# Russian President meets with Primates of the Orthodox Churches of Jerusalem and Russia



On 20 November 2019, H.E.Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation, met with His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem, and His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia. The meeting took place at the Patriarchal Chambers of the Moscow Kremlin.

The Primate of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem has arrived in Russia to attend the awards ceremony of the International Foundation for the Unity of Orthodox Christian Nations. The head of the state congratulated His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III on winning the prize of Patriarch Alexy II “For Outstanding Activity in Strengthening Unity of Orthodox Christian Nations and for Consolidation and Promotion of Christian Values in Society.’

President Putin noted the constant good relations between the Orthodox Churches of Jerusalem and Russia and fraternal relations between His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos and His Holiness Patriarch Kirill. The President is confident that these are benefit to the world Orthodoxy and strengthen relations among our believers.’

The head of the state thanked His Beatitude for hospitality extended to numerous pilgrims from Russia in Jerusalem. ‘We highly appreciate what You are doing for our people, our citizens,’ he underscored.

President Putin recalled his recent meeting in Hungary with the hierarchs of the Christian Churches in the Middle East. ‘We are aware of the difficult situation of Christians in the Middle East, their cradle,” he said and expressed his confidence in the necessity of combined efforts for the defence of Christians in the region, adding: ‘Any disunion will greatly harm the Christian world, Christians in the Middle East including.’

The President underscored the importance of cooperation with representatives of other confessions and religions represented in the Middle East, Islam in the first place. ‘We maintain close contacts with them and work effectively, solving together the task of defending our common traditional values.’

He mentioned the role the Russian Jewish communities play in the development of the state-to-state relations with Israel and shared his plan to visit this country next January on the occasion of the Holocaust Memorial Day and the unveiling of a monument to the victims of the Siege of Leningrad.

His Beatitude Patriarch Theophilos III thanked Russian President for warm reception and the meeting.

He said: First of all I bring You the blessing of the Holy City of Jerusalem and gratitude of Christians in the Middle East who have highest regard for You. Also, His Beatitude thanked Mr. Putin on his own behalf and on behalf of the Brotherhood of the Holy Sepulchre for his interest in the situation of Christians in the region, for support and aid that was very meaningful for the defence of the Holy Sepulchre.

The participants in the meeting discussed issues touched upon at the beginning of the talk as well as many others.

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Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/45904/