



Archbishop Hilarion attends Moscow mayor's meeting with religious organization

Archbishop Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations, attended the meeting between the Moscow mayor and leaders and representatives of religious organizations in Moscow, on 29 September 2009.

Along with Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov, the Moscow Government was represented by Central Moscow Prefect S. Baidakov, deputy Moscow mayor V. Vinogradov and chairman of the city committee for relations with religious organizations, M. Orlov.

Religious organizations were represented by Archbishop Hilarion, Old-Believers' Metropolitan Kornily of Moscow and All Russia, Chief Rabbi Adolf Shayevich (Russian Jewish Congress), Chief Rabbi Berel Lazar (Federation of Jewish Communities), Sheikh Ravil Gainutdin, chairman of the Moslem Board for European Russia and chairman of the Council of Muftis in Russia; Bishop Yezras of the Novo-Nakhichevan and Russian Diocese (Armenian Apostolic Church), and Ms. D. Shagdarova, leader of the Moscow Buddhist community.

In his opening address, Mr. Luzhkov noted that 'such meetings are a symbol of our common efforts for rallying society'. He said the existing cultural diversity in the Moscow population today 'can and must become our richness', which was possible to achieve only through people's education for the culture of peace.

Archbishop Hilarion, in his turn, stressed that 'it is religion that is a real force in society today which can influence people's moral condition. His Holiness Patriarch Kirill set as one of the priorities in the Church's mission the work with youth', he said, adding, 'and he makes first of all the problem of morality a theme of his continued talks with thousands-strong gatherings of young people throughout Holy Russia'.

He also underlined that 'the ethical education of society is a common task for the state and all the traditional confessions. This task can only be fulfilled through common efforts. In this respect, our traditional confessional confessions share full understanding and willingness to cooperate including in the framework of the Interreligious Council in Russia'.

All the representatives of traditional confessions expressed satisfaction at the present level of dialogue

with the Moscow Government led by Mayor Luzhkov and pointed to the importance of continued cooperation in consolidating society.

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