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Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America Receives Accreditation to United Nations Environmental Programme

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America is pleased to announce that it has received accreditation to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The UNEP is the leading authority that develops the global environmental agenda and advocates for the systematic implementation of environmental and sustainable development within the United Nations. Accreditation is the main entry point for groups and stakeholders to participate in environmental dialogue at the global level.

His Eminence Archbishop Elpidophoros was informed in a letter from Ulf Bjornholm, the UNEP Secretary of Governing Bodies, granting the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese “observer” status, which represents the highest level of accreditation within the UNEP given to non-government organizations (NGOs). This serves as recognition of the Archdiocese’s substantial efforts in the care of the environment. The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese is the only Orthodox organization with this accreditation and thus the only voice to advocate for Orthodox values within the global environmental sphere.

Accredited organizations may engage in and contribute both written and oral statements to the plenary sessions, committee meetings, and consultations of UNEP. Specifically, they are able to participate in the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA), which is scheduled to take place in February 2022 and to which the Archdiocese plans to contribute. The UNEA is the world’s highest-level executive body on the environment, composed of 118 permanent representatives and all 193 UN Member States.

Involvement will also give the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese an opportunity to further engage in ecumenical and interfaith dialogue and collaboration through the Faith for Earth Initiative of the UNEP and contribute more substantially with the Orthodox perspective.

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