



## **Patriarch Kirill attends the opening of international forum on Orthodox Women: Unity, Service, Love**

On July 27, 2011, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia attended the opening of the international forum on Orthodox Women: Unity, Service, Love. It took place at the Ukraine's House, the national business and cultural cooperation center in Kiev.

Attended by representatives of all regions in Ukraine, as well as delegations from Russia, Belarus and Moldova, the forum is to discuss among other things the cooperation of the Church, state and women's public organizations and the spiritual foundations for overcoming conflicts in family and society.

In her opening speech, Ms. O. Kovalenko, chair of the Union of Orthodox Women, cordially thanked Patriarch Kirill for the attention he gave to the forum.

In his address to the forum, Patriarch Kirill said in particular, 'The Church is facing many tasks today including the task to organize women's contribution to her life. This work is organized quite well on the level of convents, sisterhoods and parishes, but we have no organization which unites women within the whole Church. I believe, the formation of an Orthodox women's organization should move today to a new stage of founding diocesan organizations in various CIS and Baltic countries. A women's organization can be very effective and helpful in defending in the interests of the Church and in implementing the projects the Church believes to be priorities'.

Archbishop Alexander of Pereyaslavl-Khmel'nitsky read out a message of greetings from Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and All Ukraine. There was also a message of greetings from Ukrainian Prime Minister N. Azarov.

Ms. N. Yakunina, member of the St. Andrew Foundation board, spoke on behalf of Russian women.

Bishop Panteleimon, head of the UOC department for family, and Ms. Kovalenko as leader of the Union of Orthodox Women in Ukraine signed a cooperation agreement.

Leaving the forum Patriarch Kirill blessed the participants and their work to revive the spirituality and morality of the fraternal Slavic peoples.

