



## Metropolitan Hilarion emphasizes importance of continuing 'Amman format' of inter-Orthodox meetings



In the end of February, in his message timed to the anniversary of the Synaxis of Primates and Delegations of Local Orthodox Churches which took place in 2020 in Amman, Jordan, His Beatitude Theophilos, Patriarch of Jerusalem, again called them 'to meet for prayer and fraternal discussion'. 'We pray that this may be possible later in this year', the Primate of the Orthodox Church of Jerusalem noted.

According to the chairman of the Moscow Patriarchate's department for external church relations, Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, a meeting in the 'Amman format' can take place when the pandemic restrictions will be mitigated.

'This meeting is necessary', he emphasized in the air of the Church and the World program, 'because it is very important for representatives of Local Orthodox Churches to meet in order to discuss the existing

problems. And the mechanism, which functioned till recently when such meetings were initiated by the Patriarch of Constantinople, is no longer workable because Patriarch Bartholomew has joined the schism by concelebrating with schismatics and has lost legitimacy as the first among equals in the family of the Primates of Local Orthodox Churches’.

For this reason, the DECR chairman believes, even if the Patriarch of Constantinople convenes such meetings, some Churches may even attend them but very many of them will evade them under various pretexts. ‘It will be bound up precisely with the fact that he has violated the fundamental principle of the co-existence of the Local Orthodox Churches - the principle called synodality in the church language, that is, all the decisions should be made in the conciliar way. If the decisions are made on the inter-Orthodox level, they should involve the Local Orthodox Churches’, Metropolitan Hilarion emphasized.

And if one of the Primates, even if the first among equals, makes decisions to the detriment of other Local Churches, against the will of these Churches, it results in a schism, the archpastor said noting that ‘the Patriarch of Constantinople is working on the side of a further deepening of this schism’.

‘In this situation, it is important that the Orthodox Primates should meet’, the DECR chairman said, ‘the Patriarch of Jerusalem heads the oldest Orthodox Patriarchate - as we know it was Jerusalem and the Holy Land with which the history of Christianity began, and it is not accidental that in our liturgical texts the Church of Jerusalem is called the Mother of all Churches. Therefore, last year we were grateful to the Patriarch of Jerusalem for such an initiative. And this year we will accept this initiative. I hope this meeting will take place’.

*DECR Communication Service*

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