

HIS BEATITUDE MEETS WITH HIS EXCELLENCY SHEIK JUMA AL MAJED

His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, gave a warm welcome at the Patriarchal See to His Excellency Sheik Juma Al Majed from the Central Economic Council and the Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates on 23rd May 2009.

His Excellency the Sheik, accompanied by high-ranking officials of the Central Economic Council of the U.A.E. and colleagues from the above-named Centre, arrived at the ancient Patriarchate following an invitation given by His Beatitude during his visit to Dubai in February of the past year.

During the private meeting between His Beatitude and Sheik Juma Al Majed in the Patriarchal Office, issues regarding the forthcoming collaboration between the "Juma Al Majed Centre for Culture and Heritage" and the Patriarchal Library of Alexandria were discussed; issues such as academic meetings, educational programmes, mutual activities on the promotion of the spiritual treasure of the two libraries and especially the maintenance of the 45,000 manuscripts which are accumulated at the Patriarchal Library.

His Beatitude then awarded the Sheik the Supreme Commander with Star of the Lion of St Mark in a ceremony which took place in the Throne Room and thanked him for his selfless contribution to cultural efforts and peace universally, as well as for his assistance to the ancient Patriarchate, through the contribution of the technical means and technological know-how for the preservation of the valuable manuscripts.

Visibly moved, His Excellency al Majed, thanked His Beatitude for the honour given to him, expressed his admiration for the spiritual treasure and the heritage of the Alexandrian Church, as well as for the multifaceted missionary and humanistic efforts for the suffering people of Africa . He also spoke of the efforts of the "Juma Al Majed Centre for Culture and Heritage", its educational centres which it maintains, where 4000 students learn about Islam, its libraries, as well as its areas where books and manuscripts are restored. He ended saying: "It is a special blessing from God that I meet a distinguished spiritual leader of the Church of Love and sacrifice. It is this and only this aim that we need to heal all of us who believe in the great and powerful God, giving ourselves to Him, in order to become implements of His peaceful will in the service of our fellow man".

His beatitude then showed the Sheik around the Patriarchal Mansion , as well as the Patriarchal Library and then hosted an official lunch in honour of his guest in the Great Patriarchal Refectory.