New Apostolic Nuncio to Russia welcomed by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk

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Archbishop Ivan Jurkovic, new Apostolic Nuncio to Russia, was received by Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk on May 11, 2011, at the Department for External Church Relations. Present at the meeting were also Hegumen Philaret (Bulekov), DECR vice-chairman, Mgr Visvaldas Kulbokas, first secretary of the Apostolic Nunciature to Russia, Rev. Dimitry Sizonenko, DECR acting secretary for inter-Christian relations, and Deacon Alexy Dikarev of the DECR secretariat for inter-Christian relations.

Metropolitan Hilarion congratulated Archbishop Ivan Jurkovic on taking the office of Apostolic Nuncio, wished him success in his work and expressed hope for further development of constructive cooperation between the Moscow Patriarchate Department for External Church Relations and the Apostolic Nunciature to the Russian Federation. His Eminence noted with satisfaction that Orthodox-Catholic relations considerably improved in recent years. In this connection, he underscored the role of the Joint Working Group for considering problems in relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church as an effective instrument for discussing and searching for a settlement of various practical problems in relations between the two Churches.

They also discussed prospects for Orthodox-Catholic cooperation in bearing common witness to Christian values in the modern society and in protecting the rights of Christians who are subjected to persecution in various parts of the world.

In conclusion of the meeting, Archbishop Ivan Jurkovic thanked Metropolitan Hilarion for the warm welcome and assured him of his desire to promote further development of cooperation and mutual understanding between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church.

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