



Representatives of Dutch embassy in Moscow visit Department for External Church Relations

May 27, 2015 – Archpriest Sergiy Zvonarev, DECR secretary for the far abroad, met at the DECR with representatives of the Royal Dutch Embassy in Moscow, Ms. Maaïke van Koldam, counsellor, and Mr. Gregory Dempke, expert of the Embassy's political department.

The DECR representative warmly welcomed the guests on behalf of the DECR chairman, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk. The diplomats asked him to tell them about the work of the Department for External Church Relations, the present situation of the Russian Orthodox Church and its place and role in society, its relations with the state, social service and educational projects.

Special attention was given to the topic of growing migration flows and its implications for international relations and inter-cultural communication. It was noted that the strengthening and consistent advance of extremist organizations in the Middle East and North Africa present a threat to the native population of the region, with many Christians among them who have to flee and seek asylum in safe countries, including in Europe.

They also discussed the theme of traditional values and Christian morality in today's European society as they are subjected to strong pressure from secular forces which assert liberal standards in public, family and private life.

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