



## **Metropolitan Hilarion takes part in the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the independence of the Lithuanian Republic**

On 11 March 2010, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate Department for external church relations, currently in Vilnius at the invitation of the chairman of the Seim of the Lithuanian Republic Irena Degunete, took part in the grand meeting dedicated to the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the independence of Lithuania.

Speaking at the meeting were President of Lithuania Dalia Gribauskaite, President of Poland Lech Kacinski, President of Latvia Valdis Zatlers, President of Finland Tarja Halonen, President of Slovenia Danilo Türk, high representatives of other countries, the former chairman of the Seim of the Lithuanian Republic Vitautas Landsbergis, and the first President of Estonia Arnold Ryuitel.

Flags of the three Baltic states – Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia were hoisted on the square in front of the Seim building. The ceremony was followed by military parade and grand dinner.

During the events to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the independence of Lithuania, Metropolitan Hilarion met with the Archbishop of Vilnius Cardinal Audris Juozas Bačkis, with professor Landsbergis, and other church, political and public leaders, as well as with representatives of the diplomatic corps.

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