



Patriarch Kirill meets with Cuban ambassador to Russia

On October 10, 2018, His Holiness Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, met with the Cuban ambassador to Russia, Mr. Gerardo Peñalver Portal, at the patriarchal and synodal residence in the St. Daniel monastery.

Participating in the meeting was also Archpriest Sergiy Zvonarev, secretary for the far abroad of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations.

The head of the Cuban diplomatic mission in Moscow conveyed to Patriarch Kirill a message of greeting from the First Secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba, Mr. Raul Castro, and the Chairman of the State Council and Council of Ministers, Mr. Miguel Mario Diaz-Canel Bermudez.

Mr. Gerardo Peñalver Portal also reminded the patriarch that the 19th of October would mark the 10th anniversary of the opening of an Orthodox church in Havana, which was consecrated by Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad, now Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. 'This church has become a symbol of friendship between Russia and Cuba, for the people of Cuba respect Russia very much', he said.

Patriarch Kirill thanked the Cuban ambassador for the greetings, noting that the Russian Orthodox Church built in Havana is 'a symbol that does not erode with time, for it reflects eternal values'.

'It is very important. The political climate may change, many things may change in the world, but spiritual ties between peoples always continue'. I believe that the appearance of a Russian Orthodox church in Cuba, where Russian Orthodox people live as well, has opened a new page in our relations', His Holiness said.

In the course of the further talk, which was held in a warm atmosphere, various aspects of the history of close relations between the people of Russia and Cuba were discussed. They also touched upon the meeting between the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia and the Pope of Rome, which took place on February 12, 2016, in Havana.

In conclusion of the talk, the primate of the Russian Orthodox Church and the head of the Cuban diplomatic mission exchanged tokens of the meeting.

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