



## **His Holiness Patriarch Kirill presides at an enlarged session of the Patriarchal Council for Culture**

[gallery]

On 22 February 2012, the Patriarchal Council for Culture held its enlarged session under the chairmanship of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia at the St. Sergius Hall of the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church addressed all those present with a welcoming speech.

After that archimandrite Tikhon (Shevkunov), secretary of the Patriarchal Council for Culture, made a report on the work of the Council in the past year.

“One of the main objectives of the Patriarchal Council for Culture was to improve the relations with the museum community, with the Ministry of Culture.” Meetings and discussions have resulted in the agreement between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, which may be signed during the next month. Among the joint projects of the Church and the Ministry are professional development courses for clergymen and laymen in preserving architectural monuments and works of art.

The Council is also cooperating with the Federal Penitentiary Service in carrying out the educational work. It is planned to provide all the institutions of confinement with cable TV. That would allow to introduce the prisoners to educational materials and film classics. Archimandrite Tikhon noted that “sixty percent of the institutions of confinement have been already equipped with TV cables and the present task is to collect content.”

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill touched upon the issue of the law regulating the returning of objects of religious interest to religious organizations: “After the law was adopted I have not received any negative signal.”

Andrei Busygin, Deputy Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation, told all those present about the current relations between the Church and the museum community. He noted that conflict situations have been eased recently. “We understand perfectly well that both the Church and the museum community have a goal to preserve the valuable objects they have in their possession. Many icons are kept in the churches in excellent conditions comparable to those of museum storerooms.”

The participants in the meeting saw a documentary about the 10<sup>th</sup> church-public exhibition and forum “Orthodox Russia – the Day of National Unity” which took place at the “Manezh” Central Exhibition Hall last November under the auspices of the Patriarchal Council for Culture.

Then the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church made a report on the current situation in national culture.

On the results of the session an address to a future President of the Russian Federation was issued.

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