



## Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk meets with His Holiness Patriarch Irinej of Serbia

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On 31 March 2011, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, head of the Moscow Patriarchate's Department for External Church Relations (DECR), currently on a visit to Serbia, visited the Serbian Patriarchate and met with His Holiness Patriarch Irinej and members of the Holy Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church. They were joined in the meeting by Serbian Minister of Foreign Affairs Vuk Jeremić, Russian Ambassador to Serbia Alexander Konuzin, rector of the Russian Orthodox Metochion in Belgrade archpriest Vitaly Tarasjev, DECR secretary for Inter-Orthodox relations Rev. Igor Yakimchuk, executive director of the St. Gregory the Theologian Charity Foundation Leonid Sevastianov, and counselor to the general director of "OAO MPCK Holding" D. Malyshev.

Metropolitan Hilarion conveyed greetings from His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia to the Primate of the Serbian Church. The talk was held in a warm cordial atmosphere. Among other topics, the participants discussed the participation of the Russian Orthodox Church and Russian benefactors in the inner decoration of the Cathedral of St. Sava in Belgrade currently under construction.

After the talk, His Holiness Patriarch Irinej presented Metropolitan Hilarion with a copy of the "Three Hands" icon of the Mother of God, the main holy object of the Hilandar Serbian monastery on the Holy Mount Athos. Addressing Patriarch Irinej, Metropolitan Hilarion said: "Your Holiness, You are leading the Church which has suffered a lot together with its people. At present the life of the Church is being to take shape. The Cathedral of St. Sava symbolizes the revival. I believe that through concerted efforts, with a possible participation of the Russian Orthodox Church, the decoration works will be completed and the Cathedral will be a holy place not only for the Serbian Church, but for Orthodoxy as a whole."

"May the Most Holy Mother of God hear these words, and may the Lord bless our work through her almighty intercession," His Holiness Patriarch Irinej replied.

A dinner was given in honour of Metropolitan Hilarion on behalf of the Serbian Orthodox Church. After dinner, Metropolitan Hilarion and Patriarch Irinej met in private.