



## **His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia opens regular session of the Holy Synod**

On 6 October 2010, the first meeting of the winter session of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church opened at the Patriarch's working residence in Chisty side street. The session is chaired by His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia.

The Holy Synod consists of permanent members, who are His Beatitude Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine; Patriarch Exarch of All Belarus Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Slutsk; Metropolitan Juvenaly of Krutitsy and Kolomna; Metropolitan Vladimir of Kishinev and All Moldova; the chancellor of the Moscow Patriarchate Metropolitan Varsonofiy of Saransk and Mordovia; and the chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk.

Invited to take part in the winter session are Metropolitan Lazar of Simferopol and the Crimea; Metropolitan Hilarion of Eastern America and New York; Archbishop Prokl of Simbirsk and Melekess; Bishop Aleksandr of Baku and Caspian region; and Bishop Daniel of Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk and the Kuril Islands.

After "O Heavenly King" prayer, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill greeted members of the Holy Synod and delivered an introductory speech, press service of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia reports.

The Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church noted that the agenda included a number of important issues, including working plans for the regions, various aspects of out-of-church activities, election of a new bishop of the Russian Orthodox Church, and discussion of the document adopted at the session of the "Economics and Ethics" expert council at the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia that took place in Kiev last July.

Members of the Synod will also consider the establishment of new theological educational institutions and the opening of new monasteries.

An important item on the agenda will be the arrangement of church life in the newly established Metropolitan district in Kazakhstan.

His Holiness Patriarch Kirill welcomed the first hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, Metropolitan Hilarion of Eastern America and New York, saying, "A top-level representative of the Church Abroad takes part in the session of the Holy Synod for the first time. This is a testimony of the ongoing process launched by the signing of the Act of Canonical Communion that would be further developed with God's help."

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