

Head of Secretariat of World Religious Leaders embarks on diplomatic visit to Patriarchate of Jerusalem



In a testament to the ongoing commitment towards fostering religious harmony and cultivating peaceful coexistence, Maulen Ashimbayev, the Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Head of the Secretariat of the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, led a distinguished delegation consisting of Ministers, parliamentarians, and dignitaries on a visit to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem yesterday. Warmly welcomed by Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem, the delegation extended a formal invitation for His Beatitude to participate in the forthcoming “Religious Leaders Unite for Peace” Round Table.

Patriarch Theophilos III graciously received the delegation and acknowledged the noble purpose behind their regional mission. He shed light on the profound historical significance of the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem, underscoring its distinction as the religious community with the most extensive unbroken heritage in the Holy Land. The Patriarch emphasized that the Patriarchate serves as a living testament to the sacred history and the profound encounters between the divine and the human.

Echoing sentiments that resonate throughout millennia, Patriarch Theophilos III emphasized how Jerusalem has radiated its spiritual brilliance, transcending the confines of the Holy Land to encompass the entire world. The Patriarchate, he highlighted, has played a pivotal role in safeguarding and nurturing the rich tapestry of life in the region, fostering an environment that celebrates diverse cultures, ethnicities, and religions. Through its unwavering commitment to promoting moral and spiritual values rooted in the Abrahamic traditions, as articulated in the Holy Books, the Patriarchate has fostered a fruitful coexistence among people of goodwill, irrespective of their religious affiliations.

Furthermore, Patriarch Theophilos III accentuated the collaborative efforts undertaken by the various Churches and Christian communities in the Holy Land. United in purpose, they strive to ensure the well-being of all inhabitants of the

region, including the ancient and historic Christian community. By embracing respect, tolerance, and mutual prosperity, these religious entities aim to set an exemplary precedent for the rest of the world.

The visit of Maulen Ashimbayev and his esteemed delegation carries profound significance, especially given the challenging circumstances currently faced by the region. The Patriarch of Jerusalem expressed his belief that this visit will further fortify the ties between Kazakhstan and the sacred city of Jerusalem, as well as with the local Churches. The Patriarch acknowledged the instrumental role played by Ashimbayev in promoting peace and reconciliation, both regionally and globally, emphasizing that these qualities are precisely what the region needs during these testing times.

Blessing Ashimbayev and his delegation for their noble mission, the Patriarch of Jerusalem also extended his blessings to the people of the Republic of Kazakhstan, emphasizing the shared values and spiritual connections between the two regions. In turn, Ashimbayev and his delegation expressed their profound gratitude to Patriarch Theophilos III for accepting the invitation to the upcoming “Religious Leaders Unite for Peace” Round Table.

The round table, which took place today, June 6, in Jerusalem, was dedicated to the VII Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions in Astana.

Prominent speakers, including Patriarch Theophilos III and Maulen Ashimbayev, as well as distinguished Chief Rabbis of Israel, representatives of the Latin Patriarchate, and members from Muslim, Bahá'í, and Druze communities, alongside other eminent figures, graced the round table with their insightful contributions.

During his address, Patriarch Theophilos III lauded the objectives and priorities of the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, commending its steadfast focus on fostering mutual respect, tolerance, dialogue, and peace. He underscored the significance of the Congress in recognizing the pivotal role that religion plays in human society and its potential for promoting peace-building.

In the pursuit of peace, the Patriarch of Jerusalem acknowledged the myriad challenges faced by the churches. He emphasized that genuine peace can only be constructed upon foundations of mutual respect and a genuine desire for the well-being of others, acknowledging the inherent difficulties in upholding these virtues. His Beatitude stressed that in the Holy Land, the Christian presence is confronted with unprecedented threats and assaults from radical Israeli groups that reject the values upheld by the great monotheistic traditions. He lamented the current state

of affairs, as the Holy Land should ideally serve as a model for nations, showcasing how diverse cultures, religions, and ethnicities can coexist and flourish together. Unfortunately, the reality falls far short of this vision in the land that embodies the divine-human encounter.

The visit of Maulen Ashimbayev and the esteemed delegation, along with the round table, not only symbolizes the strengthening ties between Kazakhstan and Jerusalem, as observed by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, but also underscores the profound importance of interfaith dialogue, cooperation, and the unwavering pursuit of peace in a region fraught with complex challenges.

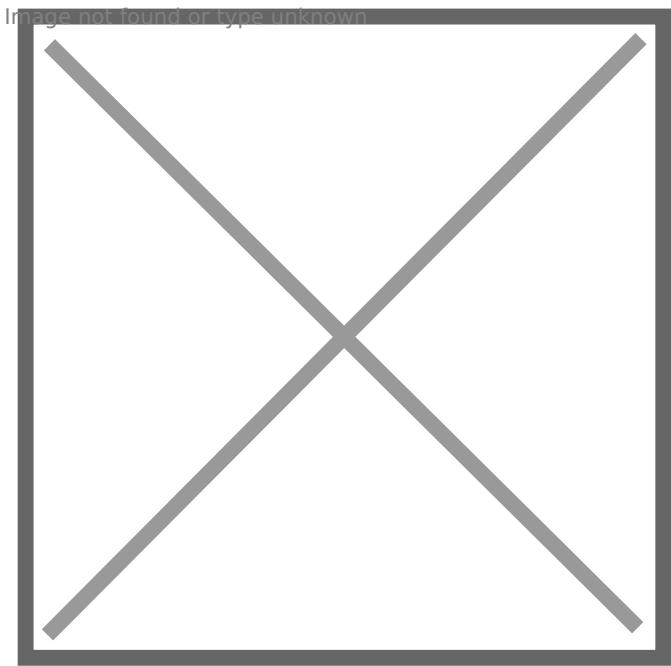
As the day concluded, attendees of the Round Table left with a renewed sense of commitment to advancing interreligious understanding, harmony, and collective efforts for peace. The fruitful exchanges between representatives of diverse faiths and traditions served as a powerful reminder of the potential for collaboration and shared values to transcend boundaries and foster a better world for all.

Patriarch Theophilos III said that in the ancient and sacred city of Jerusalem, where history and spirituality intertwine, the visit and round table stood as beacons of hope, illuminating the path towards a future marked by peace, compassion, and unity among all people, regardless of their religious backgrounds. The journey towards interfaith harmony continues, with each step taken by leaders and delegates echoing the shared aspiration for a world guided by mutual respect, dialogue, and the pursuit of lasting peace.









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