President Vladimir Putin meets with Patriarch Kirill and the Coptic Patriarch Tawadros II



On May 24, 2017, President Vladimir Putin, who came to the patriarchal residence in Chistiy Pereulok to greet His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia on the occasion of his name day, had a talk with him and the Coptic Patriarch, His Holiness Tawadros II.

Addressing the Primate of the Coptic Church, the President of Russia said, ‘Your Holiness, allow me to greet you. The Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia has told me in detail about the Coptic Church and you. The Coptic Church is one of the early Christian Churches. There are 30 million Copts in the world, and 14 million in Egypt. I am especially pleased to note this because we have very good relations with Egypt and with all the Egyptian people, of course, without any division into confessions.

‘Nevertheless, a talk with you, a man who represents Christianity in Egypt, is especially pleasant to us. For us it means a special bond with Egypt. I know that President Albdelfattah el-Sisi, who is a great friend of our country, actively supports the Copts in Egypt. Please, when opportunity offers, convey to

him and certainly all the Egyptian people the best wishes on behalf of Russia'.

In his response, the Primate of the Coptic Church thanked the Russian President for the meeting.

'It is the second time that I come to visit Russia, to meet my beloved brother His Holiness Patriarch Kirill. It is also especially important in connection with the celebrations in honour of St. Nicholas. The relationship between Russia and Egypt are very good ones, and we are proud of it. I can also say that relations between our two Churches are very good. The cooperation in various fields and spheres is developing.

'I thank God that the situation in Egypt is improving with each day. We maintain very good relations with President Sisi, the Egyptian Government and Parliament. We also make efforts to preserve national unity in Egypt between Christians and Muslims.

'I thank you for the welcome and special attitude to Egypt. We will pray that these relations may improve with each day on the both levels, inter-governmental and inter-church'.

'I attach a great importance to the development of inter-church relations', President Putin said, 'You have mentioned the relics of St. Nicholas. This event has become possible thanks to the agreements reached during the meeting between the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia and the Pope of Rome. It is a great event for the Orthodox faithful in Russia', he stressed, 'We are very grateful to the Pope of Rome and the Holy See for the decision made at the Patriarch's request.

'The Church plays a very important role in bringing nations closer together. In your case, it is the most vivid manifestation of the very beneficial tendency of today', President Putin noted.

Later that day, President Putin visited the Church of Christ the Saviour in Moscow to venerate the relics of St. Nicholas the Wonderworker.

Patriarchal Press Service

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