Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk meets with Patriarch Theodoros II of Alexandria and All Africa

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On 23 July 2012, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, while in Egypt on a short working visit with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, met with His Beatitude Pope and Patriarch Theodoros II of Alexandria and All Africa at his official residence in Alexandria.

Participating in the meeting were Bishop Gabriel of Mareotis, Chief Secretary of the Holy Synod, Patriarchate of Alexandria; Bishop Nicodemus of Nitria, Patriarchal vicar in Cairo; archimandrite Leonid (Gorbachev), representative of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia to the Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa; and archimandrite Apostolos (Trifillis), head of the Personal Secretariat of the Patriarch of Alexandria. Accompanying Metropolitan Hilarion were Orthodox benefactor, Mr Sergei Plastinin; executive director of the St Gregory the Theologian Charity Foundation, Mr Leonid Sevastianov; Ms L.M. Monakhova; and interpreter Valery Mamonov.

Metropolitan Hilarion brought greetings and best wishes from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia to His Beatitude Patriarch Theodoros. Patriarch Theodoros expressed his deep gratitude to Patriarch Kirill for his attention to the needs of the Orthodox Church of Alexandria and noted that the two Orthodox Churches have good fraternal relationships. His Beatitude Patriarch Theodoros also emphasized that over many centuries, the Russian Church has been rendering brotherly assistance to the Church of Alexandria during hard times and treats her with attentive care and love.

The participants in the meeting discussed a number of issues of mutual interest.

From the Patriarch's study, they proceeded to the Throne Hall of the Patriarchate, where Mr Sergei Plastinin was presented with the Order St Mark, the Apostle and Evangelist, for services in strengthening relations between the Orthodox Church of Alexandria and the Russian Orthodox Church and in consideration of his charity help to the Orthodox Church of Alexandria rendered with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia. His Beatitude Patriarch Theodoros expressed his deep gratitude to Mr Sergei Plastinin for contributing to the missionary work of the Orthodox Church of Alexandria, which canonical territory, as the Patriarch noted, includes forty-eight countries of the African continent.

After that, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk with his suite and Patriarch Theodoros of Alexandria visited the Monastery of St Sabbas the Sanctified, where they venerated the pillar on which, according to legend, St Catherine was beheaded, and prayed at the burial place of the Patriarchs of Alexandria.

That same day, the DECR chairman and his suite visited the Coptic Monastery of St Apostle Mark where the particle of his holy relics is kept.

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