**COMMUNIQUE**

**of the XXV Annual International Conference**

**of the International Foundation for the Unity**

**of Orthodox Christian Nations (IFUOCN)**

**“National consciousness and integration problems”**

The XXV Anniversary Annual Conference convened by the International Foundation for the Unity of Orthodox Christian Nations (IFUOCN) on April 15-17 , 2019 in Budapest (Hungary), in cooperation with the diocese of Budapest and Hungary of the Russian Orthodox Church, with the participation of Hungarian partners of the Foundation, members of the Interparliamentary Assembly on Orthodoxy, political, state, religious, and public figures, scholars, journalists from Austria, Armenia, Angola, Belarus, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Germany, Georgia, Zimbabwe, India, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Cyprus, Latvia, Lebanon, Moldova, Palestine, Poland, Russia, Romania, Serbia, Syria, Slovakia, Ukraine, Montenegro, the Czech Republic, in the context of interested, meaningful discussions and fruitful exchange of views, discussed in detail an important topic on the current agenda - national consciousness of peoples and integration problems in a broad geopolitical sense.

The organizers and participants of the Conference kindly accepted, as the fact of recognition of the importance of their endeavours, the greetings received from the Heads and Supreme Authorities of the Patriarchate of Alexandria, the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, Georgian Orthodox Church, Serbian Orthodox Church, Russian Orthodox Church, Polish Orthodox Church, the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia, Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church (India), Heads and Authorities of the States and Parliaments of Moldova, Russia, and Serbia, and leadership of international organizations.

The Conference stated that the problems under consideration come from the root causes of the unfolding new global systemic crisis, when two divergent trends had collided: the desire of nations to protect national identity, driven by a deep national survival instinct, and the ideology and practice of political elites of the liberal international ruling class opposing these forces, to intensify the integration of all aspects of the life of the international community, to accelerate the process of globalization, which dissolves the national identity of peoples and stimulated their loss of identity.

The participants of the Conference came to recognition of the fact that conservatism has returned to the current political agenda with traditional values and meanings based on Christianity, and stressed the importance of this moment for further developments in the world. It was noted that these demands of the age had already been heeded by the nationalist political forces in Hungary, Germany, Slovakia, and Austria, and that Brexit was also the result of the will of British to leave the European Union. Thus, current processes indicate the ineradicable craving of nations for independence, sovereignty of their States, protection of the traditional way of life, culture and identity. It was stressed, in this regard, European integration in the ultra-liberal model had exhausted itself.

The participants also noted thatconservatives and traditionalists show inaction in consolidating their efforts to defend classic values and meanings, sluggishly defend the principles of formation inter-state unions for this purpose. It was stressed that American conservatives led by US President D. Trump perform counterproductive attempts to dictate the strong over the weak. The United States of America, headed by President D. Trump, proclaiming the priorities of conservative values and putting the interests of America above all their obligations to the allies, treats with contempt the national interests of other States. The Conference commended the goals of the Russian state leadership to promote traditional spiritual and cultural values and meanings in the life of society, to protect the national identity of peoples. It was stated, that in the context of economic instability and the threat of a new arms race in the world, Europe needs to strengthen the cooperation of the peoples of the continent, and to improve the relationship with Russia.

In this regard, Conference commended the role of the Russian Orthodox Church which offers its ways of consolidating society on the basis of traditional spiritual and cultural values, in cooperation with the ruling Russian class which is aware of the vital importance of such cooperation. It took note of the important fact of the turn, not only in Russia, but also in other countries, of the new elites to religious spiritual and cultural values and meanings based on traditional religions, the foundation of Christianity. It was emphasized that it is Christianity in its two directions - in Orthodoxy and Catholicism, as the most ingrained religion of European nations, is able to re-unite Europe and breathe new forces into it. The participants gave a positive example of the policies of Hungarian state and political leader Viktor Orban and his ruling party FIDES who stands for preservation of national identity of Hungarians, their traditional Christian spiritual and cultural values.

The speakers noted that the very institutional structure of the European Union is experiencing a serious crisis, growing centrifugal tendencies and all sorts of contradictions, the clearest manifestations of which was Brexit, as well as "fermentation" of sovereignties (Scotland, Catalonia, etc.), becoming an immanent factor in the European process. The problem of poverty is growing not only in the "new" but also in the "old" Europe. There is an increase in poverty among the population of Belgium, Luxembourg, Denmark, the Netherlands, France. Even in the "locomotive of the economy" of the EU, in Germany, the poverty rate has reached 17 % and continues to grow. In the new members of the EU - Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia poverty growth rates generally gallops. It was noted that further worsening economic situation in the EU, the strengthening of financial imbalances, production imbalances, the increase in migration problems, the emergence of new or revival of old centers of separatism, the continuation of the policy of sanctions against Russia, - all this increase the risks of provoking a large-scale European crisis with the prospect of turning into the collapse of the integration project in Europe in general. The Conference also touched upon the phenomenon of euroscepticism.

The Conference discussed, according to tradition, the ideas of the next Davos forum, considering the topic: "Globalization 4.0: Shaping a Global Architecture in the Age of the Fourth Industrial Revolution". It was noted that even the participants of this mondialist forum predict the imminent decline of the liberal model of the economy, realizing that the liberal model is ruined by injustice in international and socio-economic relations. Concentration of gigantic wealth in the hands of a small handful of people is growing steadily, making the world extremely dangerous and unstable. The huge gap between the poor and the rich blocks integration processes and attempts to consolidate the society, breaking up into groups, each of which declares its identity and puts forward its own leaders from among populist politicians. However, it was noted, that populism cannot be a salvation from the crisis.

One of the conclusions of the Conference in Budapest is that the liberal project of European integration has given serious failures in the Balkans, where the Brussels bureaucracy breaks the resistance of popular will in Macedonia, expressed in a referendum concerning change of the name of the Republic and the country's entry into European structures and NATO. A similar scenario is taking place in Montenegro, as well as in Serbia, where attempts are being made, bypassing the will of the people and the actions of legitimate institutions of power, to push the issue of Serbia's accession to the EU and NATO on American and Brussels terms. It was noted with great concern that the land of Kosovo and Metohija, sacred to the Serbian national and religious feeling, is a bargaining chip here.

The religious issue occupies an important place in the formation and development of national consciousness, which sounded as one of the main conclusions of the Budapest forum. The Conference discussed the importance of protecting Christians from persecution in the Middle East and Africa. Proposal was made to convene a forum on this theme in Beirut (Lebanon). In was noted, that state authorities should provide for the Local Orthodox Churches the possibilities of free access to historically valuable religious and cultural objects, and to transmit religious objects to canonic Church organizations for liturgical purposes, for example, the Sophia Cathedrals in Polotsk (Belorussia) and Kiev (Ukraine). Common concerns were voiced over ignoring the religious rights of Orthodox Rusyns, living in diaspora in the European countries: Austria, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine, without any opportunity to confess their faith in the native languagues.

There was a disturbing warning in connection with a danger of encouraging of the aggravation of the religious issue in Ukraine. Unfortunately, it was noted at the Conference, the Greek Patriarch Bartholomew from Istanbul joined in this dirty political game encouraged by the United States. Together with the President of Ukraine P. Poroshenko, who has lost the trust of the people and therefore forced to rely on the marginalized and outsiders in the face of fascist nationalists and rioters, Patriarch Bartholomew organized the so-called new local Church in Ukraine, consisting of false bishops and false priests, expelled earlier from the canonical Churches as schismatics and schismatics, which is not recognized by any legitimate Autocephalous Orthodox Church in the world, that’s why the Russian Orthodox Church, uniting half of all Orthodox believers in the world, was forced to break Eucharistic communion with the Constantinople Patriarchate in connection with non-canonical actions of the latter. A split in Orthodoxy was formed, which affects severely the spiritual health of Europe, where in more than a third of the 28 countries of the EU there are Local Orthodox Churches, which play a historically important role in the spiritual and cultural life of the peoples of these States, having a great influence on the national consciousness of the peoples. It is obvious that the split will have a distinctive mark in the national consciousness of the Eastern European peoples, will cause a serious blow to the project of European integration. The Conference outlined the urgent necessity of strengthening the unity of the canonic Orthodoxy all over the world.

It was stated, that today in Europe another burning problem arose concerning choosing the future path on the eve of a tense battle for seats in the European Parliament, and the outcome of these elections will determine in many respects the prospects and destiny of the peoples of the continent. The participants of the Conference expressed hope that European nations will strengthen their self-consciousness, drawing strength from the foundation of their spiritual and cultural values and meanings, at this difficult time, in order not to dissolve in this diversity of the world, but to preserve their identity.

The Conference thanked the leadership of the International public Foundation for the Unity of Orthodox Christian Nations, the clergy of the diocese of Budapest and Hungary of the Russian Orthodox Church, the Hungarian partners for their excellent work in preparation of the jubilee XXV annual Forum of the Foundation, which provided a great opportunity for a comprehensive discussion of current problems of the modern world in a very difficult time of its development, formulationof responsible suggestionsfor international and national ruling forces in order to minimize the threats and challenges facing humanity. The participants of the Conference wished IFUOCN new successes in its efforts to promote high spiritual and cultural values of Christianity in the life of the modern community.

*Budapest, Republic of Hungary*

*April 17, 2019*