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Romanian, Serbian, Polish Churches to attend Jerusalem’s council in Jordan



Thus far, it is known that 6 Churches will attend, while 5 Churches will not.

In addition to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which took the initiative to convene a fraternal gathering to discuss issues of Church unity against the background of the ongoing Ukrainian crisis, and the Churches of Russia and of the Czech Lands and Slovakia, whose Holy Synods already officially endorsed Jerusalem’s initiative, the upcoming council in Amman, Jordan will also be attended by representatives of the Romanian, Serbian, and Polish Churches.

The council is to be held February 25-27.

Given the firm stance of the Serbian Holy Synod and Council of Bishops and the repeated statements from its primate and several other hierarchs, it is no surprise that His Holiness Patriarch Irinej intends to participate in the gathering. The Polish Church has taken no less firm of a stance, and while Greek media reports recently indicated that the Polish Church would not be represented, His Beatitude

Metropolitan Sawa's personal assistant quickly denied such rumors.

The Romanian Church has been more of a wild card and its participation in the upcoming session was always a question. While its Holy Synod has not officially recognized the Constantinople-created "Orthodox Church of Ukraine," it also has not firmly rejected it, as have the Serbian and Polish Churches.

However, at its session yesterday under the chairmanship of His Beatitude Patriarch Daniel of Romania, the Holy Synod of the Romanian Church resolved to send a delegation to the Amman council, reports the Romanian Church's official press service, the Basilica News Agency.

While rhetoric coming from Constantinople and media aligned with it attempts to paint the Ukrainian crisis as a Greek vs. Russian or Greek vs. Slavic issue, it is notable that the upcoming council will be attended by Churches from both the influential Greek and Slavic spheres, and from outside those spheres, with the announced participation of the Romanian Church.

The Synod's statement notes that Pat. Daniel himself will not attend so that the council will not be interpreted as a Synaxis of the Primates.

"This participation of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the fraternal meeting in Amman is motivated by the fact that all the autocephalous Orthodox Churches have the responsibility of working together for the preservation, defense and promotion of the Orthodox dogmatic, canonical and Eucharistic unity, according to the Gospel of Christ and the Holy Canons," the statement reads.

The Romanian Synod also reiterates its stance that the Patriarchates of Moscow and Constantinople must resume dialogue as soon as possible to find a problem to the question of autocephaly in Ukraine, "in order not to deepen the polarization of the two opposing sides: one of pro-Constantinople Orthodox Churches, and the other of pro-Moscow Orthodox Churches."

The Synod also emphasizes that it agrees in theory with the granting of autocephaly to the Church of Ukraine, though it needs to be to the entire Church, not just a part, and needs to be the fruit of an agreement between Moscow and Constantinople, with an accompanying pan-Orthodox consensus.

Thus, the hierarchs of the Romanian Church do not approve of Constantinople's unilateral granting of autocephaly to a minority group in Ukraine, though it supports autocephaly for Ukraine in theory. A similar position has been stated by other Churches and hierarchs. Last January, His Beatitude Archbishop

Chrysostomos of Cyprus stated that the Ukrainian people have the right to autocephaly, but they have shown that they are not interested in it. Met. Sawa of Poland has also voiced his support for Ukrainian autocephaly, though he emphasizes that it must be done canonically.

Additionally, His Grace Bishop Viktor of Baryshevka of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church confirmed on his Telegram channel today that Pat. Irinej will attend the council in Amman, as the primate himself informed a visiting Ukrainian delegation on January 30.

“Today, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church was held. We once again discussed and decided to participate in the fraternal meeting of primates of the Local Churches in Jordan, which was initiated by Patriarch Theophilus of Jerusalem. I hope to see your Metropolitan of Kiev, His Beatitude Onuphry, in Amman,” the Serbian Patriarch said.

The Ukrainian Union of Orthodox Journalists also reports, with references to its own sources, that the Polish Church will be represented at the gathering by a delegation to be headed by His Eminence Archbishop Abel of Lublin and Chełm .

Met. Sawa will not be able to attend due to health problems.

Thus far, it is known that 6 Churches will participate in Jerusalem’s fraternal gathering: Jerusalem, Moscow, Czech-Slovak, Serbian, Polish, and Romanian, while 5 have rejected the invitation: Constantinople, Alexandria, Greece, Cyprus, and Albania, all citing the belief that only Constantinople can summon a council, though there are reports that serious work is being done to get Patriarch Theodoros of Alexandria to attend.

There have been no public statements concerning Jerusalem’s invitation from the Churches of Antioch, Georgia, or Bulgaria.

Despite the opposition from Constantinople and the Churches in the Greek world, His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos remains determined to hold a fruitful gathering, and it was recently reported that he sent his invitation to all the primates a second time.

— Source: orthochristian.com