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Stern response by Ecumenical Patriarch to letter by Patriarch of Jerusalem over Amman meeting



A stern response by the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, His All Holiness Bartholomew I, to a letter dispatched by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, His Most Godly Beatitude Theophilos III, regarding a “fraternal meeting” organized by the latter in Amman, Jordan this week for Primates of the world’s Orthodox Churches.
In his reply, His All Holiness notes that “…we are unable to comprehend the fact that His Beatitude misinterprets, or ignores, the extent of the negative repercussions emanating from this initiative.”

The initiative, in this case, is the very meeting convened in Jordan by the Patriarch of Jerusalem.

The Ecumenical Patriarch adds that if the Patriarch of Jerusalem’s concern is genuine for the challenges faced by Orthodox society amid these crucial times, then Patriarch Theophilos should have sought recourse to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

His All Holiness stressed “…Of course we are concerned over the issue of Pan-Orthodox unity, but the Church is not an unstructured or without institutions body.”

The Ecumenical Patriarch’s very prominent statement comes as the “fraternal meeting”, the term used by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, took place on Wednesday

behind closed doors, in Amman.

Most of the world’s Primates of Orthodox Churches, most notably the Ecumenical Patriarch, are not attending. Other Patriarchates have sent junior delegations of hierarchs.

Of the Church Primates attending, the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, His Holiness Kirill, and the Patriarch of Serbia, His Holiness Irinej, arrived in Amman on Tuesday. Also in attendance is the Metropolitan of the Czech Lands and Slovakia, His Eminence RA-sti-slav.

Also attending is His Beatitude Metropolitan Onufriy, head of the Ukrainian Church-Moscow Patriarchate.

During a reception held on Tuesday evening for the attending hierarchs, the Patriarch of Jerusalem merely noted that the meeting aims to promote dialogue and Orthodoxy’s unity.

In a statement expressing the Russian Orthodox Church’s position, the Metropolitan of Volokolamsk, His Eminence Hilarion, said “… we look forward to a fraternal discussion on issues that affect the Orthodox world today”.

Hilarion also serves as the head of the Moscow Patriarchate’s department for external church relations.