



Reception given in honour of Patriarch Kirill in conclusion of his visit to Serbia

November 16, 2014 – A reception was given in Belgrade by His Holiness Patriarch Irenaeus of Serbia in honour of the visit of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia. It was attended by the official delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church, bishops and priests of the Serbian Orthodox Church as well as political and public leaders in Serbia.

Patriarch Irenaeus warmly thanked Patriarch Kirill for his visit to the Serbian Orthodox Church, saying in particular, “You have seen with your own eyes how much our people respect, value and love the holy Russian land, the Russian people and the Russian Church”. He also said that the Russian Church “always helped us when it was necessary”, recalling Russia’s and the Russian Church’s participation in overcoming the consequences of the disastrous flood that hit Serbia last May.

Patriarch Irenaeus invested the members of the ROC delegation with high church awards. Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, speaking on behalf of the delegation, thanked His Holiness for the honour.

He stated among many events, which took place during Patriarch Kirill’s visit to the Serbian Orthodox Church to make not only church but also world history, was the opening of a monument to a Russian tsar. “It is difficult to overestimate the significance of this event as at a time when the forces of evil once again have turned against Russia, the fraternal Serbia has erected a monument to a Russian tsar in the center of its capital city”, he said.

“Historians argue today whether Nicholas II was right or wrong when he let Russia be drawn into World War I. But we know that the logic of family relations is different from that of political ones. A Russian tsar could not do otherwise. He would not have been a Russian tsar if he had not risen in defence of Serbia. I wish that we all remember this day and the people, beginning from the tsar to ordinary soldiers who gave their lives for our unity and brotherhood, that we never fear any external threats and by all means defend and reinforce this brotherhood between the two Orthodox nations – Serbian and Russian”.

In his address to the gathering, Patriarch Kirill expressed the conviction that Russia and Serbia will continue preserving friendly and fraternal relations in the future, “remembering that those who died for this friendship and brotherhood pray to the Lord together with us”.

After the reception Patriarch Kirill went to the airport, where he was seen off by Patriarch Irenaeus, Russian Ambassador A. Chepurin, Byelorussian Ambassador V. Chushev, and bishops and priests of

the Serbian Church. His Holiness once again thanked Patriarch Irenaeus and the Serbian authorities for the warm hospitality and fellowship.

Patriarchal Press Service

DECR Communication Service

Source: <https://mospat.ru/en/news/50898/>