DECR chairman meets with Ambassador of Canada to the Russian Federation



On 24 March 2017, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR), met with H.E. John Kerr, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Canada to the Russian Federation. Archpriest Sergy Zvonarev, DECR secretary for far abroad countries, attended the meeting.

DECR chairman welcomed Ambassador Kerr at the Synodal department responsible for international contacts of the Russian Orthodox Church and thanked him for his openness to dialogue.

Ambassador Kerr appreciated an opportunity to visit for the first time St. Daniel's Monastery and the DECR. He spoke of the current relations between Canada and Russia and his attention to the life of the Church in Russia and relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Church in America. The Ambassador shared his impressions of the visit to the Solovki monastery, of its architectural ensemble, divine services and monastic life. Metropolitan Hilarion explained the difficult

times in the history of this holy place which was used as a concentration camp, serving a sentence of imprisonment there were also bishops, priests and laymen who were later canonized by the Russian Orthodox Church.

Metropolitan Hilarion told the guests about the preparation for the historical meeting of Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia with Pope Francis on 12 February 2016 and its results. DECR chairman spoke in detail about the situation in the Middle East and tragic consequences of the destabilization of social and political regimes in the region which has brought about the suffering of Christians and the ousting of the believers from home. DECR chairman and Ambassador Kerr agreed that extremism and terrorism are spreading from the Middle East and that humanitarian catastrophe's consequences are unpredictable. The problem of the radicalization of society was also discussed.

Metropolitan Hilarion wished Ambassador Kerr God's aid and success in his diplomatic mission in Russia.

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