



## **DECR chairman meets with President of Republika Srpska Milorad Dodik**



### **DECR Communication Service, 19/11/2024**

On 18<sup>th</sup> November 2024, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, who is visiting the Republika Srpska, met with its President, Mr Milorad Dodik.

Taking part in the meeting, which took place at the Palace of the Republic in the city of Banja Luka, were members of the Russian Church's delegation accompanying Metropolitan Anthony, namely, Archpriest Nikolai Balashov, advisor to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus'; Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, DECR deputy chairman; and Priest Nikolai Vasin, secretary to the DECR chairman. Among the participants in the meeting were also Bishop Stefan of Remesiana, representative of the Serbian

Patriarch to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus', and Mr Marko Romić, advisor on religious affairs to the President of the Republika Srpska.

President Milorad Dodik expressed his deep satisfaction at the visit of the Russian Orthodox Church's delegation, regarding it as yet another vivid manifestation of brotherly relations and unity between the Serbian and the Russian peoples and between the two Churches. As he pointed out, in the Republika Srpska the state authorities and the Church have established fruitful cooperation. In his turn, Metropolitan Anthony thanked President Dodik for the warm welcome extended to the delegation of the Moscow Patriarchate and conveyed to him greetings from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus'.

The participants in the meeting exchanged views on various issues, such as the current state of affairs within the world Orthodoxy, the persecutions against the canonical Church in Ukraine and the oppression the Orthodox Church is suffering in a number of other countries, including the Baltic ones.

Later that day, Mr Milorad Dodik and Metropolitan Anthony, accompanied by the members of the Russian Orthodox Church's delegation, visited a construction site of the Russian-Serbian Church of the Holy Transfiguration and a religious and educational centre in Banja Luka. They were joined by Mr Igor Kalabukhov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

After that, the President of the Republika Srpska and the DECR chairman answered questions from the press.

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