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WCC general secretary visits Head of Russian Orthodox Church



The World Council of Churches (WCC) continues its mission of being a platform for churches to come together, to understand each other better and to work together for the good of their societies, said Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit, general secretary of the World Council of Churches during a meeting with His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of the Russian Orthodox Church on 30 January.

The meeting took place on invitation to the WCC general secretary to attend the 10th anniversary of the patriarchal enthronement of Patriarch Kirill in Moscow. Tveit greeted Patriarch Kirill and emphasized the importance of the ecumenical engagement of the Russian Orthodox Church and participation in the WCC's work.

Patriarch Kirill from his side reaffirmed the Russia Orthodox Church's commitment to the WCC, also reflecting on the unique historical role WCC had during the times of Cold War.

Patriarch Kirill raised his deep concerns over the situation of religious freedom in

Ukraine and state involvement in church matters. He also expressed his concern on increased tensions in the world Orthodox family after the newly established Orthodox church in Ukraine was granted autocephaly by the Ecumenical Patriarch recently.

“WCC does not interfere in internal affairs of a church or a church family, but we hope and pray for reconciliation and healing of this divide in the Orthodox family”, said the WCC general secretary.

Tveit also referred to the theme of the next WCC Assembly to be held in 2021, “Christ’s love moves the world to reconciliation and unity”, inviting the Russian Orthodox Church to contribute to the assembly’s main topic: what reconciliation and unity mean for Christians in the current state of the world, when divisions and polarization increase around us. “Loving each other is the way to reconciliation and unity in the world today, to keep the vision of peace alive”, said the WCC general secretary.

The Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church elected Metropolitan Archbishop Kirill to Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia and Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church on 1 February 2009. From 1968 to 1998 he has been actively involved in the work of the WCC in various roles, including being a member of WCC Central committee and Executive Committee, as well as being the Moscow Patriarchate representative at the WCC in Geneva from 1971 to 1974.

(Source: oikoumene.org)