



## **DECR chairman meets with Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico**



On 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR), currently on a visit to Mexico with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, met with Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Carlos Alberto de Icaza Gonzáles.

The high-ranking diplomat warmly greeted Metropolitan Hilarion at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and noted the importance of his visit for the strengthening of relations between the people of Russia and Mexico.

Taking part in the meeting were Archbishop Antonio, Metropolitan of Mexico, Venezuela, Central America, and the Caribbean (Patriarchate of Antioch); Archbishop Justinian of Naro-Fominsk, administrator of the Patriarchal parishes in the USA; H.E. Eduard Malayan, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the United Mexican States, and Mr. Miguel Palacio, a

staff member of the DECR secretariat for far abroad countries.

The situation of Christians in the Middle East countries was discussed. The DECR chairman expressed concern over it and elaborated on the Moscow Patriarchate's efforts taken for the protection of Christians in the Middle East from discrimination and persecution. Metropolitan Hilarion hopes that the government of Mexico will play a more active part in the international campaign for upholding the rights of Christian minority in the Middle East to peaceful life and free profession of their faith.

That same day Metropolitan Hilarion visited the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, where the icon of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the main relic of Latin America, is housed.

In the evening, Metropolitan Hilarion, accompanied by Metropolitan Antonio, visited the Cathedral of the Assumption of Mary, the Metropolitan Cathedral of Mexico.

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