



First in 2012 session of the Holy Synod begins its work

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On 15 March 2012, the first in 2012 session of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church began in the Synodal Hall of the official patriarchal residence in St Daniel's Monastery in Moscow under the chairmanship of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia.

His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine; Metropolitan Vladimir of St. Petersburg and Lagoda; Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Slutsk, Patriarchal Exarch for All Belarus; Metropolitan Juvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna; Metropolitan Vladimir of Kishinev and All Moldova; Metropolitan Varsonofiy of Saransk and Mordovia, chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate; and Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, are permanent members of the Holy Synod.

Metropolitan Alexander of Astana and Kazakhstan and Metropolitan Vikentiy of Tashkent and Uzbekistan became the permanent members by the decision of the Holy Synod of 5 October 2011 (minutes 99) pending the approval by the Bishops' Council.

Invited to take part in the summer session of the Holy Synod in 2012 were Metropolitan Nifont of Lutsk and Volyn, Metropolitan Nikon of Ufa and Sterlitamak, Metropolitan Pavel of Ryazan and Mikhailov, Bishop Tikhon of Maikop and Adygeya, and Bishop Aristarkh of Kemerovo and Novokuznetsk.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church opened the session and presented its agenda. Discussed will be issues of central church administration, Church's external activity, and organization of monastic life. The participants in the session are expected to make a decision on establishing new dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church and to interview some of the candidates for bishopric.

The session will continue its work on March 16. Minutes of the Synod will be published upon completion of the session.