



## **DECR chairman congratulates Thorbjorn Jagland on his re-election as Secretary General of the Council of Europe**

*Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, sent the following greeting to Thorbjorn Jagland:*

Dear Mr. Jagland:

Please accept my congratulation on your re-election as Secretary General of the Council of Europe. You have been again entrusted with a responsible ministry for the good of all-European cooperation.

Today, when the unity of the European civilization is being tested to the limit, people on our continent expect public and political figures to respect their traditions and choice of world outlook. The Christian faith has played an important part in the shaping of fundamental values in many European countries. Despite a new approach to the ethical issues, the followers of the traditional Christian confessions stand up for their freedom in expressing and defending their attitude to the beginning and the end of human life without discrimination. The Russian Orthodox Church looks forward to your defence of the freedom of religious conviction and of the right to openly participate in discussing all important issues, including the problems of ethics and the safeguarding of peace.

I hope for your support of the efforts undertaken in this regard by the Representation of the Russian Orthodox Church in Strasbourg.

I wish you success in your work for the good of all European nations.

Respectfully,

**/+ Hilarion/**

**Metropolitan of Volokolamsk**

**Chairman**

**Department for External Church Relations**

**Moscow Patriarchate**

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