



## **Archbishop Hilarion arrives in China leading a delegation of the Department for External Church Relations and Presidential Council for Religious Organizations**

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Archbishop Hilarion of Volokolamsk, chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate department for external church relations and member of the Presidential Council for Religious Affairs, has arrived in Beijing on 16 November 2009 on the invitation of the Chinese State Administration for Religious Affairs.

The joint delegation of the DECR and the Presidential Council he leads includes A. Kudryavtsev, executive secretary of the Council, Archpriest Nikolay Balashov, DECR vice-chairman, and D. Petrovsky and I. Kopeikin, staff members of the DECR.

Archbishop Hilarion was met at the Beijing airport by E. Tomikhin, minister-counselor of the Russian embassy, Mr. Lu Zinguang, director of the Chinese Administration for Religious Affairs, staff member of the directorate and Russian diplomats.

Later today, the delegation met with Mr. S. Razov, Russian Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary in the People's Republic of China.

On November 17, the delegation is to hold talks with the officials of the State Administration for Religious Affairs aimed to develop Russian-Chinese exchanges and cooperation in the religious sphere.

*DECR Communication Service*