Holy Synod grants petition of Metropolitan Philaret of Minsk and Slutsk for retirement

On December 25, 2013, the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church has begun its last session in this year at the Synodal Hall of the Patriarchal and Synodal Residence at St. Daniel's Monastery, Moscow.

The Synod held the second discussion on the petition for retirement handed in by His Eminence Filaret, Metropolitan of Minsk and Slutsk, Patriarchal Exarch for All Belarus, as he has reached the age of 75.

The Holy Synod resolved:

1. That the petition be granted;
2. That cordial gratitude be expressed to His Eminence Metropolitan Filaret for his 35 year-long archpastoral care of Belarus marked with outstanding ecclesial achievements as he has opened 10 dioceses, increased the number of parishes many times, opened new monasteries and theological schools, established good and constructive dialogue with the state authorities and public organizations, maintained an adequate level of inter-confessional relations and participated in the external work of the Moscow Patriarchate.
3. That, considering the above-mentioned, His Eminence Metropolitan Filaret be appointed honorary Patriarchal Exarch for All Belarus retaining the right to participate in the work of the Holy Synod and an honorary place during divine service and official ceremonies.
4. That Belarus's President Alexander G. Lukashenko be thanked for the willingness to ensure for His Eminence Metropolitan Filaret an accommodation and adequate level of household and medical service.

The Synod also resolves:

1. That Metropolitan Pavel of Ryazan and Mikhailovskoye be appointed Metropolitan of Minsk and Slutsk.
2. That Metropolitan Veniamin of Penza and Nizhny Lomov be Metropolitan of Ryazan and Mikhailovskoye.
3. That Bishop Seraphim of Kuznetsk and Nikolsk be Bishop of Penza and Nizhny Lomov and entrusted with temporary administration of the Diocese of Kuznetsk

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