



Baku Declaration on the results of the trilateral meeting between His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II and Sheikh-ul-Islam Allahshuqur Pasha-zade

A joint declaration was adopted on the results of the trilateral meeting between His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II and Sheikh-ul-Islam Allahshuqur Pasha-zade that took place in Baku on 26 April 2010.

In the name of the Almighty Creator, in fulfillment of the cherished dream of our nations of peace, prosperity and happiness, we, the religious leaders of the Azerbaijani and Armenian people, with high mediation of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill, have met in Baku to pay our devours to one another and discuss urgent measures to achieve peace with justice and accord among our nations and states.

We consider this meeting as a development of a peace dialogue started between the Armenian Apostolic Church and the Caucasus Muslim Board with mediation of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1988. Being faithful to the spirit of the statements made earlier, we hope to help promote the principles of peaceful coexistence of our nations and the elaboration of mutually acceptable decisions through negotiations only. It is gratifying to testify that the tradition of such meetings has largely helped to end the military stage of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict engendered by the Karabakh problem. These meetings have undoubtedly helped to avoid the conflict's turn into interreligious confrontation.

Today we consider it most important to follow the spiritual guides to cooperation in order to overcome alienation among our nations. A potential of religion calling to peace, good, compassion, and patience should become a reconciling force. We believe that our common efforts will help overcome the interethnic enmity. It is vitally important to prevent a return to military ways of settling controversial problems. Through our peacemaking efforts we will uphold people's hope of the removal of the present differences, barriers and enmity, as war will have no end if it continues.

We support international efforts for the settlement of the conflict. It is necessary to enlarge contacts in order to strengthen confidence and achieve peace and good-neighbourly relations. The lasting peace is possible only with the presence of good will and sincere intentions. We support efforts undertaken by the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan and intend to further their aspirations. In this regard we consider it important to continue direct dialogue among the religious leaders in order to promote the settlement of

the conflict. This will give people an opportunity to return to the places from which they have been ousted by war. We welcome the acts of good will of the sides, such as the release of the prisoners. We call upon political and religious leaders to intensify their efforts in this noble and humane process. All of us should show that good deeds, charity, allegiance to peace and justice could do much more than military confrontation. We denounce the acts of vandalism and consider it important to preserve the holy sites and religious monuments of our nations.

The way to peace and accord is difficult and demands tremendous work and strong will. Yet we have ardent hopes of success and, combining our efforts, hope to overcome alienation and prejudice. The responsibility and duty before the Most High and before our nations prompt us, the religious leaders, to make efforts for the sake of the long-desired triumph of the ideals of peace, good, and equitable solution of the present problems. May the lasting and just peace be achieved in the gracious land of the Caucasus, and may our nations inherit welfare and prosperity.

Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia

Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II

Sheikh-ul-Islam Allahshuqur Pasha-zade, Chairman of the Muslim Board of the Caucasus

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