



## **Patriarch Kirill meets with Cuban ambassador**

On April 16, 2013, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia met with Cuba's newly appointed ambassador to Russia, Emilio Lozada Garcia, at the Throne Hall of the Church of Christ the Saviour.

Welcoming the guest, Patriarch Kirill noted, 'You are to fulfil a very important mission. As an ambassador of your country, you are to promote the development of Russian-Cuban relations. The history of these relations goes far back in the past to the pre-revolutionary time. A special page in this history is written in the Soviet time when many people in the Soviet Union tied their life with Cuba'.

Patriarch Kirill told his guest that he had several meetings with the leader of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro, and the Chairman of the State Council and Council of Ministers, Raul Castro, in particular, in 2008, when he came to Havana to consecrate a church of Our Lady of Kazan. His Holiness asked the ambassador to convey to them his greeting and best wishes.

He also said that the Russian church in Havana became the center for the Russian-speaking community in Cuba. 'The construction of this church has been one of the brightest pages in Russian-Cuban relations in recent times. I am glad that there are good relations shaping between the Moscow Patriarchate and Cuba', he said.

'On our part, we will do everything to help develop relations between our countries and peoples. In the person of the Russian Church you have a partner who, on the basis of her religious premises, considers it important to develop relations between our nations', he said.

Mr Emilio Lozada Garcia conveyed a greeting from the Chairman of the State Council and Prime Minister Raul Castro and his wish to see the Primate of the Russian Church as a guest in Cuba.

He thanked Patriarch Kirill for the opportunity to meet, saying, 'We remember the contribution the Russian Orthodox Church and you personally have made to Russian-Cuban relations. We are very glad that there is an Orthodox church in Cuba. For us it is a great honour'.

*DECR Communication Service*

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