



## **Patriarch Kirill meets with Ukrainian President Yanukovich**

[gallery]

On July 23, 2010, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia, while on an archpastoral visitation of dioceses of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, met with the Ukrainian President Victor Yanukovich in the Crimea. At Belbek airport, His Holiness was met by Metropolitan Lazar of Simferopol and the Crimea, diocesan clergy and governmental officials.

In the beginning of their meeting, Patriarch Kirill read out the diploma awarding the Ukrainian President the Order of St. Vladimir Equal-to-the-Apostles, First Degree, in acknowledgement of his efforts for strengthening Orthodoxy in Ukraine and on the occasion of his 60<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Presenting Mr. Yanukovich with the high church decoration, His Holiness Kirill said, 'I rejoice in the fact that on the occasion of your jubilee I have an opportunity to put upon you during the first year of your presidency this token of profound respect of the Russian Orthodox Church for your work and your personality'.

Then the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church and the head of the Ukrainian State had a talk.

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