



## His Holiness Patriarch Kirill meets with Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians



On 22 November 2016, at the Patriarchal residence in St Daniel's Monastery, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia met with His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians.

Among those who took part in the meeting were also Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations; Bishop Kliment of Krasnoslobodsk and Temnikov; Archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov), DECR vice-chairman; and Hieromonk Stefan Igumnov, DECR secretary for inter-Christian relations.

His Holiness Patriarch Karekin II was accompanied by Archbishop Ezras Nersisyan, head of the Russian and Nor Nakhichevan diocese; Archbishop Nathan Hovhannisian, director of the External Relations and Protocol Department of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin; Rev. Shahe Ananyan, head of the Interchurch Relations Department of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin; Rev. Vagrat Melikyan,

head of the Press Office of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin; and Hieromonk Agan Yernyakan.

“It is always a great joy for us to see you in Moscow and to meet with you,” His Holiness Patriarch Kirill said, greeting the head of the Armenian Apostolic Church, “Our historical ties that benefited greatly our peoples in past are so strong today that I do not even know where there more Armenians living now, in Armenia or in Russia.” His Holiness noted that the Armenian diaspora was an integral part of the Russian society and emphasized that the interchurch relations played a key role in it, always fostering the fraternal relations between the two peoples.

“By God’s mercy, we can say today that the historical journey of our two nations has, indeed, been remarkable and often heroic,” the Primate of the Russian Church continued, “We have been together not in joy only, but also in sorrow. Living in one country, we defended our homeland from fascism – the most terrible enemy ever. Many Armenians were the Soviet Union heroes – outstanding sons of the Armenian people and of our common homeland that we protected.”

The head of the Armenian Apostolic Church congratulated His Holiness Patriarch Kirill on his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, saying in particular, “Your jubilee has brought together not only the Russian Orthodox clergy, but also the Primates of other Churches. It is a sign of love and respect that you have won in the Christian world; as well as of appreciation for your efforts to uphold Christian values and Christianity in general.”

As Patriarch Karekin II noted, the Russian Orthodox Church is undergoing the spiritual revival, making its considerable contribution to the peacemaking mission. “We appreciate your personal efforts aimed at defending the rights of Christians in the Middle East and at restoring peace and stability in our region,” the head of the Armenian Church said.

His Holiness Patriarch Karekin II also emphasized that the brotherly relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Armenian Apostolic Church had grown closer over the years of Patriarch Kirill’s Primatial ministry. “Our people have particular love and respect for you,” he added, “No doubt, all the efforts that we make to strengthen our relationships also help promote cooperation between our peoples, and we believe that this friendship will accompany them in the new millennium as well.”

*DECR Communication Service*

*Photo by the Patriarchal Press Service*