



## DECR chairman visits Visoki Dečani monastery

[gallery]

On 2 October 2010, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations, who arrived in Serbia as head of the Russian Orthodox Church delegation for the official enthronement of His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia, visited Visoki Dečani Monastery.

Accompanied by the abbot, Bishop Teodosije of Ljipljana, a vicar of the Raška-Prizren diocese, Metropolitan Hilarion venerated the holy sites of the monastery, gave his blessing to the brethren and had a talk with the hierarchs who have arrived to take part in the Patriarch's enthronement.

King Stefan Uroš III of Serbia, a holy great martyr, established Visoki Dečani Monastery in 1327. The monastery is known as a unique complex of the monuments of architecture and painting of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The extant Byzantine frescoes and a collection of Orthodox icon, the largest in Serbia, are worldwide renowned. The monastery is also famous for the major medieval church of Serbia, the cathedral of Christ Pantocrator with the tomb of the holy King Stefan Uroš, and for the relics of the holy great martyr Nicetas and St. Jelena of Dečani. In 2004, UNESCO listed the monastery on the World Heritage List and was protected by United Nations' KFOR till September 2010.

On October 3, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk arrived at the Peć Patriarchate to take part in the enthronement of His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia.