Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk meets with President of Lebanon



On 15 September 2017, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, met with Mr. Michel Aoun, President of the Lebanese Republic, at the Presidential palace in Baabda, in the suburb of Lebanon's capital.

Taking part in the meeting were also Metropolitan Niphon of Philippopolis, representative of the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia; Hegumen Arseniy (Sokolov), representative of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia to the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East; Mr. Yacoub Sarraf, Minister of National Defense of Lebanon; Mr. V.L. Maksudov, Chargé d'Affaires ad interim of the Russian Federation in Lebanon; and other officials.

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk warmly greeted the head of the Lebanese Republic on behalf of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia.

The participants in the meeting discussed the situation of Christians in the Middle East. As the DECR

chairman noted, Lebanon is the only country in the Middle East, wherein Christians' rights are safeguarded by the Constitution. The Russian hierarch expressed his hope that the concerted peace-making efforts of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Christians of Lebanon would help preserve and strengthen the Christian presence in the entire region of Middle East.

Metropolitan Hilarion told the head of the Lebanese state about the historic meeting of Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and Pope Francis in Havana last year and emphasized that its major topic was the protection of Christians subjected to persecution in the Middle East and in some African countries.

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