# Reception in conclusion of celebration of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill's 70th birthday takes place at the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour

On 22 November 2016, a festive reception to mark the 70th birthday of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia took place at the Refectory Chamber of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour after the jubilee concert.

Dmitry Medvedev, Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, greeted the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church, saying in particular: 'His Holiness the Patriarch brilliantly fulfils his primatial duty, setting an example of the protector and defender of our Motherland. Patriarch Kirill possesses an encyclopedic knowledge, dutifully solves problems with prayers, enjoys respect of millions people, and is an exceptionally authoritative leader if the Russian Orthodox Church. Our communication always gives me joy as it is interesting and helpful. I would like to congratulate His Holiness on his birthday on behalf of all those present.'

Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos Karekin II of All Armenians congratulated Patriarch Kirill on behalf of the Armenian Church and all its members and emphasized: 'We know you as a selfless servant of the Church of Christ. You were called to this service when faith had been persecuted throughout our multinational state and the Church and clergymen had been repressed. During hard times of militant atheism you have devoted yourself to the Russian Orthodox Church and have made a great contribution to the consolidation of religious life. Having been called to the Patriarchal ministry you are continuing you zealous activity for the sake of spiritual revival of your flock. As a champion of traditional Christian values you have greatly contributed to the development of inter-church and inter-religious relations. Millions of people see you as a tireless preacher and archpastor who brings the word of God to people and an advocate of peace and accord among nations.'

Sheikh ul-Islam Allashukur Pashazade, head of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, said in his address: 'As a co-chairman of the Interreligious Council of the Commonwealth of Independent States, I greet you and congratulate you on your jubilee on behalf of all Muslims living in the post-Soviet space. We have cooperated with you for over twenty years and bridged over many difficulties together. All the believers in the post-Soviet space, irrespective of their religious or national identity look at you as at their aqsaqal, as we say in the Caucasus, as their head man.'

Sheikh Pashazade conveyed greetings from President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan and all people of the

country to the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Both the head of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus and the head of the Armenian Apostolic Church noted the mediating role played by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill for the attainment of a just and peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Invited to the festive reception were Primates and representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches, members of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, heads of church institutions, representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate in the foreign countries, abbots of the monasteries, delegations of the Holy See, the Armenian Apostolic Church, Administration of the Muslims of the Caucasus, heads of the traditional religions of Russia, senior staff of the RF Presidential Administration, leaders and members of the RF government and of the Federation Council, leaders of fractions and deputies of the RF State Duma, governors of the Russian regions, representatives of the Moscow and Moscow region authorities, ambassadors and staff members of the embassies, representatives of the public and charity organizations and business community, educators, academic figures and workers of culture.

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