



## **Working group for cooperation between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation holds its 19th meeting**



On 6 June 2014, the 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Working Group for cooperation between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation took place at the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR) under the chairmanship of its head, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, and Mr. Grigory Karasin, deputy minister of foreign affairs of the Russian Federation.

Taking part in the meeting on behalf of the Russian Orthodox Church were also archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin, chairman of the Synodal Department for Church-Society Relations; archpriest Nikolai Balashov and archimandrite Philaret (Bulekov), DECR vice-chairmen; archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, DECR secretary for Inter-Orthodox relations; archpriest Sergiy Zvonarev, DECR secretary for far abroad countries; hieromonk Stefan (Igumnov), DECR secretary for Inter-Christian relations, Rev. Dimitry Safonov, head of the DECR sector for inter-religious contacts; and other DECR staff members.

The participants discussed various aspects of the joint work carried out since the previous meeting, including the problems of the deepening crisis in Ukraine; persecution of Christians in various parts of the world, and support of compatriots living abroad.

Priority directions of cooperation for the nearest future were outlined.

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