



Patriarch Kirill meets with Portuguese ambassador to Russia



On June 5, 2018, His Holiness Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, met with Portugal ambassador to Russia Pauly Viseu Pineiro.

They were joined in their talk by Archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov), vice-chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relation.

Addressing the ambassador, the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church noted, 'Portugal is loved in Russia. As my compatriots are aware of its rich culture and remarkable history they have a great interest in this country. One can say that we live on opposite borders of the European continent: we in the extreme west while we in the east. Nevertheless, people find some similarities in the mentalities and psychology between the Russians and the Portuguese people. In the life of the both nations, an

important role is played by religious tradition’.

During the talk His Holiness also mentioned the dozens of thousands of people in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova who reside on Portugal today. ‘They are Orthodox and it is remarkable that in Portugal today there are fourteen parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church in which people can receive spiritual support’, he said.

His Holiness told his guest about his meeting in Havana with the Head of the Roman Catholic Church to which most Portuguese people belong. ‘Pope Francis of Rome and I had an opportunity to express together our concern for the situation of Christians in the Middle East and generally in the modern world. The defense of Christian values and the Christian presence in the world, especially in the regions where Christians are subjected to danger, is our common goal and common task’, he stressed.

Patriarch Kirill expressed the opinion that Christian communities in Russia and Portugal can play a positive role in strengthening spiritual and cultural relations. ‘You certainly know that in Russia there is a great interest in Portuguese culture and in Portugal there is an interest in Russian culture. And cultural exchange is a very important factor in the development of relations between our peoples and countries’, His Holiness said and expressed the hope that the presence of Mr. Pauly Viseu Pineiro as head of the Portuguese diplomatic mission will help develop good relations between Russia and Portugal.

Mr. Pauly Viseu Pineiro said in response, ‘Your Holiness, I have come to you with an absolutely clear intention to assure you of my respect as ambassador of Portugal to the Russian Federation and to ask for your blessing upon the fulfilment of my mission in this country’. He mentioned that 19 years ago he had the honour of meeting and exchanging opinions with His Holiness Patriarch Kirill when he was chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations.

They also discussed a wide range of issues of mutual concern.

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