



Solemn act devoted to Local Council of Russian Orthodox Church and patriarchal enthronement at State Kremlin Palace



On January 31, 2019, a solemn act devoted to the 10th anniversary of the 2009 Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church and the enthronement of His Holiness Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, took place at the Grand Hall of the State Kremlin Palace with the participation of the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin and His Holiness Patriarch Kirill.

Present at the event were Primates and high delegations of Local Orthodox Churches who came to Moscow for the celebrations. Among them Patriarch John X of Antioch and All the East and his delegation; Patriarch Irenaeus of Serbia and a delegation of the Serbian Orthodox Church; Metropolitan Rostislav of the Czech Lands and Slovakia and his delegation; Metropolitan Tikhon of All America and Canada and his delegation; Metropolitan Daniel of Tokyo and All Japan and his delegation; a delegation

of the Orthodox Church of Alexandria led by Metropolitan Theophilaktos of Tripoli; a delegation of the Georgian Orthodox Church led by Metropolitan Andrea of Gori and Ateni; a delegation of the Romanian Orthodox Church led by Metropolitan Niphon of Târgoviște; a delegation of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church led by Metropolitan Kipriyan of Stara Zagora; and a delegation of the Polish Orthodox Church led by Archbishop Abel of Lublin And Chelm.

There was also a delegation of the Armenian Apostolic Church led by Archbishop Yeznik; a delegation of the World Council of Churches led by Rev. Dr Olav Fykse Tveit; Sheikh ul-Islam Allahshuqur Pashazade, chairman of the Caucasus Muslim Board and chairman of the CIS Interreligious Council; and a delegation of Azerbaijan and a delegation of the People's Republic of China.

Present in the Grand Hall were permanent members of the ROC Holy Synod representing metropolises and dioceses in Russia, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Central Asia, and Belarus.

Among the participants in the solemn act were also President I. Dodon of Moldova; Russian Federal Assembly Speaker Ms. V. Matvienko, the State Duma Chairman V. Volodin; Russian Procurator-General Yu. Chaika; Moscow Mayor S. Sobyanin; Acting St. Petersburg Governor A. Beglov; as well as Presidential envoys in the federal constituent regions, high state official, episcopate and clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church, religious and public leaders, State Duma members, diplomats, scientists, cultural figures and numerous participants in the Christmas Educational Readings.

Patriarch Kirill and President Putin took seats in the first row. The gathering saw a documentary called "The Way" by producer E. Tukharelli.

Then the assembly was addressed by Vladimir Putin. He congratulated Patriarch Kirill on the 10th anniversary of his enthronement. He said that "the state will continue developing constructive partnership with the Church in all important areas, primarily, in educating the younger generation, safeguarding the cultural heritage and solving pressing social problems".

He stated that Russia is facing today great historical tasks in the sphere of demography, social development, raising people's quality of life, in the work to achieve a breakthrough in the economy, science and technology. "We are well aware of this: to reach new objectives it is important for us to preserve our identity, our unity and solidarity. These are built on the values which have been honoured in all times both by Orthodoxy and other traditional religions in Russia – charity, honesty, justice, care for our neighbours and families, respect for parents and children and, certainly, love of the Motherland, the president noted.

The common duty of the state, Church and society, he said, is to preserve and strengthen the spiritual-

ethical and value foundation and hand it down to the youth. He expressed the hope that the Russian Orthodox Church will continue to be an effective peace-making force and support compatriots and people of Orthodox culture abroad. He gave a high value to the social and educational work of the Church, saying, "I know how much has been done in recent years to broaden the social service of the Church, how great and tireless is the work carried out in this area by church organizations uniting volunteers, benefactors and those who seek to help other people selflessly. This work is invaluable".

The head of the state expressed special gratitude to His Holiness the Patriarch and the Church for the pastoral care of the Russian military. "Your sincere and heartfelt instructions help privates and officers to defend the Motherland with honour, inspiring them with confidence in their military power and moral rightfulness", he added.

Mr. Putin also thanked His Holiness for continued attention to compatriots and support for communities abroad in strengthening confidence between countries and peoples and broadening humanitarian contacts. "This honest, immaculate service, which has been demonstrated by Patriarch Kirill, is an example of true love for the Motherland and our people, and the successes made in this field lay the foundation for developing the Church for decades ahead", the Russian leader said with confidence.

"In conclusion, I would like to congratulate Patriarch Kirill once again on the auspicious date – the 10th anniversary of his enthronement. I wish Your Holiness fortitude, long life and new successes in your archpastoral work. May your prayers help preserve the Russian Orthodox Church and our Motherland', the Russian president said in conclusion.

This was followed by Patriarch Kirill's address to the participants in the solemn event.

It was followed by a festive concert. The performance was given at the State Kremlin Palace stage by a joint choir of the Russian Orthodox Church consisting of 700 singers, among them children's, mixed and men's choirs who serve singing in various churches and church centers. They sang compositions by D. Allemanov, V. Zinovyev, S. Rachmaninov, P. Chesnokov, Archimandrite Matfey, G. Sviridov, I. Dunayevsky, T. Khrennikov, S. Tulikov and A. Mikita.

After the concert, Patriarch Kirill addressed the participants in the solemn act, saying, "In conclusion of this remarkable evening and excellent concert, I would like to thank all the organizers, performers and all of you, my dear ones, for having been with me for these ten years. I hope you will continue to be with your Patriarch. Let us ask God that He may open for us a way to the future, which cannot but will have difficulties, to lead us to the goals that the Lord Himself points to for us all, His Church and our pious people. I thank you from my heart".

After the solemn act, a reception took place at the Refectory Chambers of the Church of Christ the Saviour on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church and the enthronement of His Holiness Kirill

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