His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia arrives in Belgrade



On 14 November 2014, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia began his official visit to the Serbian Orthodox Church.

Accompanying His Holiness Patriarch Kirill on his visit are Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations; Bishop Sergiy of Solnechnogorsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Administrative Secretariat; Mr. Vladimir Legoida, chairman of the Synodal Information Department; archpriest Nikolai Balashov, DECR vice-chairman; archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, DECR secretary for inter-Orthodox relations; protodeacon Vladimir Nazarkin, assistant to the DECR chairman; archpriest Andrei Milkin, head of the Patriarchal Protocol Service; and deacon Alexander Volkov, head of the Patriarchal Press Office.

At the Nikola Tesla Airport in Belgrade the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church was met by His

Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia; Mr. Ivica Dačić, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia; hierarchs and clergymen of the Serbian Church; H.E. Alexander Chepurin, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Serbia; H.E. Vladimir Chushev, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Belarus to the Republic of Serbia; and archpriest Vitaly Tarasjev, rector of the Metochion of the Russian Church in Belgrade.

After the solemn ceremony of meeting, the Primates of the Serbian and Russian Orthodox Churches spoke to representatives of the mass media.

His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia cordially thanked His Holiness Patriarch Kirill, who had arrived on a peace visit to the Serbian Church, and noted that Serbia and Russia, the Serbian and the Russian peoples always had special fraternal relations.

In his response, the Primate of the Russian Church said:

“Thank you, Your Holiness, for the kind words with which you have met me at the Belgrade airport. I would like to express the feeling of great and sincere joy when I as Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia step in this land so dear for the Russian heart.

“When a Russian comes to Serbia, he feels really at home. The common faith, culture and very close historical ties, common blood which was shed for common victories – all this bounds up our peoples. And these are not just words that we use when talking to each other. These words express our historical, spiritual and cultural reality.

“Our community is based on a common faith, common system of moral values, and love of our native land, people and neighbours. This is what creates our affinity. And the Church is called to help people to unite, to preserve peace, and in this sense the visits of heads of Orthodox Churches to each other have a great importance for both the two Churches and the peoples who are part of these Churches.

“I hope that our joint prayers and talks will help us to go forward with ever greater confidence, reaching out to each other and opening our hearts.

I would like to wish peace, prosperity and tranquility to the Serbian Orthodox Church, to the Serbian people and to the Serbian state”.

From the airport the Primates of the Russian and Serbian Orthodox Churches proceeded to the Cathedral of St. Michael in Belgrade.

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