



## **DECR chairman meets with head of Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade**



On 13 October 2017, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, met with Mr. Péter Szijjártó, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary.

The meeting took place at the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade during the DECR chairman's visit to Budapest, where he had participated, with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, in the International Consultation "Finding the Appropriate Answers to a Long Neglected Crisis."

Taking part in the meeting were also Mr. Zsolt Csutora, State Secretary of the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov), DECR vice-chairman.

During the meeting, Metropolitan Hilarion emphasized the utmost importance of the problem of persecution and discrimination of Christians in the Middle East for the international community. As the archpastor noted, the preservation of the Christian presence in the lands of the Middle East is essential

for this regions' peaceful and tranquil future. The DECR chairman thanked the authorities of Hungary for their efforts aimed at supporting their suffering brothers and sisters in faith.

In his address at the opening of the conference "Finding the Appropriate Answers to a Long Neglected Crisis," Mr. Viktor Orbán, Prime Minister of Hungary, confirmed the Hungarian authorities' intention to defend the persecuted Christians. The head of the Hungarian Government emphasized that the Hungarian people wanted the Christians, driven out of their native lands, to be able to return as soon as possible to their homes, to the lands where their ancestors had lived for centuries.

The participants in the meeting noted similarity in the positions of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Government of Hungary regarding the defense of the Middle Eastern Christians.

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk expressed his appreciation to the Hungarian Government for devoting attention to the needs of the Moscow Patriarchate's diocese of Budapest and Hungary, in particular, for the assistance in restoring its churches.

The participants in the meeting also exchanged their opinions on various issues of mutual interest.

*DECR Communication Service*

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