

HIS BEATITUDE MEETS WITH HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF THE CAMEROON

On 14th February 2009, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa met with His Excellency Dr Paul Biya, President of the Cameroon at the Presidential Palace, together with His Eminence Metropolitan Gregory of the Cameroon . In welcoming His Beatitude with the deserved honours, His Excellency expressed his joy at the visit of the Venerable Primate of the Patriarchal Throne of St Mark to the Cameroon , mentioning his great appreciation of the multifaceted work of the Orthodox Church in his country, which he said was especially significant and humanistic. "We welcome the Head of Orthodoxy in Africa, whose role we regard as important for the unity of Christian Churches and peace between faiths on the African land".

He further praised the contribution made by His Beatitude to the Cameroon as its Metropolitan as he served there between the years of 1997 – 2002. He also expressed his satisfaction and content for the active presence of the Greek communities in the country and for the excellent coexistence and cooperation with all other citizens, in developing all facets of life in the Cameroon .

Dr Biya revealed to His Beatitude that he loves the ancient Greek language which he has studied, together with the Greek philosophers whom he admires and still studies as the cradle of civilization, especially from the time of Alexander the Great.

His Beatitude expressed his gratitude to the President for the love and support of the local Church, which this year celebrates its half century of spiritual journey and expressed also his paternal gratification for the respect shown between the various religious communities. He then also expressed his deep gratitude to the Egyptian Government and His Excellency President Hosni Mubarak for his support of the Orthodox Church – Egypt too is a shining example of peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims.

Finally, Dr Biya awarded the highest distinction of the Cameroon , the Star of the Order of Honour, to His Beatitude Theodoros, a distinction given for the first time to the Primate of a Church. His Beatitude also honoured the President with the Cross and Star of the Patriarchate.