“Orthodoxy in Estonia. Studies and Documents” book is presented at the National Library of Estonia

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On 29 April 2011, a book in tow volumes entitled “Orthodox in Estonia. Studies and Documents” issued by the “Orthodox Encyclopaedia” Church Scholarly Centre was presented in Tallinn with the blessing by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia with the participation of Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate’s Department for External Church Relations (DECR) and Metropolitan Korniliy of Tallinn and All Estonia, Primate of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate.

In 2008, His Holiness Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow and All Russia, who always paid special attention to Orthodoxy in Estonia, gave his blessing to compile the book. In his address at the 22nd session of the Public Supervisory Council and the Board of Trustees of the “Orthodox Encyclopaedia” on 29 April 2010, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia said that the book should be a genuine scholarly edition and prove a historical truth, though much disputed today, that Orthodoxy in the Baltic countries is a fruit of missionary activity of the Russian Orthodox Church and that the Estonian Orthodox Church was in the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople for a short period of time “due to the tragic circumstances in the first half of the 20th century.”

Speaking at the presentation at the National Library of Estonia, Metropolitan Hilarion said he was happy to present the book to the Estonian public. The first volume, “Studies,” includes an abridged version of the fundamental studies made by His Holiness Patriarch Alexy I of Moscow and All Russia. The complete text was published in Russian in 1998, and in Estonian in 2010 along with other materials on the history of Orthodoxy in Estonia. The present edition, though abridged, is supplemented by historical survey of major events in the church life in Estonia in the 20th and 21st centuries.

“The history of Orthodoxy in Estonia has been inseparably linked with the Russian Orthodox Church. Russian priests and missionaries have brought Orthodoxy to the land of Estonia, and the Orthodox church life in Estonia has been developing through the care of the Russian Orthodox Church,” Metropolitan Hilarion noted. He spoke eloquently of the history and said in conclusion that the book would “contribute to the healing of wounds inflicted on Orthodoxy in Estonia and promote the finding of just and mutually satisfactory decisions.”

Metropolitan Hilarion gave Metropolitan Korniliy the first part of 300 copies of the new book that will be sent to Estonia with the blessing of His Holiness the Patriarch and thanked Metropolitan Korniliy for his

lengthy sacrificial service to Orthodoxy in Estonia.

Metropolitan Korniliy thanked Metropolitan Hilarion for his visit to Estonia and his address at the presentation.

Editors-in-chief of the “Orthodox Encyclopaedia,” S. Kravets, head of the Church Scholarly Centre, and archpriest Nikolai Balashov, DECR deputy chairman, presented reports on the materials and documents included in the book and its tasks.

S. Mjannik, a member of the Synod of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, led the presentation that was attended by Bishop Lazar of Narva; Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Yu. Merzliakov of the Russian Federation to Estonia and minister-counsellor of the Russian Embassy A. Yashkin; chargé d’affaires of the Republic of Belarus in Estonia V. Lazarenko; deputies of the Estonian Parliament; clerics of the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate; many representatives of the church and scholarly public circles of Estonia, Christian communities of the country and diplomatic corps.

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