



Patriarchal message of greetings to international academic-public conference on “The Great War and the Beginning of a New World: Topical Agenda for Humankind”

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia has sent the following message of greetings to the international academic-public conference on “The Great War and the Beginning of a New World: Topical Agenda for Humankind”(16 – 18 September 2014, Belgrade, Serbia):

Your Holiness,

Esteemed Participants and Guests of the Conference:

I cordially greet you all as you have gathered for the commemorative events devoted to the centenary of the beginning of World War I and the international academic-public conference on “The Great War and the Beginning of a New World: Topical Agenda for Humankind”.

Today we recall a tragic date. One hundred years ago, one of the bloodiest wars in history was unleashed. Over thirty countries in various continents clashed at the battlefield. That war took away over 22 million people and changed the whole world. As a result of military confrontation, four great empires – Russian, German, Austrian-Hungarian and Ottoman – ceased to exist. The military conflict provoked irretrievable processes within European states, leading to inter-ethnic and civil wars and ultimately to the creation of new military blocs. The events of those years failed to resolve the problems faced by countries and nations but laid preconditions for a more terrible World War II.

The First World War affected the fate of Russia in a special way. It resulted in an intestine war and the 1917 October Revolution which established a theomachist regime in the country. The Russian Orthodox Church suffered persecutions unprecedented in her history. Many bishops, clergy and laity suffered martyrdom for Christ.

I hope that your forum will make a weighty contribution to the preservation of the historical memory of the nations which participated in World War I and will help assert patriotism in today's society.

I wish all the participants fruitful discussion and success in achieving the stated goals.

I invoke God's blessing on you and your efforts.

+ KIRILL

Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

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