



World Council of Churches

COMMUNIQUE

Inter-Orthodox Pre-Assembly Consultation For the 11th Assembly in Karlsruhe, Germany, 2022 “Christ’s love moves the world to reconciliation and unity”

1. At the initiative of the World Council of Churches (WCC) and with the gracious hospitality of H.E. Metropolitan Vasilios of Constantia and Ammochostos of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus, delegates of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches met at Paralimni, Cyprus, to deliberate upon the theme of the 11th WCC Assembly, ‘Christ’s love moves the world to reconciliation and unity’, in order to provide their theological contribution to the Assembly. The 11th WCC Assembly will be held in Karlsruhe, Germany, from 31 August to 8 September 2022.

2. Since 1983, the WCC has convened an Inter-Orthodox Pre-Assembly Consultation prior to its Assemblies. The purpose of this year’s Consultation in Cyprus was to articulate the Orthodox perspective on the theme and sub-themes of the Assembly, prepare the delegates for their fullest participation, and express their expectations of the upcoming Assembly and life in the WCC and beyond. There were fifty participants, including delegates from twenty Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches: hierarchs, priests, deacons, professors, lay men and women, and youth, as well as observers and consultants. Keynote speeches by men and women delegates explored the theme and sub-themes from various Orthodox standpoints. The delegates also received information from WCC staff about Assembly procedures.

3. In Orthodox theology, love is of utmost importance. The One God in Trinity in His divine goodness created the world, and maintain, and protects humanity and all His creation with his love. The supreme act of God’s love is the divine economy of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation is understood as the re-creation and restoration of humanity and the whole creation.

4. As Orthodox, we are committed to the goal of Eucharistic unity, which has been the vision of the WCC from its initiation. The call for unity, reconciliation, justice, and peace remains our mission today, as our incarnate Lord invites us to abide in His love by keeping His commandments: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind...and love your neighbour as yourself” (Matthew 22:37-39). In this mission, we join with all Christians, seeking to promote unity, reconciliation, justice, and peace on the basis of Christ’s message and God’s love for humanity and all creation. We are aware these aspirations will be reached only by putting our trust as living faith in God’s love, which is also the basis of loving one another.

5. The meeting took place in an apostolic land (of apostles Paul, Barnabas, and Mark), giving the participants the opportunity to pray together and immerse themselves in the two-millennia old Christian heritage of the island of Cyprus, and also to be informed about the vivid problems and continuing pain that the Turkish occupation has caused to the local population, an occupation that keeps the island divided.

6. The delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church informed the body about the armed confrontation in Ukraine. The members of the meeting had the chance to discuss about the attitude of the local church to this painful situation and shared their deep concerns for the developments in the region, prayed for peace and expressed their hope that the theme, "Christ's love moves the world to reconciliation and unity", chosen for the next Assembly period, will be another input that may lead this wounded region as well as other wounded places from wars in the world, to peace and overcome problems of division.

7. The delegates approved a report of the Consultation that will be shared with all Eastern and Oriental Orthodox member churches and offered it as an Orthodox contribution to the 11th Assembly for the wider ecumenical fellowship. This report also includes discussions on anthropology, the ecological crisis, Covid-19, and other topics in the context of the Assembly and the life of the WCC.

8. The participants gave thanks to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, for bringing them together in a spirit of love, reconciliation, and unity, and renewed their commitment and common obedience to follow God's commandments to love Him, to love one another, and to protect His creation, which is our home.