya Kashitsyn, DECR Secretary for Interfaith Relations, and Priest Andrei Titushkin of the DECR Secretariat for Far Abroad Countries. Among the forum guests were also representatives of the St. Petersburg Metropolia.

The summit continued its work on September 4, when the 4th All-Russian Applied Research Conference – Bayazitov Readings – took place at the St. Petersburg State University, in the historical Twelve Collegia building. During the conference, scholars from St. Petersburg, Moscow, Tashkent, Cairo and other cities delivered academic reports on religious art, palaeography, history and theology.