DECR chairman greets Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Gewargis III Sliwa with 5th anniversary of his accession to the Throne of Primates of the Assyrian Church of the East

In his letter to His Holiness Mar Gewargis III Sliwa, Catholicos-Patriarch of the Assyrian Church of the East, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, congratulated him on the 5th anniversary of his Primatial ministry.

Your Holiness,

Kindly accept my cordial congratulations upon the fifth anniversary of your Primatial ministry that you are celebrating.

You have assumed the heavy cross of the Patriarchal ministry in the days of great upheavals that have fallen on the biblical land of ancient Mesopotamia and the whole Middle East. In the person of Your Holiness, the Assyrian people have acquired a wise, energetic and empathic spiritual father who *lays down his life for the sheep* (Jn. 10:11) bringing to the world the light of *testimony about our Lord Jesus Christ* (2 Tim. 1:8).

In effectively developing external relations, you have invariably given a considerable attention to the life of the Assyrian community in Russia and to the consolidation of cooperation with the Moscow Patriarchate. The work of the Commission for Dialogue between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Assyrian Church of the East, too, is developing dynamically and successfully. I hope for its equally successful continuation.

From my heart, I wish Your Holiness good health, peace and physical strength in your lofty ministry!

With love in the Lord,

+ Hilarion

Metropolitan of Volokolamsk

Chairman

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