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Patriarch Daniel reaffirms importance of religious collaboration for Romanian society

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On September 30, 2024, Patriarch Daniel of the Romanian Orthodox Church addressed leaders and representatives of Romania’s recognized religious denominations, underscoring the need for ongoing consultation and cooperation to benefit society.

During the event, attended by dignitaries including the Apostolic Nuncio and the Secretary of State for Religious Affairs, the Patriarch emphasized the vital role of religious denominations in defending human dignity and promoting shared values like family, faith, and the integrity of creation.

Patriarch Daniel highlighted the 2011 establishment of the Advisory Council of Religious Denominations as a platform for unified responses to societal challenges.

He acknowledged the Romanian State’s support for religious autonomy and public utility and called for continued collaboration on pressing issues such as youth education, social welfare, and the protection of human rights.

“Through consultation and practical cooperation, religious denominations can effectively respond to the many challenges facing today’s society,” the Patriarch affirmed.

Consultation and collaboration among recognized religious denominations are a practical necessity for the benefit of Romanian society
Your Excellency, Apostolic Nuncio,
Your Excellency, Mr. Secretary of State for Religious Affairs,
Esteemed leaders and representatives of recognized religious denominations in Romania,
Most Reverend and Right Reverend Fathers,
Distinguished members of the Standing Committees of the National Church Council and the Eparchial Council of the Archdiocese of Bucharest,

Seventeen years ago, on September 30, 2007, during my enthronement as Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, I expressed my hope that dialogue,

cooperation, and mutual respect with other Churches and religious denominations would continue, thanking the representatives of the Romanian State and recognized religious denominations present at that time.

Remaining faithful to this commitment, I took the initiative at the Patriarchal Palace on April 14, 2011, to establish the Advisory Council of Religious Denominations in Romania, an ethical, autonomous, apolitical, non-governmental, non-profit organization without legal personality.

The primary purposes of this Council are to promote faith in God and its importance in the lives of individuals and society, as well as to express common opinions, attitudes, and positions on important societal issues.

At its inception, 13 of the 18 recognized denominations in Romania joined as members. They have held six working sessions and adopted several common public positions.

The Romanian State recognizes two necessary rights for religious denominations in Romania to optimally exercise their organizational religious freedom: autonomy and state support. Both are constitutionally guaranteed (Article 29, paragraph 5 of the Romanian Constitution) and are further developed in Law no. 489/2006 regarding religious freedom and the general regime of religious denominations.

Religious denominations exercise autonomy through their statutes or canonical codes, which outline the specifics of their organization and activities.

State support is based on recognising the public utility of religious denominations and their role as agents of social peace. The State explicitly acknowledges, in the Law of Religious Denominations, their spiritual, educational, social-charitable, cultural, and social partnership roles, as well as the important role of the Romanian Orthodox Church and other recognized denominations in Romania’s national history and the life of Romanian society (Article 7).

In the context of secularization and the degradation of human dignity through war and violence, drugs and other addictions, and human trafficking, consultations among recognized religious denominations, which share fundamental values such as the belief that the Universe is God’s creation and that man, created in the image of the eternal God and called to resemble Him and achieve eternal life, is not merely a biological being but also a “theological” being, rational, free, and relational or loving, is essential.

Therefore, we have the calling to defend and promote the value of each person, the

family blessed by God, and the integrity of creation (nature), as well as to collaborate in areas such as the education of children and youth, health, and social-philanthropic work.

We thank you for accepting the invitation to participate in this moment of institutional cooperation. We are convinced that, through consultation and practical collaboration, religious denominations can address today’s many challenges.

† DANIEL
Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church

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