



DECR chairman meets with representative of Austrian Ministry for European and International Affairs



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On 20th August 2026, Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, met with Mr Thomas Mühlmann, Director of Department II.3 of the Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs of the Republic of Austria.

Taking part in the meeting were also Mr Gerhard Sailer, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Austria to the Russian Federation, his deputy Mr Thomas Stolz, and Ms Ye.G. Gurova, the Ambassador's assistant.

Having greeted the guests, Metropolitan Anthony pointed out that they were visiting the Department for External Church Relations in the year marking the 80th anniversary of its establishment. The archpastor gave a brief overview of the past and present-day activities of the DECR, focusing on the relations with

the Local Orthodox Churches, various Christian confessions and other religions, as well as on the work of the Russian Church's institutions abroad.

Having mentioned the presence of the Russian Orthodox Church in Austria, Metropolitan Anthony expressed gratitude to the Austrian authorities for their attention to the ministry of the Diocese of Hungary and Austria and its parishes.

The participants in the meeting discussed the situation in Ukraine. The DECR chairman spoke about the plight of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and persecution against its hierarchs and clergy, as well as about the Ukrainian authorities' interference in church affairs and their support for the schism.

Taking part in the meeting were also Archpriest Igor Vyzhanov, DECR Deputy Chairman, and Archpriest Sergy Zvonarev, DECR Secretary for Far Abroad Countries.

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