Presentation of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society representative office held in Beirut



DECR Communication service, 31.10.2026.

On 30 October 2026, a presentation of the Representative Office of the Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society (IOPS) in Lebanon took place in the country's capital. The guests and members of the IOPS were welcomed by Jacques-Jean Sarraf, Honorary Consul of the Russian Federation in Lebanon.

Metropolitan Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chairman of the Department for External Church Relations, congratulated all those gathered on this significant occasion and conveyed the best wishes of His Holiness Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus', Chairman of the IOPS Committee of Honorary Members. "The Imperial Orthodox Palestine Society has done much work in Lebanon in the past. It has made its contribution to the organisation of educational projects and pilgrimages by Orthodox Christians

to holy sites," he recalled. Metropolitan Anthony pledged his support for the IOPS initiatives in Lebanon.

Wadih Haddad, Head of the Representative Office, noted that its present-day objective was to familiarise Lebanese society with the heritage of Russian Orthodoxy in Lebanon and neighbouring countries, as well as to encourage pilgrimages from Russia.

In his address, S.V. Stepashin, Chairman of the IOPS, emphasised: "Russia is loved and respected in the Middle East for one simple reason: we came here in peace and with goodwill, bringing schools and hospitals, and showing love and respect for the traditions of the peoples of the Middle East. Today, our Society will continue these traditions on Lebanese soil."

According to A.N. Rudakov, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Lebanon, the IOPS helps the Lebanese people become acquainted with Russia's rich history and its role in world affairs.

The presentation was also attended by the following representatives: from the Antiochian Orthodox Church: Metropolitan Silouan of Mount Lebanon; Metropolitan Anthony of Zahle and Baalbek; Metropolitan Niphon of Philippopolis, Representative of the Patriarch of Antioch to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus'; and representatives of Metropolitan Elias of Beirut, Archpriest Philip (Said) and Archpriest Roman (Gebran); from the Russian Orthodox Church: Archpriest Nikolai Balashov, Advisor to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus'; Archpriest Igor Yakimchuk, Deputy Chairman of the DECR; and Archimandrite Philip (Vasiltsev), Representative of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' to the Patriarchal See of Antioch; Archimandrite Seraphim (Shemyatovsky), Representative of the Orthodox Church of the Czech Lands and Slovakia to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus'; Robert Abiad, Head of the Orthodox Council of Lebanon; Marwan Abboud, Governor of Beirut; Ghazi Shaab, Mayor of Ainab; Rasul Zhumany, Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Lebanon; Mohammed Al-Asaad, Ambassador of Palestine to Lebanon; Milan Trojanović, Ambassador of Serbia to Lebanon; Valer Franco, Ambassador of Slovakia to Lebanon; Maysam Skaff, wife of a Member of the Lebanese Parliament; and others.

Source: https://mospat.ru/en/news/94693/