

PC.DEL/497/05
8 June 2005

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

**STATEMENT BY THE PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUSSIA
AT THE OSCE CONFERENCE ON ANTI-SEMITISM AND ON
OTHER FORMS OF INTOLERANCE**

Cordoba, Spain, 8 and 9 June 2005

Distinguished Participants,

The Russian Orthodox Church fully shares the governments' and general public's real concern at manifestations of xenophobia, anti-Semitism and all forms of ethnic strife and intolerance. We are alarmed to see disrespect and hostility towards the religious and cultural traditions of other peoples raise their head again in some European States 60 years after the end of the Second World War.

Our Church has always proclaimed that any form of national intolerance, be it Islamophobia, the persecution of ethnic minorities in Kosovo or discrimination against Russians in some Baltic States, is sinful and in conflict with Christian teaching. Anti-Semitism is an extreme form of misanthropy and ethnic strife, and it had particularly tragic consequences in the twentieth century. Unfortunately, this sin is also being committed today by public figures, publicists and leaders of extremist groups. Many of them also insult the feelings of other nations, including Russia, and trample on their shrines and historic memory.

We can say with certainty that Europe has no future if its States and societies do not accept the national, cultural and religious traditions of all the peoples living on the continent. Not only the indigenous population of the continent but also those coming to live and work here from different parts of the world must understand this.

Unfortunately, some politicians believe that the repression of certain national traditions, including religious ones, would be conducive to greater tolerance. We believe this would be a mistake, triggered by the illusion that all people are the same. Lasting peace and harmony in society can be based only on respect for the variety of traditions, cultures and foundations of life.

Undoubtedly, the State must fight against the manifestations of extremism, hostility and intolerance. However, restrictions and punishments alone are clearly not enough. We should promote dialogue between representatives of ethnic and religious communities, which can be the only way of creating a world free from national and religious hatred.

**TRANSLATION OF THE FOLLOWING TEXT PROVIDED BY THE
ORIGINATOR AND NOT BY THE OSCE LANGUAGE SERVICES**

Translated from the Russian

**To: Participants in
OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism and on Other Forms of Intolerance
(Cordova, Spain, 8-9 June 2005)**

Dear Participants,

The Russian Orthodox Church fully shares the governments and general public's serious concern for xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and all forms of national strife and intolerance. It is with anxiety that we see disrespect and hostility to religious and cultural traditions of other nations to raise in certain European states again, sixty years after the end of World War II.

Our Church has always affirmed that any form of national intolerance, be it Islamophobia, or persecution of minority groups in Kosovo, or even discrimination of Russians in some Baltic states, is sinful and contradicts the Christian teaching. Anti-Semitism is an extreme form of misanthropy and national discord and it had particularly tragic consequences in the 20th century. Unfortunately, this sin is also displayed today among public figures, publicists, and leaders of extremist groups. Many of them offend the feelings of other nations, Russian including, and trample on their shrines and historic memory.

We can definitely say that Europe has no future if its states and societies do not accept national, cultural, and religious traditions of all people living in it. Not only native population of the continent should understand it, but also those who come here to live and work from different regions of the world.

Unfortunately, some politicians think that the repression of certain national traditions, including religious ones, would contribute to the development of tolerance. We consider it to be a mistake caused by the illusion that all people are the same. The lasting peace and harmony in society can be based only on respect for the variety of traditions, cultures, and foundations of life.

Undoubtedly, the state should fight against manifestations of extremism, hostility and intolerance. However, only limitations and punishments are not enough. We should contribute to the dialogue between representatives of ethnic and confessional communities, which can be the only way to creating the world free from national and religious hatred.

/+Alexy/

Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia

**TRANSLATION OF THE FOLLOWING TEXT PROVIDED BY THE
ORIGINATOR AND NOT BY THE OSCE LANGUAGE SERVICES**

Translated from the Russian

**To: Participants in
OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism and on Other Forms of Intolerance
(Cordova, Spain, 8-9 June 2005)**

Dear Participants,

The Russian Orthodox Church fully shares the governments and general public's serious concern for xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and all forms of national strife and intolerance. It is with anxiety that we see disrespect and hostility to religious and cultural traditions of other nations to raise in certain European states again, sixty years after the end of World War II.

Our Church has always affirmed that any form of national intolerance, be it Islamophobia, or persecution of minority groups in Kosovo, or even discrimination of Russians in some Baltic states, is sinful and contradicts the Christian teaching. Anti-Semitism is an extreme form of misanthropy and national discord and it had particularly tragic consequences in the 20th century. Unfortunately, this sin is also displayed today among public figures, publicists, and leaders of extremist groups. Many of them offend the feelings of other nations, Russian including, and trample on their shrines and historic memory.

We can definitely say that Europe has no future if its states and societies do not accept national, cultural, and religious traditions of all people living in it. Not only native population of the continent should understand it, but also those who come here to live and work from different regions of the world.

Unfortunately, some politicians think that the repression of certain national traditions, including religious ones, would contribute to the development of tolerance. We consider it to be a mistake caused by the illusion that all people are the same. The lasting peace and harmony in society can be based only on respect for the variety of traditions, cultures, and foundations of life.

Undoubtedly, the state should fight against manifestations of extremism, hostility and intolerance. However, only limitations and punishments are not enough. We should contribute to the dialogue between representatives of ethnic and confessional communities, which can be the only way to creating the world free from national and religious hatred.

/+Alexy/

Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia