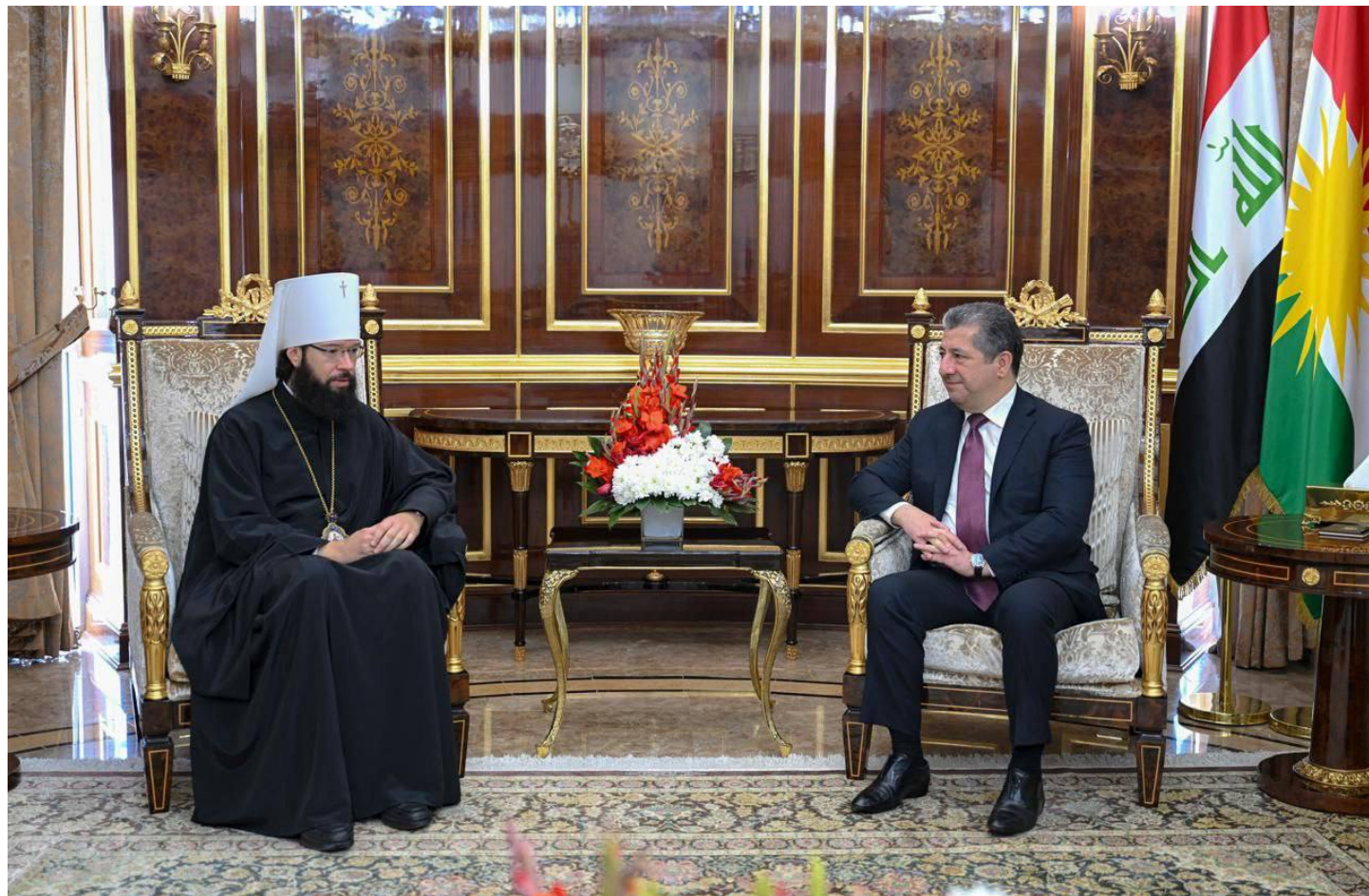




Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk meets Prime Minister of Iraqi Kurdistan



DECR Communication Service, 30/09/2025

On 29th September 2025, in Erbil, a meeting took place between Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, and Mr Masrour Barzani, Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Metropolitan Anthony told the head of the Kurdistan Regional Government about the history and present-day ministry of the Russian Orthodox Church, dwelling, in particular, on its relations with Christian and other traditional religious communities, as well as governmental and non-governmental organisations in the Middle East.

Among the topics discussed during the meeting was the religious communities' contribution to maintaining peace and fraternal relations between peoples. The DECR Chairman and Prime Minister

Barzani pointed out the inadmissibility of using the religious factor for destructive purposes.

A special mention was made of the historic role of the Assyrian Church of the East in promoting relations between the peoples of the ancient Mesopotamia and the historical Rus', as well as of the personal contribution of His Holiness Catholicos-Patriarch Mar Awa III and His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' to strengthening these ties today.

Among those who took part in the meeting were also Mr Maxim Rubin, Consul General of the Russian Federation in Erbil; Mr Noreldin Waisy, Press Secretary to the Prime Minister; Mr Danar Mustafa, Acting Representative of the Kurdistan Region in the Russian Federation, President of the Foundation for the Support and Development of Russian-Kurdish Cultural and Public Relations; Chorbishop Samano Odisho, Representative of the Assyrian Church of the East in Russia; Mr V.V. Vavilin, Russia's Vice-Consul in Erbil; as well as Hieromonk Stefan (Igumnov), DECR Secretary for Inter-Christian Relations; and Priest Nikolai Vasin, Secretary to the DECR Chairman.

Source: <https://mospat.ru/en/news/93618/>