



## Patriarch Kirill arrives in Amman



On 25 February 2020, His Holiness Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, began his visit to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. He arrived in the capital city of Jordan for the Amman meeting of Primates and delegations of Local Orthodox Churches.

At the Queen Alia International Airport, the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church was met by Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, Chief Advisor to King Abdullah II for Religious and Cultural Affairs; Mr. Samer Naber, director of the MFA European department; and Mr. Amer Haddadd, deputy director of the MFA protocol department.

From the Patriarchate of Jerusalem there were Metropolitan Timotheos of Botsra, Metropolitan Benetictos of Diocæsarea, and Archbishop Christophoros of Kyriacoupolis. The welcoming party included Archimandrite Alexander (Yelisov), head of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Jerusalem, and Hieromonk Demetian (Makarian), deputy head of the Mission.

The Russian Federation embassy in Jordan was represented by Ambassador G. F. Desyatiniov, and I. A. Bulgakov, senior counsellor of the embassy.

During his visit to Jordan, Patriarch Kirill is accompanied by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations (DECR), Mr. V. Legoida, head of the synodal department for the Church's relations with society and mass media, and Archpriest Nikolay Balashov, DECR vice-chairman.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church and Prince Ghazi Ben Muhammad exchanged greetings. His Holiness stressed that he was very glad to come to Jordan. Pointing to the rich history of this country and the importance its holy places have for the faithful of the Russian Church, he said, "We experience special feelings whenever we come to the holy places. They are not just sights but places where God's grace works in a special way. Our people revere and love these holy places and it is certainly a very good prerequisite for developing relations between our countries".

His Holiness also said that he would be glad to have another meeting with the King of Jordan Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein.

His Holiness also addressed warm words of greetings to the present hierarchs of the Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad spoke about love and respect for the Russian Orthodox Church making a special mention of the work carried out by the Russian House of Pilgrims on the Jordan River. He noted in particular that a great number of pilgrims keep coming there from Russia in spite of the uneasy situation in the Middle East.

*DECR Communication Service*

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