

THE MAYOR OF ATHENS VISITS HIS BEATITUDE

His Beatitude Theodoros II, Pope and Patriarch of Alexandria and All Africa, gave an especially warm welcome to the Mayor of Athens Mr Nikitas Kaklamanis, on 31st March 2009; he also awarded him the Great Cross of the Apostle Mark, with a Star, as a personal honour to him and also to the leading Municipality in Greece. "The initiatives taken by Athens are very moving as they show true humanity to those who have need of it, most especially the homeless, the immigrants and generally our suffering brothers and sisters", stressed His Beatitude. He also spoke about the Missionary efforts being undertaken by the Alexandrian Church on the African Continent.

In his reply Mr Kaklamanis who is visiting Alexandria as a guest of His Excellency Mr Adel Abib, Governor of Alexandria, emphasized the will of the Municipality of Athens to actively support the efforts of the Orthodox Church in Africa, especially with regard to Medical support for our African brothers and sisters who suffer from AIDS, cholera, tuberculosis and so many other diseases, together with the enormous problems created by poverty and racial conflicts. Mr. Kaklamanis in his role as Chairman of the Central Union of Municipalities and Communities of Greece, also invited His Beatitude to pay an official visit to the above-named offices and expressed his confidence that all concerned will support the efforts of the ancient Patriarchate.

Commemorative gifts were then exchanged and the Mayor was taken on a conducted tour of the Patriarchal Mansion. During his three-day visit to , Mr Kaklamanis was accompanied by the Chairman of the Municipal Council Mr. Theodoros Behrakis, the Deputy Mayor Mrs Sophia Mytilinaiou-Daskalaki, councillors and other staff members.

At noon on the same day His Beatitude attended the official lunch hosted by the Hellenic Naval Club of Alexandria in honour of the Mayor of Athens. Present also were His Excellency Mr Adel Abib, Governor of Alexandria, the Honourable Consul General of Greece in Alexandria Mr George Diakofotakis, the Chairman of the Hellenic Community of Alexandria Mr Haralambos Katsimbris and other dignitaries.