



## His Holiness Patriarch Kirill meets with delegation of Bulgarian Orthodox Church



On 6 December 2017, at the Patriarchal and Synodal residence in St. Daniel's Monastery in Moscow, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia met with the delegation of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

The delegation that had arrived in Moscow to take part in the celebrations marking the centenary of the restoration of the Patriarchate in the Russian Church included Metropolitan Gabriel of Lovech, Metropolitan Anthony of Western and Central Europe, Metropolitan Naum of Ruse, Metropolitan Kyprian of Stara Zagora, Bishop Gerasim of Melnik, Archpriest Tsvetan (Ivanov), Archpriest Dimitar Dimitrov, Rev. Ventsislav Pavlov, and Deacon Nedyalko Dimitrov. They were accompanied by Archimandrite Theoktist (Dimitrov), representative of the Patriarch of Bulgaria to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.

Taking part in the meeting were also the following representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church:

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations; Bishop Panteleimon of Orekhovo-Zuyevo, chairman of the Synodal Department for Church Charity and Social Ministry; Archpriest Nikolai Balashov, DECR vice-chairman; Archimandrite Philip (Vasiltsev), representative of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia to the Patriarch of Bulgaria; and Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, DECR secretary for inter-Orthodox relations.

"I would like to thank His Holiness for sending such delegation. It is a great joy to us to celebrate with you, brethren, the centenary of such important historical event as the restoration of the Patriarchate in the Russian Orthodox Church," the Patriarch Kirill said, greeting the guests, "It is already obvious that had not this event happened, little would have been left of the Russian Church. Relying on this, we can state that the institute of the Patriarchate in the Local Orthodox Churches is very important. The Patriarch bears responsibility for the unity, for defining the Church's diverse interests, for strengthening the church witness and enlightening the people of God."

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill also mentioned yet another momentous date – the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Bulgaria which will be celebrated in 2018, and asked the members of the delegation to convey his gratitude to His Holiness Patriarch Neophyte for the invitation to visit the Bulgarian Church. "If the Lord gives me strength, I intend to visit the blessed Bulgarian land," His Holiness said.

The participants in the meeting discussed various issues on the pan-Orthodox agenda.

*DECR Communication Service*

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