



Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church meets with Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to the Russian Federation

On 23 January 2018, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia met with H.E. Leonidas Markides, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Cyprus to the Russian Federation.

They were joined in the meeting, which took place at the Patriarchal and Synodal residence located in St. Daniel's stavropegic monastery, by Archpriest Nikolai Balashov, deputy chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR); Rev. Anatoly Churiakov, a DECR staff member; and Mr. Konstantinos Christofides, a counselor of the Embassy.

His Holiness warmly greeted the guest and said: "Cyprus and Russia are countries close by spirit and faith and have fellow feelings," noting positive dynamics in the development of relations between them, including the economic ones.

Patriarch Kirill emphasized good relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Church of Cyprus. "His Beatitude Archbishop Chrysostomos II of Cyprus visited us twice recently. His last visit was timed to the celebration of the centenary of the re-establishment of the office of Patriarch in the Russian Church. "You, certainly, know, that our President Vladimir Putin received His Beatitude who explained to him the position on the Cyprus problem."The Cyprus problem remains important and painful not only for the state and people of Cyprus, but also for the majority of Orthodox Christians in the world. We monitor all the talks and know the position of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus, and I would like to know your opinion on the prospects of the Cyprus settlement.

His Holiness continued to say: "We rejoice over the construction of a church not far from Nicosia for the Russians as tens of thousands of them who have fellow feelings for Cyprus reside there. It is very important to have the church in which divine services are celebrated in the Slavonic language."

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church noted the traditionally good relations between the two Churches and underscored: "We have no disagreements and appreciate the role played by the Orthodox Church in Cyprus and the authority she enjoyed."

Ambassador Markides conveyed greetings to His Holiness from His Beatitude Archbishop Chrysostomos II and from the President of the Republic of Cyprus, the government and all people of Cyprus. The high guests emphasized the importance of fraternal relations between people of Cyprus and Russia and noted that the Russian diaspora is an integral part of society in Cyprus.

Also discussed were pilgrimages, the return of cultural values taken from the Orthodox churches in the northern part of the island, and also the prospects of re-establishing the unity of Cyprus on the basis of respect for the rights and lawful interests of all nationalities living on the island.

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