Russian-Chinese working group for contacts and cooperation in religious sphere holds its 6th session

On 22 March 2018, the 6th session of the Russian-Chinese working group for contacts and cooperation in religious sphere took place at the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA), Beijing. Co-chairing the meeting were Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, and Mr. Zhang Yantong, SARA deputy head.

The participants in the meeting discussed a wide range of issues pertaining to the cooperation between Russia and China in religious sphere, including the education of the Chinese Orthodox students at theological schools of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Taking part in the meeting were Mr. Valery Nazarenko, deputy head of the Presidential Foreign Policy

Directorate; Mr. Sergei Melnikov, assistant at the Presidential Domestic Policy Directorate, executive secretary of the Presidential Council for Cooperation with Religious Organizations; Mr. Yevgeny Timokhin, Ambassador at Large of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation; Mufti Rushan hazrat Abbyasov, first deputy chairman of the Russia Muftis Council; Archpriest Nikolai Balashov, DECR vice-chairman; Mr. Georgy Zunoviev, Minister Counsellor of the Russian Embassy in China; Mr. V. Fadeyev, Senior Counsellor of the Russian Embassy in China; Mr. Dmitry Petrovsky, DECR staff member; Mr. Ildar hazrat Galeyev, head of the International Department of the Russia Muftis Council; Mr. G. Zhigarkov, Third Secretary of the Russian Embassy in China; and Mr. Alexander Yershov, DECR staff member.

Representing the People's Republic of China at the meeting were director of the SARA Fourth Department Huang Zhihui; director of the SARA Department for International Relations Xiao Hong; deputy director of the SARA Fourth Department Kuang Sheng; head of the Second Bureau of the SARA Department for International Relations Xue Chunmei; head of the Second Bureau of the SARA Fourth Department Wang Xiaogang; consultant of the SARA Fourth Department Hao Rongnan; a staff member of the Second Bureau of the SARA Department for International Relations, Shi Yujie; and a staff member of the Department of Europe and Central Asia of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Li Youran.

After the meeting Mr. Zhang Yantong, deputy head of the State Administration for Religious Affairs, gave a reception in honour of Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk and the Russian delegation.

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