

Orthodoxy on the front line for protection, well-being of Christians around the world



Reports of persecution and attacks against Christians around the world continue unabated, especially in areas where Islam is the dominant religion — as well as in countries in the Far East where atheism is promoted by the state.

In places ranging from south Asia, the Middle East to west Africa, extremist groups and terrorists are systemically targeting Christian communities and places of worship.

In war-torn Syria, the Orthodox Church in the country is waging a daily struggle to preserve Christianity and the well-being of the faith in the ancient land.

The Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch & All the East, His Beatitude John, and the rest of the Church's hierarchs are stepping up efforts to restore Orthodox cathedrals and chapels, which have been damaged during eight years of war in the country.

Elsewhere in the Middle East, the Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa's clergymen and missionaries are active throughout the continent in the battle against poverty, disease and warfare.

On its part, the Patriarchate of Moscow has dramatically increased its support for overseas Orthodoxy, from Africa to SE Asia.

Finally, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople remains a beacon of Hellenism in Turkey, actively supporting and encouraging ethnic Greek communities in the country that refuse to vanish, as well as extending its reach to Greeks of the Diaspora.

In a related development, 11 people were killed and dozens injured in a twin suicide bomb attack in the northeast Nigerian city of Mai-du-GU-ri last Saturday, after two young female bombers detonated explosives in a crowd on the outskirts of the regional capital, the birthplace of the Boko Haram terrorist group.

Shocking reports have been collected by aid groups and international media charging that the jihadi group is now abducting Christian women and children and forcing them to participate in suicide attacks.

The BBC, for instance, in a previous report, referred to Boko Haram as using infants held by their mothers or other women in suicide attacks.