

HIS BEATITUDE VISITS THE PREFECTURE OF ATHENS

His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa was warmly welcomed the Governor of Athens Mr Ioannis Sgouros on 4th March 2009, when His Beatitude visited the Greek capital, where he will be awarded for his philanthropic and missionary work, at the function of the Ambassadors of Hellenism 2009, at the Megaro Mousikis Athinon, on 5th March 2009.

He is the first Primate of a Church who will receive this award, according to the unanimous decision taken by the Governing Council of Athens, within the framework of the institution of "Ambassadors of Hellenism" which was established in 1997 in memory of Melina Mercouri. Many leading personalities around the world would have received this award.

In welcoming His Beatitude, in the presence of the entire Governing Body of Athens, Mr Sgouros expressed his great joy in welcoming the missionary Patriarch, who has dedicated his entire life to helping our suffering brothers and sisters in Africa. "The work you do is especially significant", said Mr Sgouros, assuring His Beatitude that the Prefecture of Athens and himself personally, will support the missionary work of the ancient Patriarchate.

In his reply His Beatitude thanked all for the warm welcome, spoke about the humanistic and missionary service of the Alexandrian Church in the 54 countries of the African continent and expressed his gratitude for the understanding shown for the multifaceted effort of the Patriarchal Throne of St Mark. Commemorative gifts were then exchanged.

His Beatitude was accompanied on this visit by His Eminence Elder Metropolitan Petros of Aksum, his representative in Athens, and His Grace Gabriel Bishop of Mareotis, Patriarchal Vicar of Alexandria.