



## **Russian Orthodox Church delegation takes part in official enthronement of His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia**

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On 3 October 2010, the official enthronement of His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia took place at the Peć (Kosovo and Metochia) Patriarchate with representatives of the Local Orthodox Church attending in accordance with the tradition of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia was elected Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church by the Episcopal Council on 22 January 2010. His first enthronement took place at the Cathedral of the Holy Archangels in Belgrade on January 23.

Taking part in the celebration with the blessing of His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia was an official delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church consisting of Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR); archpriest Nikolai Balashov, DECR deputy chairman; archpriest Vitaly Tarasjev, rector of the metochion of the Moscow Patriarchate in Belgrade; and the Rev. Igor Yakimchuk, DECR secretary for inter-Orthodox relations. Bishop Peter of Cleveland (Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia) has also arrived to participate in the celebration.

On 3 October 2010, the Divine Liturgy was celebrated at the Church of the Holy Apostles with the office of enthronement of His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia.

Concelebrating with His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia were His Beatitude Chrysostomos II, Archbishop of New Justiniana and All Cyprus; His Beatitude Metropolitan Christopher of the Czech Lands and Slovakia; hierarchs of the Serbian Orthodox Church and representatives of other Local Orthodox Churches: Metropolitan Emmanuel of France (Constantinople), Metropolitan Kallinikos of Pelusion (Alexandria), Archbishop Nifon of Philippopolis (Antioch), Archbishop Theophilactos of Jordan (Jerusalem), Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk (Russia), Metropolitan Gerasim of Zugdidi and Tsaish (Georgia), Metropolitan of Oltenia and Archbishop of Craiova Irineu (Romania), Metropolitan Dometian of Vidin (Bulgaria), Metropolitan Theologos of Seres and Nigrit (Greece), Metropolitan Ignatios of Berat, Avlon and Kanin (Albania), Archbishop Abel of Lublin and Chelm (Poland), Bishop

Melchizedek of Pittsburg and Western Pennsylvania (Orthodox Church in America).

After the Trisagion, Metropolitans Ioann of Zagreb and Ljubljana and Amfilohije of Crna Gora and Primorje led His Holiness Patriarch Irinej to the Patriarch throne three times. At the dismissal of the Divine Liturgy, Metropolitan Amfilohije read out the Council's Act on the enthronement of His Holiness Patriarch Irinej and presented him with Patriarchal staff and panagia of St. Sabbas of Serbia, which has been passed from one Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church to the other since the time when the King of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes Alexander Karageorgievich presented it to His Holiness Patriarch Demetrios. His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia was led to the throne of St. Sabbas from the right side of the sanctuary three times and delivered his address. The Serbian hierarchs signed the protocol of enthronement. Present at the office of enthronement were Serbian President Boris Tadic; first deputy chairman of the Russian Council of Federation A. Torshin; Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Serbia A. Konuzin, Ambassador of Ukraine to Serbia V. Nedopas; chargé d'affaires ad interim of Belarus in Serbia S. Chichuk; Ambassador of Greece to Serbia D. Stoidis; heads of international presences in Kosovo in compliance with the UN Security Council Resolution 1244; staff members of diplomatic representations of foreign countries; representatives of traditional religions and confessions and of international Christian organizations.

After the Divine Liturgy, a reception was given at the Peć Patriarchate. Greetings to His Holiness Patriarch Irinej were read out. Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk read out the congratulatory message from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia and presented the Primate of the Serbian Orthodox Church with the Patriarchal staff – a gift from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill.

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