



His Holiness Patriarch Kirill attends Paschal reception given by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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On 28 April 2011, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation gave a festive Paschal reception at the Ministry mansion in Moscow. His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia was met by the Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov.

Attending the reception on behalf of the Russian Orthodox Church were Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR); Archbishop Arseniy of Istra; Archbishop Ioann of Belgorod and Stary Oskol, chairman of the Synodal Department for Mission; Archbishop Mark of Yegorievsk, head of the Administration for Moscow Patriarchate's Institutions Abroad; Bishop Irinarkh of Krasnogorsk, chairman of the Synodal Department for Ministry in Prisons; Bishop Panteleimon of Smolensk and Vyazma, chairman of the Synodal Department for Church Charity and Social Ministry; Bishop Tikhon of Podolsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Finance and Economic Administration; archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin, chairman of the Synodal Department for Church-Society Relations; Archpriest Dmitry Smirmov, chairman of the Synodal Department for Cooperation with the Armed Forces and Law Enforcement Agencies; Mr. Vladimir Legoida, chairman of the Synodal Information Department; archpriest Vladimir Divakov, the Patriarch's secretary for Moscow; archpriest Vladimir Siloviev, editor-in-chief of the Moscow Patriarchate's Publishing House; DECR deputy chairmen, archpriest Nikolai Balashov and hegumen Filaret (Bulekov); hegumen Philipp (Riabykh), representative of the Moscow Patriarchate to the Council of Europe; staff members of the Synodal Departments of the Moscow Patriarchate and clergymen. Also attending the reception were representatives of the Local Orthodox Churches to the Moscow Patriarchate: the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem, the Orthodox Church in America; the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia; and a clergyman of the Georgian Orthodox Church who takes spiritual care for the community of the Moscow church of St. George.

Representatives of scholarly circles, Russian public organizations, foreign diplomats, and representatives of the non-Orthodox Christian Churches and traditional religious communities in Russia were among the guests.

Minister Lavrov greeted them all and acknowledged the role of the Church as the largest and most authoritative public institute of Russia at present, underscoring that for centuries the Orthodox Church has been a custodian of traditional values of our society, including love of neighbour, willingness to self-

sacrifice, tolerance, justice, and peace among nations.

The Russian Foreign Minister awarded the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church with the Gorchakov Medal “in recognition of his merit in promoting the ideals of good throughout the world.”

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill congratulated all those present on the feast of the Bright Resurrection of Christ. In his address he said, “Believing people are convinced that the way to building good-neighbourly relations among nations lies through the assertion of traditional spiritual and moral values on which nations and civilizations build their life.”

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church presented an Easter egg to Minister Lavrov in token of today’s feast.

The Moscow Synodal Choir conducted by the honoured artist of Russia Alexei Puzakov sang Paschal hymns.

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