

The Holy and Great Council commences at first day's work

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The Holy and Great Council commenced its work at the first day at the Orthodox Academy of Crete. In his Introductory Address, His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew made reference to the history of the attempts over many years for the Council to be assembled, emphasizing that there was no possibility for postponement. His All-Holiness expressed his disappointment at the decision of certain Local Autocephalous Orthodox Churches, which after decades of preparation, failed at the last moment to honor their written agreement, and are not participating in the Holy and Great Council, underlying at the same time the need to preserve unity since the Orthodox Church is one and does not constitute a confederation of Churches.

The Primates of the Local Orthodox Autocephalous Churches in their turn, addressed greetings to the Council, unanimously expressing their joy and support for being present at this historic event. They reaffirmed their commitment to work together in unity to address the questions facing the Church in the contemporary world and to deepen co-operation in the future. They also expressed their profound regret and incomprehension at the absence of some Churches, underlying the need for unity.

