

Primate of Orthodox Church of Antioch receives delegation of Russian parliamentarians



On 17 January 2019, the Russian delegation led by Mr. Dmitry Sablin, deputy of the State Duma and vice-chairman of the 'Combat Brotherhood' veteran organization, visited the residence of the Patriarch of Antioch in Damascus and met with His Beatitude Patriarch John X of the Great Antioch and All the East.

The delegation included Mr. Sergei Gavrilov, president of the Interparliamentary Assembly of Orthodoxy and deputy of the State Duma; Mr. Dmitry Belik, deputy of the State Duma; and representatives of the Russian charitable organizations and entrepreneurs.

Taking part in the meeting were also Bishop Luke of Seidnaya, vicar of His Beatitude Patriarch John, and Hegumen Arseniy (Sokolov), representative of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia to the Patriarch of the Great Antioch and All the East.

Summing up the results of the meeting, Mr. Sergei Gavrilov noted that the Primate

of the Orthodox Church of Antioch supported the intention of the Russian Orthodox Church to preserve the unity of canonical Orthodoxy all over the world.

Patriarch John X expressed his opinion that “the schism in Ukraine organized by those who are not Orthodox Christians is a political process under religious cover,” and his regret that the Patriarch of Constantinople “does not hear the voice of faith.”

“There is a risk that the schismatics will become extremist groups, alien to Orthodoxy. Attempts are being made by the Western structures to undermine the integrity of the Orthodox Church of Antioch in Syria. It is necessary to prevent the unfolding of the anti-Orthodox scenario in the bosom of one of the most ancient Orthodox Churches. The Orthodox Churches of Antioch and Russia have unique ties,” Mr. Gavrilov said.

The Primate of the Orthodox Church of Antioch conveyed cordial greetings to His Holiness Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia with the anniversary of his enthronement.

His Beatitude Patriarch John thanked Mr. Sablin and the ‘Combat Brotherhood’ organization for their financial aid in restoring the Convent of St. Thecla in Maaloula that had been seized and partly destroyed by militants during the war.

After the meeting the members of the delegation, accompanied by Bishop Luke, proceeded to the Patriarch Maryamieh Cathedral in Damascus and prayed at the molyeben celebrated there with the blessing of His Beatitude Patriarch John by Hegumen Arseniy.



(DECR Communication Service)