Patriarchal greetings to Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk on the occasion of his 50th birthday

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia greeted Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations (DECR), on the occasion of his 50th birthday.

To the Most Rev. Hilarion

Metropolitan of Volokolamsk

Chairman of the Department for External Church Relation

Permanent Member of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church

Your Eminence,

I cordially greet you on the occasion of the auspicious date – your 59th birthday.

Having come to love things heavenly more then things earthly, you have devoted your life to the service of the Holy Church and today have an opportunity to give filial thanks to God for His generous blessings that He sent down to you in the past time.

For over a quarter of a century you have sought to be a zealous worker in the Vineyard of Christ. It is gratifying to testify that in every place of your service you thoroughly and responsibly fulfill the tasks entrusted to you by the Supreme Authority. As chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, you take part in many international meetings and maintain dialogue with representatives of various cultures and traditions, religious views and beliefs. Much effort is required of you as rector of the Ss Cyril and Methodius Institute of Post-Graduate Studies, the leading educational institution that trains highly educated clergy and workers of the Church of Christ. No less significant is your contribution to the work as chairman of the editorial board of the Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate.

I would like to commend your work to illuminate our contemporaries with the light of the Gospel's truth, to defend traditional moral values, including through the mass media and musical creative work.

In recognition of your zealous service and on the occasion of your 50th birthday, I believe it fair to award

you the Order of St. Alexis, Metropolitan of Moscow, 2nd degree.

I prayerfully wish you spiritual and physical strength, God's help and success in your further work for the glory of the Holy Church.

May the Lord preserve you in good health for many years.

With love in Christ,

+ KIRILL

PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUSSIA

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