



Representative of the Russian Orthodox Church visits Sudan



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From 17th to 21st April 2026, with the blessing of Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, Hieromonk Stefan (Igumnov), DECR Secretary for Inter-Christian Relations, visited the Republic of the Sudan.

It was the first ever visit of a representative of the Russian Orthodox Church to the country. The trip took place at the invitation of the Coptic Orthodox Church and the Embassy of the Russian Federation in the Republic of the Sudan.

On 17th April, in an episcopal residence at the Church of the Holy Virgin Mary in the city of Port Sudan,

a meeting took place between Hieromonk Stefan (Igumnov) and hierarchs of the Coptic Church – Metropolitan Elia of Khartoum and South Sudan and Metropolitan Sarabamon of Atbara, Omdurman and North Sudan. The hierarchs expressed their heartfelt love for the Russian Orthodox Church and their joy at the opportunity to develop bilateral cooperation. Taking part in the meeting were also Mr Andrei Chernovol, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of the Sudan; Priest Besada Bushara, Rector of the Church of the Holy Virgin Mary; and other representatives of the Russian diplomatic mission.

On 19th April, Saint Thomas Sunday, Father Stefan celebrated the Divine Liturgy in the Church Complex of the Holy Virgin Mary in Port Sudan.

Later that day, Hieromonk Stefan and Ambassador Andrei Chernovol met with Mr Malik Agar, Vice-President of the Republic of the Sudan. Discussed at the meeting were various issues of Russia-Sudan cooperation. The participants in the meeting noted that the first visit of the Russian Orthodox Church's representative to Sudan would facilitate inter-faith relations and contribute to strengthening historical friendship and solidarity between the peoples of Russia and Sudan.

The DECR Secretary for Inter-Christian Relations concluded his visit to Sudan on 21st April. At the Port Sudan Airport, he was seen off by Mr Muawiya Osman Khalid, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Sudan, and Russian Ambassador Andrei Chernovol.

Historically, the Republic of the Sudan was the territory of the ancient Kushite Kingdom, closely associated with the civilisations of Ancient Egypt and the Kingdom of Aksum. From the dawn of the Christian era to the 12th century, it was the land where the local Church of Nubia carried out its mission. Its traces can be found in many local Christian architectural sites, as well as in iconographic and literary works. Since April 2023, a war has been raging in the country. By its death toll and humanitarian aftermaths, it is now the biggest local conflict on the planet.

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