



## His Holiness Patriarch Kirill meets with His Beatitude Archbishop Chrysostomos of Cyprus



On 21 November 2016, at the Patriarchal residence in St Daniel's Monastery, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia met with His Beatitude Archbishop Chrysostomos of Nova Justiniana and All Cyprus.

The Primate of the Orthodox Church of Cyprus who had arrived in Moscow to take part in the celebrations marking the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill was accompanied by Metropolitan Isaïas of Tamasos and Oreini, Bishop Nektarios of Arsinoë, and deacon Kyprianos Kunduris.

Representing the Russian Orthodox Church were also Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations; Bishop Simon of Shakhty and Millerovo; archpriest Nikolai Balashov, DECR vice-chairman; archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, DECR secretary for inter-Orthodox relations; and Rev. Anatoly Churyakov, DECR interpreter.

Greeting the guests, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill thanked them for taking part in the celebrations and noted that the Russian people felt particular affection for the people of Cyprus. “We share the Cypriots’ grief over the division of their homeland. We know that the Orthodox Church of Cyprus takes a principled stand on the settlement of the Cyprus problem, and we believe that any solution must, first of all, imply the restoration of justice. Over the time passed since the division, great changes have occurred in some cities where the Greeks used to live. Today there is almost no Greek population left there; churches and monasteries have been destroyed. We know what the ruined churches and monasteries mean – we had that dreadful experience. We are grieving together with the Cypriots over what happened in the past, and hope for the peaceful and just settlement of the Cyprus problem.”

As His Holiness emphasized, the Church of Cyprus historically plays a very important role in the life of the Cyprian people who have preserved their national identity thanks, to a large extent, to the Orthodox Church that continues to shepherd them today.

“I have warm recollections of my visit to Cyprus,” the Primate of the Russian Church said, “I saw how many young people attended the divine services, how many faithful came to pray to churches on Sundays. It is yet another sign of importance of the Orthodoxy for the Cyprian people.”

His Beatitude Archbishop Chrysostomos thanked His Holiness Patriarch Kirill for the invitation to the celebrations and expressed his appreciation to the Russian Orthodox Church for the ongoing support rendered to the Cyprian people and to the Republic of Cyprus. His Beatitude also thanked Patriarch Kirill for promoting the relationships between the two Churches.

As His Beatitude noted, thousands of the Russian people living in Cyprus make a considerable contribution to the economy of the country. Archbishop Chrysostomos told the participants in the meeting that some time ago he had decided to help his fellow-villagers. They wanted to build a new church since the old one, dating back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, could not accommodate all the parishioners. As His Beatitude said, they managed to achieve their dream with the assistance of representatives of the Russian community.

Among the issues discussed at the meeting were the relationships between the peoples of Cyprus and Russia, as well as the interchurch and pan-Orthodox cooperation.

*DECR Communication Service*