His Holiness Patriarch Kirill receives Archbishop Antonio Mennini, Apostolic Nuncio to the Russian Federation

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On 26 January 2011, the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church met with the Apostolic Nuncio to the Russian Federation, Archbishop Antonio Mennini, who completes his ministry in Russia.

Taking part in the meeting that was held at the Patriarch's working residence in Chisty side street were Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, and Archbishop Mark of Yegorievsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Management for Institutions Abroad. The Apostolic Nuncio was accompanied by the first secretary of the Holy See Representation in the Russian Federation, Mgr Visvaldas Kulbokas.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill greeted the guests, saying: "I would like to thank you for your work as representative of the Holy See in Moscow and acknowledge your personal contribution to the solution of difficult problems in the relations between our Churches. These problems, by God's mercy, are finding positive solution, thus changing the climate of bilateral relations to the better. To a large extent, this is your service as a plenipotentiary representative of the Holy See."

His Holiness mentioned that prior to the meeting he celebrated a litiya for the victims of the terrorist act committed on January 23. Requiem services were held in all churches of the capital city with the Patriarch's blessing.

Archbishop Mennini expressed his condolences over innocent people's death at the hand of terrorists.

Addressing His Holiness the Patriarch, he said: "I am very grateful to you, Your Holiness. I have been happy to work for the good of our Churches. This work would have been much more difficult without your support, friendly relations, and Christian love. I will never forget you and the Russian Church, but shall cherish my love to it." Archbishop Mennini emphasized his willingness to contribute to common witness about Christian values before the world.

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/56086/