Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk attends ceremony of transferring to the Serbian Orthodox Church of mosaic decoration for main dome of St. Sava's Cathedral in Belgrade



On 22 February 2018, at the Cathedral of St. Sava in Belgrade, a ceremony was held to mark the transferring to the Serbian Orthodox Church of a mosaic decoration for the cathedral's main dome, which was produced in 2016-17 by a team of the Russian mosaicists led by Nikolai Mukhin, People's Artist of the Russian Federation.

Among those in attendance were His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia, hierarchs of the Serbian Orthodox Church, Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić, Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ivica Dačić, President of Republika Srpska Milorad Dodik, Serbia's Ambassador to Russia Slavenko Terzić, as well as Serbian politicians, public figures, clergymen and journalists.

Taking part in the ceremony were also Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov, Russia's Ambassador to Serbia Alexander Chepurin, Gazpromneft General Director Alexander Dyukov, and other Russian entrepreneurs and diplomats.

With the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, attended the event. On his visit to Belgrade he was accompanied by Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, DECR secretary for inter-Orthodox relations, and Mr. Alexander Yershov, secretary to the DECR chairman.

Metropolitan Hilarion conveyed to all those present greetings from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia. In his address, the archpastor said, in particular:

"When I stepped again under the magnificent vaults of the Church of St. Sava on Vračar today, my heart was filled with deep joy and reverence at the sight of the grand mosaic composition of the Ascension of the Lord, which now adorns the cathedral's dome.

"The mosaic decoration for the main cathedral of the Serbian Orthodox Church is a gift from Russia and its President, from the Russian artists and the Russian Orthodox Church led by her Patriarch, to the Serbian Orthodoxy. For many centuries to come it will be for future generations a sign of fraternal love between the Russian and the Serbian Orthodox Churches and the peoples they shepherd."

After the ceremony, Metropolitan Hilarion met with His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia. They were joined in the meeting by Bishop Irinej of Backa and Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk.

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