

# **HIS BEATITUDE MEETS WITH HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ROMANIA**

**On the afternoon of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa** paid an official visit to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Romania Mr Traian Basescu, at the Presidential Mansion Cotroceni in Bucharest.

During the meeting, which was attended by His Beatitude Daniel Patriarch of Romania, His Excellency the President addressed His Beatitude defining the visit as a particular honour and blessing for the Romanian people, while also praising the multifaceted missionary effort of the Venerable Primate of the Patriarchal Throne of St Mark of which he already knew details.

He also spoke of the assistance given by Romania to the African countries, saying that he often meets leaders of African countries who have completed their studies in higher educational institutes in Romania. He also emphasized the importance of co-operation between state and Church for the benefit of the people and expressed his joy on the active participation of the faithful in the worship and spiritual life of the Church, as this contributes to the formation of the ethos of honourable citizens.

**In his reply His Beatitude Theodoros II**, thanked His Excellency Mr Basescu for the meeting, spoke at length of the relations between the ancient Patriarchate with Romania and its Church, as well as the general efforts of the Alexandrian Throne on the African continent. He also stressed the exceptional co-operation with the Egyptian and Greek States and expressed the certainty that the people of Egypt and Greece will soon enjoy the pure products of their efforts for greater progress and prosperity.

Ending his reply, he awarded the Cross of St Mark with a Star to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Romania.

In his address His Beatitude Daniel of Romania also spoke of the relations between state and Church in his country. And finally, he defined the visit of His Beatitude as a spiritual revitalization for the Christian faithful of Romania from the Apostolic and Paternal heritage of the ancient Church of Alexandria, which was adorned by great Fathers and Teachers of the world, such as Athanasios the Great and St Kyrillos of Alexandria, but also as another assurance of the pure relations and co-operation between the two Patriarchates.

They then went on to worship in the Holy Church of Ss Sergius and Bacchus which is in the gardens of the Presidential Mansion and which was the Chapel of the great Holy Monastery of Cotroceni – today the Presidential Mansion Cotroceni – which was built in 1672 by Prince Serban Katakuzino of Romania.

During this visit to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Romania His Beatitude was accompanied by His Eminence Metropolitan George of Accra, His representative in Athens and the Very Reverend Archimandrite Panteleimon Arathymos, Chief- Secretary of the Holy Synod.