



## Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk is honoured with the State Order of Hungary



On 16<sup>th</sup> December 2013, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, met with the Deputy Prime Minister of Hungary, Zsolt Semjén, at the building of the Parliament.

Metropolitan Hilarion thanked Zsolt Semjén for the invitation to visit Hungary, where he stayed in 2003-09 as administrator of the Moscow Patriarchate's Diocese of Budapest and Hungary. They exchanged opinions on a wide range of questions pertaining to relations between Russia and Hungary and between the Russian Orthodox Church and other Christian confessions.

After the meeting, an awarding ceremony took place. Metropolitan Hilarion was honoured with the Commander's Cross of the Order of Merit of Hungary, a highest award of the country, by the decree of President of Hungary, János Áder, 'for contribution to the strengthening of inter-Christian dialogue, protection of Christians in the modern world, upholding of the fundamental moral principles of the Holy

Scriptures, defence of the institute of family, the outstanding achievements in the ecclesiastical diplomatic mission, and the work done for the deepening of cooperation between the historical Churches of Hungary and the Russian Orthodox Church.'

In his address Mr. Zsolt Semjén underscored that close spiritual bonds united Metropolitan Hilarion with Hungary and named his numerous achievements.

After the ceremony, Deputy Prime Minister of Hungary gave a luncheon in honour of the chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations.

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