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# The message of the Ecumenical Patriarch at the International Conference for Peace in Ukraine



“War is always destructive. To remain silent in the face of the cruelty of war is a shame! It is our duty and mission to defend and promote peace. “Blessed are the peacemakers” (Matt. 5:9). With these words, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew began his brief greeting at the International Summit for Peace in Ukraine, which was attended by leaders and representatives of approximately 100 countries, as well as International Organisations, and took place over two days, June 15-16, 2024, in the resort of Bürgenstock in the Canton of Nidwalden, Swiss Confederation.

His All-Holiness underlined the importance and value of dialogue, which, as he said, was also the driving force of this Conference.

Referring to the granting of Autocephalous status to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, His All-Holiness emphasised that the Ecumenical Patriarchate responded “to the pastoral needs of the Orthodox faithful in Ukraine”, because, he added at

another point, “we firmly believe that Orthodox Christians in Ukraine are entitled to have their own ecclesiastical voice.”

Concluding his greeting His All-Holiness noted:

“We are here, all of us, to support a just and lasting peace in a sovereign Ukraine. May God rest all those who tragically lost their lives and give strength to all those who defend peace.”

On the sidelines of his participation in the International Summit, the Ecumenical Patriarch had the opportunity to meet and talk with the President of Ukraine Mr. Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the President of France, Mr. Emmanuel Macron, and the President of Georgia, Mrs. Salome Zourabichvili, as well as with the Prime Minister of Greece Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, the Prime Minister of the Vatican State Rev. Cardinal Pedro Parolin, with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey Mr. Hakan Fidan, as well as with other leaders and representatives of states and organisations, including the President of the Dominican Republic Mr. Luis Abinader and the President of the Fiji Islands Mr. Wiliame Katonivere, whom he thanked for the protection of the small Orthodox missionary community in his country.

Late on Sunday evening, 16 June 2024, His All-Holiness returned from Zurich via Turkish Airlines to the City of Constantinople, where he was received by His Patriarchal Commissioner, His Eminence Elder Metropolitan Apostolos of Derkoi and the Grand Archdeacon Father Alexandros.

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