



Metropolitan Hilarion describes as groundless the USA statements about “the violation of religious freedoms” in Russia



US Secretary of State Entony Blinken has designated Russia among the countries engaged “in systematic, egregious violations of religious freedoms” along with Myanmar, China, Iran, North Korea, Pakistan, Saud Arabia. Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, was asked by the hostess of the TV program “The Church and the World”, Ekaterina Gracheva, to comment on this statement by the USA official.

As His Eminence Hilarion believes, representatives of foreign states, before making conclusions on such a topic, should have asked the religious confessions how do they feel in the Russian Federation.

“I am a member of the Interreligious Council in Russia represented in which are the Orthodox Church and Muslim communities, Jews and Buddhists. Ask any representative of this council: Are they persecuted, oppressed, or they are satisfied? I believe any of them will give a perfectly unequivocal

answer: in Russia, none of the religious freedoms is infringed upon; the traditional religions are equal before law; each traditional confession has an opportunity to develop freely”, Metropolitan Hilarion said.

At the same time, he noted that some organizations of sectarian persuasion, such as Jehovah’s Witnesses, are prohibited in Russia. But, firstly, Russia is not the only country to prohibit this sect, he reminded the audience. Secondly, it is not prohibited for its religious activity but for its extremism, which has been revealed in its work. Such measures cannot be considered a violation of religious freedom, since they are undertaken to protect our people from extremist manifestations”.

DECR Communication Service

Source: <https://mospat.ru/en/news/88475/>