



## **His Holiness Patriarch Kirill receives H.E. Mr. Ajai Malhotra, Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of India to Russia**

[gallery]

On 29 November 2012, at the Patriarchal residence in St Daniel's Monastery, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia met with H.E. Mr. Ajai Malhotra, Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of India to Russia. Taking part in the meeting were the DECR vice-chairman, hegumen Philaret (Bulekov), and the second secretary of the Indian Embassy's Political Wing, Mr. Mayang Singh.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill greeted the guest and expressed his appreciation of the experience Mr. Ajai Malhotra has gained while working in the Soviet Union and Russia and also of his knowledge of the Russian language.

Mr. Malhotra said he has lived in Russia for many years and is well aware of good relations between the two countries. He also reminded the participants in the meeting that this year marks the fifty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Russia and India.

The Indian diplomat shared with Patriarch Kirill his impressions of his trips to Russian cities and towns, saying: "I travel a lot and I like to visit your churches and take picture of them; they are very beautiful. I saw the Church-on-the-Blood in Yekaterinburg and visited Solovki." Mr. Malhotra said that over thirty million Christians are living in India.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill recalled that as chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations he often visited India, New Delhi and some other Indian cities and towns and met with representatives of various religious traditions. "We have been cooperating with many Indian Christians at the international level, at the level of international organizations," the Primate of the Russian Church added.