Patriarch Kirill visits Jose Marti Memorial and meets with Chairman of Cuban State Council



On February 12, 2016, the second day of his visit to Cuba, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia visited the Jose Marti Memorial in the Square of the Revolution in Havana.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church laid a wreath at the memorial to Cuba's national hero. Then he saw the halls of the memorial and signed the Book of Honoured Guests.

His Holiness was accompanied by Rojelio Sierra, deputy minister of foreign affairs, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations (DECR), Metropolitan Anthony of Borispol and Brovary, chancellor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and Bishop Sergiy of Solnechnogorsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate administrative secretariat.

After that, Patriarch Kirill met with Raul Castro Ruz, Chairman of the State Council and Council of Ministers, at the Palace of the Revolution.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church and the head of the state of Cuba exchanged greetings at

the Sun of America hall. Among the attendees from the Russian Orthodox Church were Metropolitan Hilarion, Russian Ambassador M. Kamynin, Metropolitan Anthony of Borispol and Brovary and Bishop Sergiy of Solnechnogorsk. The Republic of Cuba was represented by Mr. Miguel Diaz-Cannel Bermudez, first vice-chairman of the State Council and the Council of Ministers, Mr. Esteban Laze Hernandez, chairman of the People's Assembly and Mr. Bruno Rodriguez Padilla, minister of foreign affairs.

There was a lively exchange of opinions. In particular, they discussed international relations issues. Among the topics was the forthcoming unprecedented meeting between the Pope of Rome and the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.

After the conversation, Raul Castro and Patriarch Kirill exchanged presents. Mr. Raul Castro presented His Holiness with a bas-relief image of the Holy Protomartyr George the Conqueror. Patriarch Kirill presented the Chairman of the State Council with a table icon of the Protecting Veil of the Most Holy Mother of God and a copy of his book *Freedom and Responsibility* in Spanish.

In conclusion of the meeting, Patriarch Kirill warmly thanked Mr. Raul Castro for the hospitality.

Later that day, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill met with His Eminence Jaime Lucas Cardinal Ortega y Alumina, Archbishop of San Cristobal de la Habana, at Havana's international airport.

Then His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia met at the airport with His Holiness Pope Francis of Rome, who made a stop at the airport on his way to Mexico. As a result of their conversation, a Common Declaration was adopted.

Official events with the participation of the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church have been broadcast by Cuba's national television.

On February 13, Patriarch Kirill will visit the children's rehabilitation centre 'Solidarity with Panama' in Havana.

Patriarchal Press Service

DECR Communication Service

Photos by the Patriarchal Press Service

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