



DECR chairman meets with Patriarch of the Syrian Catholic Church

On 6 June 2014, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR), met with the Patriarch of Antioch and All the East of the Syrian Catholic Church, Mor Ignatius Joseph III Younan, who was on a visit to St. Petersburg and Moscow together with a group of pilgrims.

Metropolitan Hilarion warmly greeted the guests at the DECR premises on behalf of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and noted a particular importance of His Holiness' visit to Syria and Lebanon in 2011, when he met with the Catholic Patriarchs of the Middle East. The DECR chairman underscored that the protection of Christians in the region drawn in the armed conflict is a priority for the Russian Orthodox Church. Her authorities try to do anything possible to help Christians by rendering them spiritual support and material aid and by taking part in the processes of peaceful settlement of the conflict.

Patriarch Joseph III Younan thanked Metropolitan Hilarion for hospitality and expressed deep gratitude to him and to Patriarch Kirill for the efforts undertaken by the Moscow Patriarchate for supporting the suffering Christians. As political and religious leaders of the West do not pay enough attention to the situations of Christians in the region, Christians in the Middle East are particularly grateful to Russia and the Russian Church for defending their interests and aid.

Metropolitan Hilarion assured the high guests that the Moscow Patriarchate in close cooperation with the Russian state will exert efforts for the achievement of peace and wellbeing of Christians in the Middle East.

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