



## **Metropolitan Hilarion meets with head of Appeal of Conscience interreligious foundation**

November 22, 2017 – Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations (DECR) and rector of the Ss Cyril and Methodius Institute of Post-graduate Studies (CMI), met with Rabbi Arthur Schneier, president of the American Appeal of Conscience foundation, at the CMI.

Participating in the meeting were also Mr. Steven J. Dorn, secretary-treasurer of the foundation, and Ms Elizabeth Schneier. From the Russian Orthodox Church there were Archpriest Peter Perekrestov and Rev. Dimitry Safonov, DECR secretary for interreligious relations.

The interlocutors discussed the place and role of interreligious dialogue in peacemaking, which has become of current importance in the light of the growing political tension in the world. It was noted that the interaction of religious leaders based on common moral values could make an essential contribution to the mending of Russian-American relations. Rabbi Schneier also stressed the positive role that dialogue between religions plays for creating favourable public conditions and an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

A major point in interreligious interaction is the protection of Christians and people of other traditional religions in the Middle East and Africa against prosecution and the restoration of conditions for their return to their native lands, the participants in the meeting noted. With the practical realization of such cooperation in mind, Metropolitan Hilarion and Rabbi Schneier discussed plans for holding an international conference on this issue.

The Appeal of Conscience Foundation was founded in 1965 with the aim of developing dialogue and good relations between traditional world religions. It is one of the best-known and influential interreligious organizations in the USA. The history of relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the foundation numbers over forty years.

*DECR Communication Service*