



## **DECR chairman meets with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán**

On 6<sup>th</sup> September 2019, a meeting between Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, and Mr. Viktor Orbán, Prime Minister of Hungary, took place at the House of the Hungarian Government in Budapest. The DECR chairman arrived in Hungary with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia to take part in the Budapest Forum for Christian Communicators.

Greeting Mr. Orbán, Metropolitan Hilarion noted that he had the warmest recollections of Hungary, for in 2003-2009 he headed the diocese of Hungary of the Russian Orthodox Church and in his capacity as chairman of the Department for External Church Relations he undertakes regular working visits to the country.

The participants in the meeting discussed the role and importance of Christianity in today's world.

Among the issues raised at the meeting was the situation of Orthodox Christians in Ukraine, where numerous cases of discrimination against and violation of the rights of individual believers and whole

communities occurred. As the DECR chairman noted, the drastic aggravation of the religious situation and the increasing number of inter-confessional conflicts in Ukraine this year can be explained, first of all, by the actions of the state authorities, which in December 2018 made an attempt to forcibly unify the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and two schismatic structures.

As Metropolitan Hilarion pointed out, the Moscow Patriarchate maintains good and constructive relations with the Hungarian leadership that devotes favourable attention to the activities of the Russian Orthodox Church's parishes located in the territory of Hungary.

To conclude the meeting, Metropolitan Hilarion thanked the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán for his willingness to further promote the relationships between Hungary and the Russian Orthodox Church.

*DECR Communication Service*

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