



DECR chairman meets with newly-appointed Croatian Ambassador to Russia

On 19 April 2017, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, met with His Excellency Mr. Tonči Staničić, newly-appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Croatia to the Russian Federation. They were joined in the meeting by Archpriest Sergy Zvonarev, DECR secretary for far-abroad countries.

Metropolitan Hilarion greeted the head of Croatia's diplomatic mission at the synodal institution responsible for international contacts of the Russian Orthodox Church and shared with the guest his impressions of his visits to Croatia and his meetings with the country's leadership. The DECR chairman and Mr. Staničić discussed the situation of Orthodoxy in Croatia and the relationships between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church in Croatia.

Among other issues raised at the meeting was the social and political situation in the Balkans, as well as manifestations of ethnic and religious tension in the region. As Metropolitan Hilarion noted, acts of vandalism are still being committed against the Orthodox churches. According to the Russian hierarchy, it is very important to overcome the inter-ethnic conflicts caused by the breakup of Yugoslavia. The participants in the meeting emphasized a significant role of Churches in promoting reconciliation in the Balkans.

To conclude the meeting, Metropolitan Hilarion wished the high-ranking Croatian diplomat God's help and every success in his service.

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