



Primate of Russian Church Meets with Delegation of Patriarchal Exarchate of South-East Asia



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On 18th July 2026, after officiating at the Divine Liturgy in the Holy Trinity and St. Sergius Lavra, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Rus' met with a delegation of the Patriarchal Exarchate of South-East Asia. The meeting took place in the Church of St. Philaret the Merciful at the Lavra's Patriarchal Chambers.

The delegation consisted of representatives of Orthodox Christian communities, including clerics of the Diocese of Singapore that unites parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church in the territory of Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and East Timor.

The delegation had arrived in Russia to undertake a pilgrimage to holy sites of the Russian Orthodox Church, take part in divine services, visit various centres of historical and spiritual importance and

strengthen brotherly ties between the Russian Orthodox Church's communities in South-East Asia and Russia, **reports** the Patriarchal Press Service.

Metropolitan Sergiy of Singapore and South-East Asia, Patriarchal Exarch of South-East Asia, expressed gratitude to the Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church for encouraging and facilitating the development of church life in one of the most densely populated macro-regions in the world. "Allow me to thank you on behalf of the entire Patriarchal Exarchate of South-East Asia, on behalf of the clergy and laypeople of Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua... These are remote countries, but they are important," Metropolitan Sergiy said.

As the Exarch pointed out, the overall population of the countries in which the Patriarchal Exarchate of South-East Asia carries out its pastoral activities – which are Singapore, East Timor, Vietnam, Indonesia, Cambodia, the DPRK, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Thailand and the Philippines – is now reaching a billion. "Our Church is everywhere. Please bless the plenitude of our Church in that region in the person of these pilgrims," Metropolitan Sergiy added, asking His Holiness for his Primatial blessing.

"I thank you, Vladyka! Dear fathers, brothers and sisters, I am very glad to meet you," His Holiness Patriarch Kirill said in response, "I am one of those few people who by virtue of their position, and not as tourists, travelled almost throughout the globe. As part of my travels, I visited your region. It was back when one could not imagine that Orthodoxy would be present there and that the Patriarch of Moscow would be meeting with clerics and laypeople from that region."

"Establishing the Orthodox Church, strengthening Orthodoxy in that important region is your mission," the Primate of the Russian Church added, "I thank you for worthily carrying out this mission. And we, in our turn, will be doing all we can to support you on this salvific path of profound significance for the spiritual enlightenment of your people."

His Holiness greeted Metropolitan Sergiy on his Name Day, presenting to him the Gospel for travellers.

Each member of the delegation received from the Primate of the Russian Church an English-language edition of his book *Freedom and Responsibility: A Search for Harmony. Human Rights and Personal Dignity*. When speaking of what had prompted him to write the book, His Holiness said: "The motive behind this book was as follows. Human freedom and human rights were the notions often used in Western culture, in Western politics. At the same time, Orthodox Christians, including Russia, would be criticised as allegedly having no freedom, no human rights. At some point, I decided to respond to those critics and wrote a book which in English is entitled 'Freedom and Responsibility'."

“For indeed there can be no freedom without responsibility. Freedom without the responsibility for one’s people, one’s nation, one’s country and everything a person ought to be responsible for, transforms into lawlessness and results in the loss of moral principles underlying the very foundations of human life. That is exactly what we see today in many Western countries,” the Primate of the Russian Church pointed out.

To conclude the meeting, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill presented the delegation members with commemorative medals and icons.

Photo by the Press Service of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus’

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