Metropolitan Hilarion meets with members of World Coordination Council of Russian Compatriots



On 1 June 2016, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Department for External Church Relations (DECR), met with the members of the World Coordination Council of Russian Compatriots who arrived in Moscow for the Council's 26th meeting organized by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They represented the compatriots' organizations in China, Moldova, Madagascar, Latvia, the United Arab Emirates, Kyrgyzstan, Canada, Greece, Israel, Brazil, Venezuela, Jordan, Ukraine, Cyprus, Australia, Germany, Portugal, Armenia, Luxemburg, Kazakhstan, Norway, Mexico, Tunisia, Singapore and Italy.

Also taking part in the meeting that took place at the DECR premises were Bishop Antony of Bogorodsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Administration for Institutions Abroad; hierodeacon Roman (Kiselev) of the DECR Secretariat for far abroad countries; Mr. Anatoly Makarov, director of the Department for interaction with compatriots abroad of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, his deputies V. Goncharenko and S. Nikolayev, and Ms O. Tsareva, counselor of the Department.

Metropolitan Hilarion welcomed the participants on behalf of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, saying in particular:

‘Our meeting offers a good opportunity to discuss the life of the compatriots living abroad and the preservation of the spiritual and cultural heritage.

‘The Russian Orthodox Church gives full attention to the spiritual support of our brothers and sisters living abroad as we see them as an integral part of our nation. We care for our flock in the Fatherland and also for those who have chosen another place of residence but have kept the faith and religious traditions. The Church has always shared joys and sorrows of her children, including those in diaspora.

‘Millions of our compatriots have found themselves in different corners of the world, but there is something that unites them: faith, culture, traditions of the forefathers and the Russian language. It is on this foundation that diaspora in far abroad can be consolidated. The strong community of compatriots helps develop relations among nations, consolidate peace and render assistance to concrete people in their needs.’

Metropolitan Hilarion told the audience about the DECR’s work with compatriots and gave statistic of parishes and monasteries in far abroad. He noted constructive cooperation of the DECR with the Department for interaction with compatriots abroad and said that the annual round tables ‘The Russian Orthodox Church and Compatriots: Experience of Cooperation in Different Regions of the World’ gave a good example to this.

Concluding his address Metropolitan Hilarion called the participants to keep faith and unity and uphold ties with the Motherland. At the end of the4 meeting he gave answers to many questions.

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