



## **Archbishop Hilarion: Human beings initiate ecological problems unless they see in environment a sphere of their responsibility**

Archbishop Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations, speaking in the Church and World program of the national Vesti TV network on December 26, said that man causes ecological problems 'unless he sees in the environment a sphere of his responsibility' and as long as he uses it for his own ends.

'One should begin with oneself and only after that complain about the powers that be, about factories and plants. Certainly, the responsibility of leaders of large enterprises for the environment is great, though. And here certain mechanisms of control should be enforced, including international ones', he said.

According to Church Fathers, God originally made man the master of nature, calling him to common efforts in improving the creation, but instead of becoming 'God's co-worker in beautification of the earth', man used nature selfishly, the archbishop maintained.

Since the resources of the Earth are not limitless, human beings have no right to treat it rashly but should leave it to their posterity in a state good for living, he said.

Arguing against the hypothesis that the planet is threatened with over-population, Archbishop Hilarion said that 'humanity at large faces not so much the problem of over-population as that of the rational use of natural resources', adding that scientific hypotheses about the need for birth rate reduction to avoid over-population 'are very biased as a rule'.

*DECR Communications Service*