



Diplomats and church representatives attend Christmas dinner at Russian Foreign Ministry's Reception House

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On 13 February 2013, traditional Christmas dinner took place at the Reception House of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Attending the reception on the part of the Russian Orthodox Church were Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations; archpriest Nikolai Balashov and hegumen Philaret (Bulekov), DECR vice-chairmen; archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, DECR secretary for inter-Orthodox relations; and archpriest Sergy Zvonarev, DECR secretary for far abroad countries. Representing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were Mr. Grigory Karasin, state secretary and deputy foreign minister of the Russian Federation; Mr. Oleg Vasnetsov, director of the department for relations with the Federation constituent regions, the Parliament and public organizations (DSPO); Mr. Viktor Sorokin, director of the 2nd CIS department; Mr. Alexei Pavlovsky, director of the 3rd CIS department; and Mr. Roman Romanov, head of a DSPO office.

The participants in the meeting discussed various issues of cooperation between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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