A delegation from Russian visits an old monastery under restoration in Syrian Maaloula



March 22, 2018 – A Russian delegation led by State Duma deputy D. Sablin, who is the leader of the Russian Veterans organization ‘Boevoe bratstvo’ (Brothers in Arms), visited the Orthodox Convent of St. Thecla located in the city of Maaloula, Syria. The delegation was accompanied by Hegumen Arseniy (Sokolov), representative of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia to the Patriarch of Antioch.

In 2014, the convent was seized by terrorists and was in their hands for over a year. At present it is being restored. Boevoe Bratstvo, with the support of the Russian Orthodox Church, has taken an active part in the restoration of the ruined and defiled convent.

At the convent’s gates, the delegation was welcomed by Bishop Ephraim of Seleukeia, vicar of His Beatitude Patriarch of Great Antioch and All the East. Assisted by Father Arseniy, he celebrated a

thanksgiving at the church under restoration.

Mr. Sablin conveyed to Bishop Ephraim a message of greetings from Metropolitan Hilarion and presented him with a large amount of funds for the restoration of the St. Thecla convent.

Father Arseniy, on his part, expressed to the hierarch of the Church of Antioch wishes for a speedy resumption of monastic life in the convent. ‘The Russian Orthodox Church is praying for peace in Syria. We hope that the Most High Lord will resurrect this dead convent and that the monastic community will come back here’, he said.

Then the Russian delegation was taken on a tour of the city. During their trip to Maaloula they were accompanied by Orthodox members of the Syrian Parliament.

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