Church delegates take part in Moscow International Forum ‘Religion and Peace’



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On 20th October 2026, a Panel Discussion ‘Church Diplomacy in the Name of Peace,’ timed to the 80th birthday of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus’, was held at the Moscow House of Nationalities as part of the 12th Moscow International Forum ‘Religion and Peace: The Unity of Peoples in the Diversity of Service.’

Participants in the meeting discussed the role of church diplomacy in strengthening peace and promoting international cooperation. Among the key topics on the meeting agenda were interfaith cooperation, implementation of humanitarian and social projects in various countries, including Africa, as well as peace-building initiatives, and cultural and educational activities of religious organizations.

Addressing the meeting with opening speeches were Mr K.L. Blazhenov, Deputy Director of the Department of National Policy and Interregional Relations and Head of the Directorate for Relations with Religious Organizations of the Moscow Government; and Mr A.A. Cherkezov, President of the Union for the Preservation of Traditional Spiritual Values 'Christian World.' Hieromonk Stefan (Igumnov), Secretary for Inter-Christian Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, acted as moderator.

The meeting brought together representatives of Christian churches and the Islamic community from Russia and other countries, including Metropolitan Sarabamon, Head of the Diocese of Atbara, Omdurman & North Sudan of the Coptic Orthodox Church; Head of the Secretariat of Sudan's Ministry of Religious Affairs and Endowments Al-Mamoun Muqaddim Hamid; President of the Sudan Council of Churches Ezzedine Al-Tayeb Ali; Imam Muhtasib Salikh Ibragimov of Nizhnekamsk and Nizhnekamsk Region; and Deputy Chairman of the Synodal Department for Church's Relations with Society and Mass Media V.V. Kipshidze.

Among those in attendance were students of the Master's Programme 'Religious Diplomacy in a Multipolar World,' which is implemented by the HSE University in partnership with the Sts. Cyril and Methodius Theological Institute of Postgraduate Studies and the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate.

Archpriest Sergiy Zvonarev, DECR Secretary for Far Abroad Countries, conveyed to those present greetings from the DECR Chairman, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, and delivered an address entitled 'International Activities of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill.'

Discussed at the meeting were various aspects of interfaith cooperation and its role in promoting humanitarian contacts and strengthening ties between peoples. Special attention was devoted to religious organizations' cooperation in the face of the present-day international challenges and their concerted efforts to uphold peace and traditional spiritual and moral values.

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