



February 6, 2013

Mr. Uri Vladimirovich Artyukh
Department Head
Department of Interregional Cooperation, National Policy, and Relations with
Religious Organizations in Moscow
Moscow, Russian Federation

Dear Mr. Artyukh:

As the largest association of Christian media communicators in the world, the members of the NRB were shocked and dismayed by the events leading to the demolition of the Holy Trinity Church in Moscow. To many international observers, such conduct and actions were reminiscent of darker years in Russia's storied history.

It has come to my attention that your Department has recognized the unfortunate nature of the circumstances surrounding the destruction of the Holy Trinity Church. In fact, I recently read about a public statement made by Counsellor Veronika Kravchuk announcing the creation of a support plan for the Church.

I write today to make an official inquiry into the nature and status of that support plan.

First, let me commend your Department for its leadership in working to resolve this matter. Terrible mistakes are sometimes made, but it shows genuine leadership when leaders, like you, make substantive efforts to correct those mistakes.

Because of the great interest on the part of the international Christian media community, the NRB would like to know the details of the support plan, and how your Department will implement it. Of greatest interest to us is the following:

1. What provision is being made for Holy Trinity Church to continue conducting its church services? What facility can it use? During what hours will it be available to the Church? What provision will be made for children, the elderly, and the disabled?
2. What is the status of the plan to allocate new land for the construction of a replacement church building?

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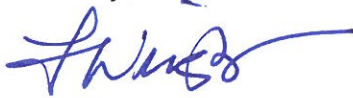
3. What is the status of your investigation into the thefts of church property that took place during the demolition? Were any of the sacred relics that were stolen recovered? Were the vessels devoted to the communion table recovered? When can the Church expect to have these returned?

4. Does the support plan include any financial compensation for the destruction or theft of personal property belonging to members of the Church?

Let me be clear in saying that the members of the NRB have great respect for Russia's long Christian history. While the sad events associated with the destruction of the Holy Trinity Church may have temporarily injured Moscow's long-standing reputation for religious toleration and freedom, we are encouraged to see your Department taking a leadership role in restoring Moscow's reputation in the eyes of the worldwide Christian community.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest opportunity.

Sincerely,



Frank Wright, Ph.D.
President & CEO

cc: President Barack Obama
The White House

The Honorable John Kerry
U.S. Secretary of State

The Honorable Suzann Johnson Cook
U.S. Ambassador for Religious Freedom

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader of the U.S. Senate

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives