

## **Patriarch Theodoros of Alexandria: “Zimbabwe will prosper with the unity of its Leaders and People”**

With the opportunity of the recent National Presidential, Parliamentary and Municipal Elections in Zimbabwe, His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, Primate of the Orthodox Church on the African Continent, in consultation with the local Metropolitan Seraphim of Zimbabwe, gave directions for the positive contribution of the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and our Orthodox faithful for the peaceful conduct of the crucial elections and dealing with the danger of controversy leading the country into a civil war. His Beatitude is well aware of the situation in the country, in which he served as Metropolitan of Zimbabwe prior to his election to the Patriarchal Throne of the Apostle Mark and which he often visits during his pastoral visits to the Holy Metropolises and Dioceses of the Throne.

For this purpose, in all the Orthodox Churches, a special prayer was made for the unity of the Leaders of the Country and their Political Parties, for the peaceful conduct of the elections, in order to protect the unity of the People.

Emphasized in the Patriarchal Message of the Alexandrian Primate Theodoros, was that ‘Without the unity of the Leaders, the unity of the People cannot be protected, and without the unity of the People, the country, plagued by the problem of poverty and economic collapse, can not prosper.’

Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia) had as its president since its Independence in 1980, Mr Mugabe, up until November last year when he was overthrown by bloodless military intervention, to restore the spirit of the of revolution to liberate the country from the colonialists. In the recent National Elections of July 30, there were 23 nominations for the position of President of the country, for the positions of 210 members of the Parliament and the Senate there were over 4,000 candidates and for positions of Mayors and Councilors over 50,000 candidates. The candidate of the ruling party, Mr.Mnangagwa, won the presidential election with 50,8%, as well as 145 seats out of the 210 of the Parliament and the Senate. The Opposition reacted with violent demonstrations that led to the army’s intervention to restore order, resulting in the death and injury of demonstrators.

Alexandrian Primate Theodoros appealed to all parties to abstain from any form of violence and to solve their differences through peaceful dialogue and to work for the protection of the people and the welfare of the country. Similar calls have been made by the Secretary General of the United Nations Mr. Guterres and the International Community.

In his message His Beatitude did not fail to thank our brothers and sisters in Greece and Cyprus, who even though many of them are victims of the economic crisis of recent years, do not cease, with great love and sacrifices, doing themselves without many things, from continuing in a remarkable way to help poor and orphaned Zimbabwean children and those in other African countries who suffer from poverty and drought. He thanked the ‘Friends of the Zimbabwe Mission’ Association and especially the President, Mr. Spyridon Marangos and his Council Members in this direction.

It is worth mentioning that, under the instructions of the Alexandrian Primate, that the Zimbabwean Metropolis, the Members of the Hellenic Community and our Diplomatic Authorities, as well as our Orthodox Brothers and sisters of the local population, work together with their peaceful presence to contribute to the case of the reconciliation of the People, abstaining from any form of confrontation between the political forces of the country, working to strengthen unity, peaceful

coexistence, mutual respect and tolerance.