
SERGEY MELNIK. INTERNATIONAL INTERRELIGIOUS SUMMITS IN MODERN RUSSIA

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Abstract. The article is concerned with three largest and most significant international interreligious events in the period of modern Russia: I Interreligious Peace Forum (2000), II Interreligious Peace Forum (2004), and World Summit of Religious Leaders (2006). The first part of the article describes different types of interreligious dialogue (polemical, peacekeeping, cognitive and partner). Then three mentioned interreligious activities, which are described as a peacekeeping dialogue at a “high level” are considered. Emphasis is placed on the analysis of summary documents that reflect the consolidated position of the participants. The conclusion of the article sums up the results, in particular, it is noted that the main topics of the summits were peacemaking, terrorism under religious slogans and moral values.

Introduction. Types of Interreligious Dialogue

Researchers consider the World Parliament of Religions (1893, Chicago) to be the starting point of the modern stage of

interreligious dialogue [Moyaert, 2013, p. 195]. The organizers declared as the main goal of the event the desire to build harmonious relations between believers of different religions against the model of interreligious polemics, accusatory theology, antagonism and confrontation that prevailed in relations between them for many centuries. Precisely such attitudes – strengthening peace, mutual understanding and cooperation for the common good – characterize the modernist period of the dialogue between religions. In the first half of the 20th century, such sectarian initiatives began to intensify, although they were relatively few [Melnik, 2022a, p. 20–32].

Interreligious dialogue has become widespread since the end of World War II, especially since the 1960s and 1970s. This was due to a number of factors, the main of which are globalization, the end of the colonial era (which caused inequality and inter-religious relations, the privileged position of Christianity), the Holocaust (which had a great influence on Catholicism and Protestantism), the popularity of ideas of mutually enriching dialogue of different religions and cultures, the interest of many people in them [Shokhin, 1997].

Since the 1970s, as K. Lehmann notes, interreligious dialogue has become a social movement of a global scale, in practice all religions around the world are involved in it [Talking Dialogue, 2021, p. 2–8]. As a rule, interreligious dialogue, in which high-ranking representatives of religious organizations participate, does not involve discussion of theological topics, but is concentrated around issues of peacemaking and cooperation to achieve social well-being [Melnik, 2021b, p. 95–118]. Today, in an interdependent and interconnected world characterized by an unprecedented high degree of social communication, the relevance of interreligious dialogue is beyond dispute. It is implemented at both local, country and international levels [Melnik, 2022a, p. 333–362].

In accordance with the approach developed by the author, it is proposed to distinguish between four types of interreligious

dialogue: “polemical, cognitive, peacekeeping and partner. The named types of dialogue can be conditionally compared with the questions that determine communication: “who is right?” “Who are you?” “How to live peacefully together?” “What positive contribution can believers make to society?”” [Melnik, 2020; Melnik, 2022a]. The interreligious activities considered in this article can be attributed to peacekeeping dialogue. At the same time, to understand the system of interreligious relations in modern Russia and the position which summits assume in it, it seems useful to give a brief overview of other types of dialogue.

The most famous example of polemical interreligious dialogue in Russia is the two disputes between the Orthodox priest Daniil Sysoev and the former Orthodox priest Ali Polosin, who converted to Islam. The meetings took place in Moscow in 2005 and concerned disputes regarding the inspiration of the Bible and the Quran, as well as conflicting views on God in two religions [Melnik, 2022a, p. 135]. Since polemical dialogue can lead to tension and enmity (it is significant that the priest. D. Sysoev was killed in 2009), official representatives of religious communities do not support him, so such meetings were rare [Melnik, 2022a, p. 132–140].

Cognitive dialogue aims to explore different religions. In 2018, the publishing office of the Bible and Theological Institute published the book “Christian-Islamic Dialogue. Anthology” [Christian-Islamic, 2018] translated from German. In the chapters of the book, the Christian and Muslim authors set out the views of their religious tradition on the topic under discussion (for example, the conception of God, man, revelation, community of believers, family, eschatology, etc.). Unlike polemical dialogue, the task is not to convince the interlocutor, to demonstrate the advantage of his faith (who has the correct conception of God, and who is mistaken, etc.), but simply to get acquainted with his views, to understand his worldview and value system (for example, to find out what the conception of God is in a particular religion, about revelation).

Due to the predominance of atheistic ideology in the USSR in our country, the problems of comparative study of religions were investigated much less, than in the West, where this topic was dealt with, including specially created scientific centers, many leading theologians and researchers¹, meetings of believers were held who explored each other's spiritual experience in order to enrich themselves², as, for example, in the framework of the so-called "monastic interreligious dialogue" [Bethune, 2013]. It's possible to introduce isolated examples of cognitive interreligious dialogue in Russia, which was mainly expressed in intellectual acquaintance with other religions. These include the project "interreligious dialogue" on the basis of Tomsk State University [Karpitsky, 2014], the work of priest Nazariy Eyvazov [Eyvazov, 2021a; Eyvazov, 2021b], devoted to a comparative analysis of ideas about Jesus Christ and man in Islam and Christianity, the approach proposed by the author of the article is the so-called "personality model" of interreligious dialogue, based on a comparison of the spiritual practices of religions [Melnik, 2017].

Peacekeeping interreligious dialogue can be carried out at three "levels": "high" (religious leaders), "middle" (experts) and "lower" (grassroots; we mean ordinary believers, including young people) [Melnik, 2022a, p. 90-91]. Since religious communities in the USSR could not fully carry out their activities, interreligious dialogue at the "grassroots" level in our country, unlike the West, did not develop. Such initiatives began to become widespread only in the 2010s. One of the first of them was the annual International Interreligious Youth Forum in Dagestan³, held since 2013. Other examples include the Dialogue of Religions series of events in Moscow, during which chess tournaments, football and volleyball matches of believing youth of different religions were organized⁴.

For this reason, in our country, there were also almost no original concepts adopted by religious communities in which the principles of mutual respect and consent of representatives of

different religions, comparable to those that appeared during the last century in the West, would be philosophically, theologically, and religiously proved. In 1965, the Roman Catholic Church adopted at the Second Vatican Council the declaration "Nostra aetate" (Latin "Our Century"), which formulates a new attitude towards non-Christian religions [Christians and Muslims, 2000, p. 3–6]. Conceptual interreligious documents of a theological nature were subsequently published by representatives of Islam (an open letter from Muslim figures "A Common Word Between Us and You" (2007) [Common Word, 2018]) and Judaism (Dabru Emet (2000), "To Fulfill the Will of Our Heavenly Father: Towards Cooperation between Jews and Christians" (2015) [Jewish-Catholic, 2021]). Catholic theologian Hans Küng made an attempt to identify common moral grounds in different religions, which he designated as the Global Ethic Project Projekt Weltethos, (it was reflected in the outcome document of a major interreligious forum in Chicago in 1993 entitled "Towards a Global Ethic: An Initial Declaration")⁵.

One of the main approaches which is the basis of the listed documents (this is a peacekeeping dialogue at the expert level) is to identify the similarities of religions, which can lie at the core of respectful, constructive, good neighborly relations. For example, *Nostra aetate* says: "The Church also respects Muslims who worship the One God, the Living and the Eternal, the merciful and almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, who spoke to people whose definitions... they wholeheartedly strive to obey" [Christians and Muslims, 2000, p. 4–5]. That is, it is emphasized here that both Christians and Muslims believe in the One God-Creator who created the world (which is not, for example, in Buddhism), similarly understand His properties ("living and existing, merciful and almighty"), believe that He opens his will through special people – prophets, and this will, expounded in the scriptures, must be obeyed. Without going into details of the content of the listed interreligious documents, it can be stated that there were no similar interreligious statements or

research approaches in our country in their theological elaboration and significance.

An example of cooperation between religious communities in the framework of collaborating interreligious dialogue is the activities of the Interreligious Working Group on Humanitarian Assistance to the Population of Syria, created in 2017 (operates within the framework of the Council for Interaction with Religious Associations under the President of the Russian Federation)⁶. Religious communities raised the finances for humanitarian aid and the restoration of a secondary school; in September 2019, a Russian delegation of religious leaders visited Syria⁷. In general, interreligious initiatives for the joint activities of believers of different religions in our country were rare. It seems that this is the niche, which can be filled as the expansion of interreligious contacts.

The sphere of interreligious relations, which is mostly developed in our country, is a peacekeeping dialogue at the "high" level of religious leaders, that is, the interaction of official representatives of religious organizations. Such a dialogue existed in the times of the USSR, both between the religious communities of the country and at the international level [Silantyev, 2010]. Two major interreligious summits were held in the Soviet Union: the World Conference "Religious Figures for Lasting Peace, Disarmament and Fair Relations between Peoples" (1977) and the Moscow World Conference "Religious Figures for Saving the Sacred Gift – Life from Nuclear Catastrophe" (1982). The last of them was attended by 590 delegates from 90 countries. The final document of the event states: "We do not seek to merge our worldviews. Our perspectives on reality remain distinct. We uncompromisingly adhere to our various religious beliefs. Despite these differences, we can jointly assert much that is precious to all of us" [World..., 1983, p. 7]. The participants declare that they distance themselves from the discussion of theological issues, everyone has the right to believe as it is thought to be necessary. Recognizing differences in religious

beliefs and not striving to level them, believers say that they are ready to cooperate in different spheres of public life and see this as the main task of interreligious dialogue. The same principles of interreligious relations at the bottom of the summits held already in the period of modern Russia with the participation of religious leaders.

It's possible to distinguish three largest and most significant interreligious summits in Russia which were held in Moscow: I Interreligious Peacekeeping Forum (2000), II Interreligious Peacekeeping Forum (2004), World Summit of Religious Leaders (2006). Ultimately, other interreligious events with international participation were held in Russia. Among them, it's acceptable to note, in particular, the Moscow International Forum "Religion and Peace," which has been held annually since 2013⁸. However, such events were less representative and of less importance. The I Interreligious Peacekeeping Forum was the first major interreligious summit in the history of modern Russia, and the World Summit of Spiritual Leaders was the largest in terms of the number of participants. In addition, it can be stated that on the subject, the main ideas of the speakers, the content of the final documents, interreligious conferences are close to each other. In this regard, the consideration of the three named summits will allow us to get a fairly full picture of the practice of implementing peacekeeping interreligious dialogue at the "high" level of religious leaders in our country.

Interreligious Peacekeeping Forum (2000)

The I Interreligious peacekeeping forum took place from November 13 to November 14, 2000 in Moscow⁹. The event was held under the auspices of the Interreligious Council of Russia (ICR) and the Ministry of the Russian Federation on federation, national and migration policy affairs. ICR, and more specifically

Russian Orthodox Church being its part acted as “ideologist” and the main initiator of carrying out of this event.

The forum was attended by more than 300 people, among whom, in addition to representatives of religious communities and interreligious organizations, were employees of state authorities of Russia, diplomats of the CIS countries, experts. In addition to the religious leaders of the Russian Federation, among the foreign participants of the forum, one can note the Catholicos-Patriarch of all Georgia Ilia II, Chairman of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims (SAM) of Kazakhstan Mufti A. Derbisaliev, Secretary General of the International Council of Christians and Jews Pastor F. Pieper, Secretary General of “Religions for Peace” organization W. Wendley¹⁰. Basically, representatives of the CIS countries were invited to the event, which was reflected, among other things, in the final declaration and speeches of the participants, who paid special attention to the specifics of the development of interreligious dialogue in the post-Soviet space.

The event was opened by His Holiness Patriarch Alexy II, who delivered a short report. The head of the Russian Orthodox Church noted that there were no religious wars in the region of the CIS countries, and he called the main goals of interreligious dialogue the prevention of extremism and peacemaking, as well as overcoming the moral crisis and “moral revival of society.”¹¹ These topics are central to all summits under consideration.

After the speech of Patriarch Alexy II, greetings were read from state officials: President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin, President of Georgia E.A. Shevardnadze, Chairman of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation G.N. Seleznev, Moscow Mayor Yu.M. Luzhkov and others¹². Then Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad (future Patriarch) made a meaningful report on the topic “Through the harmonization of liberal-secular and religious-traditional approaches to solving interethnic and interreligious problems¹³.” The scope of the article does not allow even a brief review of the

main speeches of the summit participants, so we will focus on the analysis of the final documents. They largely repeat the key ideas of the speeches of religious leaders and, in addition, express their consolidated position, and therefore are of particular interest¹⁴.

Within the framework of the given forum, two documents were adopted. The first of them, the shorter one – “Statement of the participants of the Interreligious Peacekeeping Forum.” Religious leaders express in it their concern about “manifestations of extremism and terrorism, which are often trying to justify religious rhetoric¹⁵.” The second document is the “Final Document of the Interreligious Peacekeeping Forum,” the core theme of which was traditional moral values. The statement said: “We are convinced that peace is unattainable without genuine moral transformation and renewal of society. Harmony between people of different peoples and faith will become strong only when loyalty to the original, above given moral norms prevail among our compatriots on which any human activity should be based... Being conscious of the growing danger of conflict between secular worldview and adherence to a holistic religious lifestyle, we appeal to every possible effort to harmonize the existing legal systems and religious and moral traditions of various peoples¹⁶.” The document also calls to “follow the paths of peace,” and expresses concern about acts of “vandalism against sacred places, manifestations of xenophobia and blasphemy, propaganda of prejudice against religion, public actions related to insulting the feelings of believers.¹⁷” The experience of holding the Interreligious Peacekeeping Forum was recognized as successful, in connection with which, four years later, a similar event was held in Moscow, which became more ambitious.

II Interreligious Peacekeeping Forum (2004)

The II Interreligious Peacekeeping Forum was held from March 2 to 4, 2004 in Moscow. The event, which, like the previous

one, was held under the auspices of the Interreligious Council of Russia, was attended by 300 representatives of religious communities from the CIS countries. At the plenary session, there were made presentations by: "Patriarch Alexy II, acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia I.S. Ivanov, Chairman of the Caucasus Muslim Authority Sheikh ul-Islam Allahshukur Pashazade, Chief Rabbi of Russia Berl Lazar, Head of the Buddhist Traditional Sangha of Russia Pandito Hambo Lama Dam Ayusheeva, Chairman of the MSD of Uzbekistan Mufti Abdurashid Bakhromov, Chief Rabbi of Russia Adolf Shaevich, Chairman of the Coordination Center for Muslims of the North Caucasus Ismail Berdiev, Chairman of the Council of Muftis of Russia Mufti Ravil Gainutdin, Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad" [II Interreligious..., 2004]. Greetings from the presidents of Russia, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan were read out.

Within the framework of the forum, round tables were held on the topics: "The current situation of state-religious relations in the CIS space," "Coordination of the efforts of traditional religions to respond to common challenges," "Social service of religious organizations," "Problems of religious education," "Experience of expanding interreligious cooperation to the regional level," "Religion and the media," "Peacekeeping efforts of religious organizations" [Ibid.]. As shown by the listed topics, the focus of the event was on the role of the religious factor in society.

At the forum, the participants announced the creation of the CIS Interreligious Council (IC) [Lyapin, 2022]. The organization included twenty-three religious leaders of the Commonwealth countries, and Patriarch Alexy II and Chairman of the MSD of the Caucasus Sheikh-ul-Islam A. Pashazade became honorary co-chairs [II Interreligious..., 2004]. The statement on the establishment of the CIS IC as a priority goal of the organization is "coordination of joint activities of traditional religious organizations of the CIS countries in strengthening interethnic and interreligious peace, achieving harmony and

stability in society, developing dialogue between spiritual leaders, joining forces in the fight against common challenges, affirming traditional spiritual values in society" [II Interreligious..., 2004]. Major forums took place with the participation of the CIS IC, the most significant of them were the World Summit of Religious Leaders (Baku, 2010)¹⁸ and the Presidium of the CIS Interreligious Council (Yerevan, 2011)¹⁹.

With the participation of the CIS IC, major forums took place, the World Summit of Religious Leaders (Baku, 2010) and the Presidium of the CIS Interreligious Council (Yerevan, 2011) are the most significant of them. However, this organization subsequently ceased its activities and currently the CIS Interreligious Council does not even have its own official website.

The final document of the 2004 forum raises a number of issues – peacemaking, the importance of moral values, the revival of religion in the CIS countries, the need to recognize the diversity of modern civilization in the context of renunciation of alignment [II Interreligious..., 2004]. One of the central topics of the statement was the problem of terrorism under religious slogans: "We testify that true believers will never embark on the course of terror. We are convinced that those who deliberately became terrorists have denied their faith. We bitterly state that their consciousness, blurred with crazy ideas, is closed to the reasons of conscience, and the only language they understand is the language of power. Traditional religious organizations are working hard to contain the proliferation of terror and the blasphemous use of religious symbols by terrorists. At the same time, we offer our governments assistance and support in the fight against this evil" [Ibid.]. After the previous forum, there were attacks on the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001; terrorist attacks in which criminals used religious rhetoric took place on the territory of the Russian Federation. The Interreligious Council of Russia adopted several statements on the problem of terrorism during this period: "Statement of the ICR in connection with the

hostage-taking in Moscow" (2002) (terrorist attack at the Dubrovka Theater in Moscow at the musical "Nord-Ost"); "Statement due to a series of terrorist attacks" (2004), "Appeal in connection with the tragedy in Beslan" (2004) [Melnik, 2022b]. In this regard, the forum paid special attention to the topic of extremism and terrorism.

World Summit of Religious Leaders (2006).

On July 3–5, 2006, the World Summit of Religious Leaders was held in Moscow at the President Hotel. The event was organized by the Interreligious Council of Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church. The summit was attended by more than "one hundred and fifty religious leaders (more than 50 of them are leaders of the largest religious communities on the planet) from 49 countries of the world – representatives of the world's leading religions: Christianity (Orthodox, Catholics, Protestants), Judaism, Islam (Shiites and Sunnis), Buddhism, leaders of such influential international interreligious organizations as the World Conference of Religions for Peace, World Council of Churches, Conference of European Churches, International Jewish Committee, World Jewish Congress, Organization of the Islamic Conference.²⁰" The event came before the G8 summit in St. Petersburg. The opening ceremony was attended by President of the Russian Federation V.V. Putin, who at the end of his speech announced that he would convey the final document of the forum to state leaders at the upcoming summit²¹.

Within the inter-religious summit, many issues were discussed: "the role of faith and religion in modern society; protection and affirmation of spiritual and moral values in the society and the responsibility of religions for this; ways to overcome terrorism and extremism; education and the need for moral education of young people; legality, freedom, human rights, moral responsibility; supporting the values of the family and human life, as well as gender equality; respect for religious

feelings and for what is considered sacred in religious traditions; morality in the economy, overcoming poverty; the role of the media; planet resources, environmental responsibility, challenges of epidemics of infectious diseases, drug addiction; the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; dialogue and partnership of civilizations, the problem of globalization and the world order, the dialogue of religious figures with politicians, civil society structures and international organizations.²² All these topics were reflected in the final document of the event – “Message of the World Summit of Religious Leaders,” the position of the participants was formulated in a separate paragraph for each of them²³.

The Speech, as in the two previous forums, reflected the themes of pseudo-religious terrorism and the importance of moral values. Much attention was paid to the issue of the value of human life, rights and freedoms: “human life is the gift of the Supreme Being. It is our sacred duty to preserve this gift, which should be the concern of both religious communities and political leaders ... Man is the supreme creation of the Almighty. Therefore, individual rights, their protection and observance at the national, regional and international levels are an important concern for us... we are convinced that the law and social order must be correspondent and combine the commitment to rights and freedoms with an understanding of the moral foundations underlying the human community. We declare the importance of religious freedom in the modern world²⁴. That is, the Speech notes that the idea of the value of human life, the concept of human rights and freedoms is supported by religions, at the same time, religious leaders emphasize that this concept takes into account the idea of morality and sin.

The Speech covered topics that were not involved in the final documents of previous forums – ecology and economics: “Human life is also connected with the economy. The international economic order, as well as other areas of global architecture, must be based on justice. All economic and business

activity should be socially responsible and based on moral norms... It is imperative that all governments and business communities are equally responsible protectors of our planet's resources. These resources, granted to all generations by the Creator, should be used for the benefit of every person... Responsible distribution of the Earth's wealth and active humanitarian work will help to overcome the poverty and hunger that influence billions of our brothers and sisters.²⁵ Thus, in the document we see an extensive range of issues in connection with which religious leaders jointly declare their desire for peace, solving social problems and conflicts, readiness to contribute "to creating a better future for the all-human family."²⁶

The World Summit of Religious Leaders was the largest and most representative interreligious event in the history of modern Russia. In May 2022, it was planned to hold the World Conference on Interreligious and Interethnic Dialogue in St. Petersburg.²⁷ This event could have become larger, but it was canceled in six months due to the coronavirus pandemic.²⁸

Conclusion

In conclusion of the study, we summarize some of the main results regarding the experience of holding interreligious summits in modern Russia.

1. At interreligious meetings of religious leaders, as noted in the introduction, theological issues are not discussed, while the focus of the participants is on social topics. The main message of the summits is reflected in the final phrase of the final document of the II Interreligious Peacekeeping Forum: "We appeal to Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, to all people to preserve peace and harmony among themselves, to work together for the benefit of our countries."²⁹ The statements actually reveal what specific contribution religions can make to peacemaking and social well-being.

2. One of the most important topics of the summits, which was reflected in all statements and speeches of the participants, was the phenomenon of terrorism. In particular, the 2006 Summit Speech says: "We condemn terrorism and extremism in any form, as well as attempts to justify them religiously.... The use of religion as a means of incitement to hatred or as an excuse for crimes against the individual, morality, humanity is one of the main challenges of our time. It can only be dealt with through education and moral upbringing.³⁰" The position of religious leaders is that it is wrong to associate the ideology of terrorists with religion, it distorts religious doctrine and contradicts spiritual values. In this regard, statements and speeches referred to "terrorism using religious rhetoric," "pseudo-religious terrorism³¹, and the main means of its prevention was called increasing the level of religious literacy.

3. Moral values have become another key topic of all forums. For example, the Speech says: "Through education and social action, we must ingrain stable moral values in the minds of people. We consider these values to be given by the Almighty and deeply rooted in human life. In practice, they are in many ways consistent for our religions. We feel responsible for the moral condition of our societies and wish to take on this responsibility, working together with states and civil associations in the name of a life in which moral values are the property and source of sustainable development.³²" In this context, traditional family values were often mentioned. Representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church, especially Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, developed this theme, contrasting the "liberal" ("secular-humanistic") and "religious-traditionalist" value systems. The first of them lacks the concept of "sin," a person is given maximum freedom to satisfy any of his needs (if this does not harm other people). The religious-traditionalist paradigm presupposes the presence of absolute and certain moral norms that a person is obliged to follow. The main significance of

religions in this context is thought of as opposition to the destruction of public morality [Melnik, 2022a, p. 322–325].

4. The participants of the meeting noted the need to respect and preserve the uniqueness, identity of different civilizations, the refusal to level cultural differences: “We need to build a world order that combines democracy – as a way to reconcile different interests and as the participation of people in decision-making at the national and global level – with respect for moral sense, lifestyle, various legal and political systems, national and religious traditions of people... The world should be multipolar and multi-layered, satisfying all people and all peoples, and not fit into lifeless and simplified ideological schemes.³³” A similar idea was expressed in the statement of the II Interreligious Peacekeeping Forum: “The relationship between leading cultural and spiritual traditions is complicated by attempts to unify them, impose the same way of life on peoples, one type of social structure, and a single civilizational model. All this provokes conflicts, creates a background for extremist sentiments” [II Interreligious, 2004].

5. Also it's possible to touch on the issue of the effectiveness of such international interreligious summits, which are regularly held around the world. For example, in the Eurasian space, the triennial Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions in Astana³⁴ is the most famous of them. Often, interreligious forums are limited only to slogans and appeals of religious leaders, do not lead to practical activities outside the event, the final documents in their content are very close to each other, we can even say that they are partly formulaic. The limitations of this form of interreligious dialogue are recognized and acknowledged by experts [Orton, 2016]. For instance, Patriarch Kirill, who was an active participant in the considered summits, once noted: “The easiest way is to sign on to common words - no one takes any responsibility, and then no one reads these common statements. Interreligious groups talk about peace and friendship, and meanwhile bombs explode in the Middle

East, the North Caucasus, and Europe. On one level - a politically correct dialogue, on the other - a tough, sometimes terrible reality.³⁵ At the same time, according to the author, one should not expect from such a diplomatic dialogue to discuss theological topics or organize joint work. There are various forms of interreligious communication, including those related to joint activities (partner dialogue) and theological analysis and comparison of representations of religions (cognitive dialogue). These types of interreligious dialogue are not mutually exclusive, but can combine and complement each other. Interaction at the level of religious leaders also has its own niche, specifics and tasks. Here, the very fact of a friendly meeting, the demonstration of respectful relations (as an example for believers), the creation of a space of communication for religious leaders, evidence of adherence to high humanistic ideals, the expression of a consolidated peacekeeping position are important [More details, see: Melnik, 2021a]. The first and second interreligious peacekeeping forums, the World Summit of Religious Leaders, demonstrated that Russia is also the initiator of an intercivilization dialogue, in general, the experience of holding these events can be assessed positively.

Notes

1. For example, The Oxford International Interfaith Centre. - Access mode: <https://www.oxfordinternational.com/> (date of access: 12.07.2023).
2. Svidler L. 10 commandments of interreligious dialogue. - Access mode: <http://www.moonsun-bel.blogspot.ru/> (date of access: 12.07.2023).
3. Refer to: 10th International Interreligious Youth Forum opened in Dagestan <https://islamdag.ru/news/2023-05-27/v-dagestane-otkrylsya-yubileynny-x-mezhdunarodnyy-mezhreligioznyy-molodyozhnyy-forum?ysclid=liukr5ime732063069> (date of access: 12.07.2023).
4. Refer to: The First Interfaith Chess Tournament was held in Moscow. - Access mode: <https://www.mos.ru/news/item/54306073/> (date of access: 12.07.2023); The second interfaith chess tournament "Dialogue of Religions" was held in Moscow. - Access mode: https://www.mos.ru/news/item/89900073/?utm_source=fb&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=linkshare&u

- tm_content=news&fbclid=IwAR1wAe41_7JFe7EHnN5OxS1hV0QIWW6jePZyT
OpmQuS2n4T1PbGapHmhbzE (date of access: 12.07.2023); Interfaith football
tournament "Dialogue of Religions" was held in Moscow. - Access mode:
https://www.mos.ru/news/item/90430073/?utm_source=fb&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=linkshare&utm_content=news&fbclid=IwAR0eX88dDJv72Yir-Q8lvDghFwfmOll42hUgBn_YZidjVIWhyqZEuqaxq0Q (date of access:
12.07.2023).
5. Declaration of the World Ethnic Group / E.V. Seredkina - Access mode:
<http://anthropology.ru/ru/text/dokumenty/deklaraciya-mirovogo-etosa>
(date of access: 12.07.2023).
 6. A meeting of the interreligious Working Group on the provision of
humanitarian assistance to Syria took place. - Access mode:
<https://mospat.ru/ru/2017/04/12/news144542/> (date of access: 12.07.2023);
The first batch of joint assistance from Russian religious organizations was
sent to Syria. - Access mode: <https://mospat.ru/ru/2017/06/23/news147833/> (date of access: 12.07.2023).
 7. Refer to: The delegation led by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk
transferred humanitarian aid to a children's boarding school in Syria. -
Access mode: <https://mospat.ru/ru/2018/11/18/news166781/> (date of
access: 12.07.2023); Interreligious humanitarian action in Syria and Lebanon
ended, which became unprecedented in terms of the volume of aid
transferred. - Access mode: <https://mospat.ru/ru/2018/02/09/news156494/> (date of access: 12.07.2023).
 8. The First Moscow International Forum "Religion and Peace" was held in the
Russian capital - Access mode: [http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/
3439230.html?ysclid=lixlukujja596617533](http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3439230.html?ysclid=lixlukujja596617533) (date of access: 12.07.2023);
Participants of the II International Forum "Religion and Peace" called on
religious leaders to unite efforts against extremism under religious slogans -
Access mode: [http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3799264.html?ysclid=
lixlvtgaz0352780063](http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/3799264.html?ysclid=lixlvtgaz0352780063) (date of access: 12.07.2023).
 9. Moscow will host the Interreligious Forum - Access mode:
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