The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Russian Patriarch, Pope Urge 'Just Peace' in Ukraine

By AFP

March 16, 2022



Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill. **Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency**

Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill and Pope Francis held talks on Wednesday about the conflict in Ukraine and urged negotiations to continue to reach a "just peace."

"The sides emphasized the crucial importance of continuing negotiations and expressed hope for reaching a just peace as soon as possible," the Patriarch's office said in a statement.

The statement said the two church leaders also discussed how to handle the unfolding humanitarian crisis in Ukraine.

Related article: Orthodox Christian Unity Broken by 'Russian World' Heresy

The 75-year-old head of the Russian Orthodox Church is a key pillar of President Vladimir Putin's ruling apparatus and has buttressed the Kremlin's authoritarian tendencies by

denouncing opposition protests and blessing Russia's conflicts abroad.

Shortly after the start of Russia's operation last month in Ukraine, Patriarch Kirill called Moscow's opponents in Ukraine "evil forces."

"God forbid that the current political situation in brotherly Ukraine should be aimed at ensuring that the evil forces that have always fought against the unity of Russia and the Russian Church prevail," he said in an address to parishioners.

Patriarch Kirill said he was praying for peace across "Russian land" that he said included Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.

Meanwhile, Pope Francis has called for an end to the conflict on more than one occasion.

Last Sunday he issued a heartfelt plea for an end to the "massacre" and the "unacceptable armed attack" in Ukraine.

Speaking after his weekly Angelus prayers, he condemned the "barbarity" of killing children and civilians, adding: "In the name of God... stop this massacre."

Earlier this month he deplored the "rivers of blood and tears" flowing in Ukraine and the mounting humanitarian crisis.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/03/16/russian-patriarch-pope-urge-just-peace-in-ukraine-a76967