



**THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH**

Department for External Church Relations

## **Metropolitan Hilarion meets with Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein**



On 16 November 2013, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, arrived in Vaduz, the capital of the Principality of Liechtenstein, with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, to take part in the international colloquium on the Syrian crisis.

On the day of arrival, Metropolitan Hilarion visited the Vaduz Castle and met with Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein.

Metropolitan Hilarion conveyed greetings and best wishes to the reigning Prince from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia.

The DECR chairman told the Prince about his recent trip to Lebanon and about the anxiety of the Lebanese Christian politicians they have shared with him. He underscored that the situation of Christians in the Middle East is catastrophic. In certain countries one can see a full-scale persecution against Christians: many were killed, and thousands had to leave their homes. Christians used to coexist with the Muslims in the Middle East for centuries, but the situation has changed, and radical forces are in the forefront now. The escalation of radicalism is a direct consequence of external intervention, Metropolitan Hilarion said and gave an example of Iraq, where one and a half million Christians have lived recently, but now there is only a small number of them there, while in Libya there are almost no Christians living at present.

Metropolitan Hilarion spoke of a particular pain and anxiety of the Russian Orthodox Church over the situation in Syria, where Christian population is deliberately exterminated, Christian churches are destroyed, and the holy sites desecrated. The DECR chairman called for the strict adherence to the recommendations given by the European Parliament to the Western countries in 2011 to render economic and political support to the Middle East countries only in exchange for the security of Christian population. Unfortunately, he underscored, the resolution has remained ink on paper.

Metropolitan Hilarion expressed concern over de-Christianization of Europe, denial of many European states to adhere to Christian moral principles and the destruction of the institute of family under the influence of secular ideology.

The reigning Prince of Liechtenstein shared with Metropolitan Hilarion his vision of the situation in the Middle East and in Western Europe, and told him about priorities in his political activity as a head of the state.