



Archbishop Hilarion meets with Dr. Herbert Schambeck, former President of the Bundesrat of the Republic of Austria

Archbishop Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations, met on 22 September 2009 at the department, with Dr. Herbert Schambeck, former President of the Bundesrat of the Republic of Austria. Participating in the meeting was also Austria's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary in Russia, Martin Vukovic.

As president of the Austrian Bundesrat in the period from 1988 to 1997, Dr. Schambeck was actively involved in the Orthodox-Catholic dialogue. In the course of their talk, Archbishop Hilarion introduced his guest to the present state of bilateral relations between the Russian Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches. He made a special mention of the considerable growth in mutual understanding reached in relations between the two Churches in recent times. It was reflected in particular in the positive results of his recent official visit to Rome as chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations. His Eminence Hilarion also stressed that as a result of these meetings with the Roman Catholic leadership, which were highly fruitful, representatives of the two largest Christian Churches agreed on the need for the closest possible cooperation, which is of special importance at a time of growing secularism in the world today.

They also discussed a possible meeting between the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Pope of Rome. Archbishop Hilarion noted that to make such a meeting possible it was necessary to settle several problems and the principal among them is the situation in relations between the Orthodox and the Greek Catholics in western Ukraine. In conclusion of the meeting, both sides expressed hope that the two Churches would be able to reach perfect mutual understanding in settling the difficult problems involved in Orthodox-Catholic dialogue.

DECR Communication Service